

The Seventh Vial Chapter XVII The Commencement And Termination Of The Twelve Hundred And Sixty Days



The French Revolution

Continued from [Chapter XVI. The Two-Horned Beast Of The Earth](#)

WE now come to discuss the question of time. There is a certain period fixed by God between the birth and death of every man. The same Providence, by an irresistible decree, has numbered the days of the Man of Sin. Between his appearance above the dark flood, and his descent into his burning grave, an interval will elapse of twelve hundred and sixty years. This number occurs in the Apocalypse, in connection with the existence of Antichrist, not less than five times. The Gentiles were to tread the holy city under foot forty and two months: the witnesses were to prophesy, clothed in sackcloth, a thousand two hundred and threescore days. The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God for a thousand two hundred and threescore days; and in the wilderness she was nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. Power was given unto the beast of the sea to continue forty and two months.

The period is variously expressed in days, months, times; but its length is the same in all—twelve hundred and sixty symbolic days, or years. The prophecy of Daniel, too, limits the duration of Antichrist to the same period—a time, times, and the dividing of time. Thus, as regards the length of the period, there is no doubt. The Papacy cannot possibly survive its twelve hundred and sixtieth year, dated from its rise. This is the hour of its doom, beyond which neither craft nor power can prolong its existence: then it goeth into perdition.

The main point here, then, is to ascertain the period of the rise of the Papacy: twelve hundred and sixty years added to which will give the epoch of its fall. Of course its rise must be placed subsequent to the Gothic invasion: for out of that flood did the ten kingdoms emerge. The ten kingdoms, as we have already stated, were completed by the opening of the sixth century. We are not, therefore, to look for the full development of the Papacy before that century, nor are we to look for it at any era very much subsequent, as must be evident from our former explanations, that the ten kingdoms of Europe, united and governed by the Pope, their last and eighth

head, forms the beast of the abyss, whose continuance is limited to forty-two months.

Do we find any strongly-marked epoch occurring soon after the commencement of this century in the history of the ten kingdoms or of the Papacy? Do we find any signal change in the constitution of the first, or any signal enlargement or confirmation in the powers and claims of the second? We do. About the year 530 we find a change passing upon the ten Gothic kingdoms, which made them, in fact, Roman kingdoms, and linked them to the fourth monarchy of Daniel, and made them, in truth, but a continuation of that Roman empire to which the Gothic invasion had given a deadly wound.

From A.D. 530 to A.D. 533, Gibbon tells us, the Emperor Justinian published his immortal works, the CODE, the PANDECTS, and the INSTITUTES. These contained a digest of the laws of the ancient Roman empire, which henceforward became the law of the ten kingdoms. Gibbon remarks that, by the execution of this work, "Justinian, the Greek emperor of Constantinople and the East, was the legal successor of the Latian shepherd who had planted a colony on the banks of the Tiber." Much more, would we remark, was it true of the ten kingdoms, which now began to be governed by the laws of ancient Rome, and into which the very spirit of Rome was thus breathed, that it had now become the legal successor of that Latin kingdom which Romulus founded on the banks of the Tiber. The promulgation of the Justinian Code seems to mark the epoch of the full emergence of the ten-horned beast above the Gothic flood. The ten kingdoms became then the true lineal descendant of Pagan Rome.

Seventy-five years later we find another strongly-marked epoch in the history of the Papacy. In A.D. 606, the Emperor Phocas confirmed a former recognition of the Pope's authority by Justinian, by constituting the Pope universal bishop, and requiring all the Churches to acknowledge the Papal supremacy; and in A.D. 608, Phocas gave Pope Boniface the Pantheon, which, from being a temple originally dedicated to all the Pagan gods, was henceforward dedicated to the worship of the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs. It had been the high place of Pagan idolatry, and now it became the high place of Antichristian idolatry. We would request our readers specially to mark these two stages in the rise of the Papacy. They are Justinian's edict, say, A.D. 532, and Phocas' edict, A.D. 606.

Others have traced yet a third stage in the rise of the Papacy—the era of Charlemagne. Charlemagne, king of France, was crowned Emperor of the Romans, by Pope Leo, in AD. 800. By the help of Charlemagne, the Pope's temporal authority was enlarged and confirmed; three of the ten kings whose territory adjoined the Roman See being abolished, and the Pope vested in their authority and their territories—thus fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel, that three of the horns should be plucked up before the little horn. We now behold the Antichrist not only risen, but fully revealed to the world. From the summit of the Seven Hills he shows himself to Christendom, decked out in the glories of the triple crown, and claiming the blasphemous title of Christ's vicar and God's vicegerent.

From which of these three epochs are we to date the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years? The opinion that there may be a double, or

perhaps even a treble commencement of this period, is very probable. It is countenanced by a prediction long since fulfilled. The “seventy years” of Jeremiah determined the length of the captivity in Babylon. But there was at three several times a carrying away; and, of course, the question came to be, from which of these periods the commencement of the seventy years should be dated. It was found that as there were three commencing stages in the captivity, so there were three terminating stages in the return, with exactly seventy years between each. So, to the three stages in the rise of the Papacy there may be three answering stages in its downfall and total extinction. If we date the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years from the era of Justinian, A.D. 532, we are brought down to 1792. If we date from the era of Phocas, A.D. 606–8, we are brought down to 1866–68. And if we date from the era of Charlemagne, A.D. 800, we cannot look for the downfall of Popery till 2060. (Webmaster: This could fit with what I am seeing today. I believe Popery is still in control albeit covertly.)

Let us examine these three epochs a little more particularly, and see how they correspond with the present state of the world and of the Papacy. We feel satisfied that we are warranted to make the era of Justinian the *primary* commencement, at least, of the twelve hundred and sixty years. At that epoch we behold the ten kingdoms risen, and governed by Roman law—the beast from the sea. If to that we are to add twelve hundred and sixty years, we are brought down, as we have said, to 1792, the era of the French Revolution. How does that period correspond? Was there any similarity between the rise of the Papacy in A.D. 532 and its fall in 1792? A very striking similarity. In A.D. 532 we see the “ten kingdoms” risen: in 1792 we see them falling before a tremendous political tempest. But further, the code of Justinian first recognized the Pope’s absolute ecclesiastical supremacy, virtually gave the saints into his hand, and placed the civil sword at his disposal. Twelve hundred and sixty years thereafter, at the breaking out of the French Revolution, the leading kingdom in Continental Europe, and that one which for ages had been the chief stay of the Papacy, abolished the Pope’s supremacy, declared the *clergy fatally independent of the See of Rome*, vested the election of bishops in the departmental authorities, and, to complete the change, made a national profession of atheism.

The two epochs, in their bearing on the Papacy, appear the very counterparts of each other. At the one epoch we find the supreme civil power bent on aggrandizing the Pope, framing all its laws with that special view, and subjecting both secular and spiritual authority to him. At the other epoch we find the supreme civil power bent on the Pope’s overthrow, enacting laws to effect that object, and emancipating both the secular and spiritual authorities from his sway. The manifold calamities of which the Revolution was productive to the Papacy we shall have a future occasion of stating: we only here further remark, that the tremendous blow then inflicted on Rome she has somewhat repaired, but is very far from having fully recovered. (Webmaster: In 1848 when this book was first published.)

The second epoch—that of Phocas, A.D. 606–8—brings us to 1866–68. All admit that the Pope was by this time vested in the title and powers of Christ’s vicar. The general consent on this point warrants the conclusion that at this

era there was a fuller manifestation of Antichrist; that now, at least, he was fully come; and that at the corresponding era of 1866–68 he may be overtaken by the plagues of his final ruin. But though the Papal system may, about that time, begin to be broken up and swept away as a government, remnants of Popery may linger in being, and the full glory of the millennium, consisting in the restoration of the Jews, and the full conversion of the Gentile world, may not be realized till toward A.D. 2000, forming a third period corresponding to the era of Charlemagne.

Daniel speaks of two periods—one of thirty, and the other of forty-five years, making seventy-five years in all—which are to be added to the twelve hundred and sixty days. “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days,” (Daniel 12:11) which are just thirty days added to the twelve hundred and sixty. Thirty years after the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years, we may expect some event bearing with decided effect on the downfall of Antichrist. But a still more blessed change may be expected forty-five years after that again; for it is added, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five-and-thirty days.” (Daniel 12:12) It is a remarkable coincidence, that in the rise of Antichrist there were seventy-five years between his primary appearance at the era of Justinian, and his secondary at the era of Phocas; and that we find an era of corresponding length in his predicted downfall, extending from the French Revolution to 1866–68, which marks most probably the epoch of his consummated ruin, the interval being filled up with the plagues of the consummation.

It is the claim to be Christ’s vicar that constitutes the Pope the Antichrist. This claim involves in it supreme dominion, temporal as well as spiritual; and to us it appears a matter of no moment at what time he obtained his insignificant patrimony, seeing his supreme dominion was neither in point of theory nor in point of fact founded upon it. The moment that the Bishop of Rome avowed himself the vicar of Christ, and had that claim acknowledged, the Antichrist was come: he had a character allowed him which placed him above sovereigns, entitled him to dispose of their crowns and kingdoms, and to press into his service, when occasion required, the revenues and armies of Europe. This claim was first admitted by Justinian in 533, and more formally and fully recognized by Phocas in 608. These seventy-five years form a broad line, marking off the era of the reign of Antichrist, and the twelve hundred and sixty days of sackcloth to the witnesses; and a line of equal breadth will mark the termination of his reign, filled up by two terrible catastrophes, the first of which has already passed over the world; the last is most probably opening upon it;—the former symbolized in the Apocalypse by the Harvest, and the latter by the Vintage.

There are three and only three great lines in prophecy, and though the starting point of each is different from that of the others, all three have a common termination, and that common termination lies within our own era. The first and longest line is the “seven times” which comprehends the whole period of the domination of idolatry, and by consequence the whole period of the oppression of the Church. We are disposed to say that this period began

with the captivity of the ten tribes under Shalmaneser, in B.C. 728, and running on for two thousand five hundred and twenty years—for such is the length of seven prophetic “times,” terminated in A.D. 1792.

The second line is that of the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:13-14), “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Counted from the pushing of the Persian ram, in B.C. 508, its probable starting-point, this line too runs out in A.D. 1792.

The third line also mentioned by Daniel, is the “time, times, and the dividing of time,” that is three years and a half, or the twelve hundred and sixty symbolic days, or years, of the Apocalypse. Reckoning from the edict of Justinian in A.D. 532, when the beast from the sea arose, this period runs out, like the other two, in 1792.

It is striking, first of all, that we should have only three great prophetic lines in the Word of God, and that all three should relate to the same exceptional period of the world’s history, even that of Satan’s domination through a succession of idolatrous empires. God, in great mercy to the Church, kindled this light to guide her during this dark night, till the dawn of a better state of things should arise. On the side of Satan these lines are exhibited as eras of triumph, on the side of the Church they are represented as eras of bondage. This would lead us to expect that all three should have a common termination; for the breaking up of idolatry necessarily implies the cleansing of that sanctuary which it had defiled, and the overthrow of Antichrist implies the escape of those whom he had held captive, and who, now, no longer called to prophesy against him, put off their sackcloth. It is further remarkable, that when we trace down these three lines, each from its most probable commencement in the past, we find them ending together. But still more striking is it, that the era of their common convergence, should be one of the grand crises of the world. It is the era of the great French Revolution.

That event sounded the knell of the idolatrous despotisms, which, in one form or another, had exercised dominion in the earth, from the days of Shalmaneser to 1792, and which had been shown to the king in his dream, as but one image or structure, from its head of gold to its ten toes. Surely it is not by chance, that the instant, as it were, that these three lines meet, the aspect of Providence should change; that a new drama should open; that a great earthquake should shake the world; and a mighty political tempest should set in, which begins the cleansing of the sanctuary, in the casting down of those despotic thrones and idolatrous altars, which had so long defiled Christendom.

This event, if the death-knell to the world-power, was the trumpet of jubilee to the Church. It told her that her period of bondage had expired; that her prison-doors had been opened;—not opened willingly by her great oppressor, but burst open by the mighty earthquake which had shaken the world. Like a voice from heaven, it invited her to arise from the dust, to put away her

chains and her sackcloth, to array herself in her beautiful garments, and to come forth into liberty. Her exodus from Egypt was a great event; so, too, was her exodus from Babylon.

These the Church had not ceased to celebrate in her songs. But the grandest deliverances of the past were to pale in the presence of that complete, final, and majestic exodus which was now approaching. The song of Moses was to swell into the mightier and loftier song of the Lamb; and this sublime melody was to roll its numbers down the ages, till time should merge into eternity.

Daniel adds a supplementary line to the three great lines we have mentioned. This line begins when the others terminate, and runs on seventy-five years beyond them. Reckoning from about 1792 or 1793, the acme of the French Revolution, these seventy-five years terminate with the present year. They probably mark the period during which the final plagues—those which the seven thunders uttered—will be inflicted on Antichrist. With terrible, stunning, consuming swiftness will plague follow plague, till, at the end of the seventy-five years, they will culminate in a tremendous stroke—an all-embracing convulsion, which will shake in pieces, and lay prostrate in ruin the whole frame-work, political and ecclesiastical, of Popish Europe.

Yet again: the most probable calculation of the world's chronology makes the world's seventh millenary to begin about seventy-five years after the epoch which we have fixed on as that of the primary termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years. It was an old Jewish opinion, and likewise an early Christian belief, that after the year 6000, dated from the creation, the world's Sabbath would begin. It wants only a little while to the seventh millenary of time. We are on the eve of the long-anticipated Sabbath. It already begins to dawn towards that great First Day of a coming era of rest and blessedness. Thrice welcome to a world which has been so long desolated by the tempests of war, and so long enthralled by the fetters of superstition! and not less welcome to a Church which for so many ages has worn only sackcloth! Unless the shadow on the dial of prophecy greatly misleads us, that mighty consummation is at hand.

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