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Another Look at the 1,260 Days of Revelation

Ian R. Brown

Abstract

Rev 11:2; 13:5 speak of 42 months. Rev 11:3; 12:6 speak of 1,260 days. Rev 12:14 speaks of “a time, and times, and half a time.” Traditionally, Adventists have interpreted these time references in Revelation as all referring to a single period of symbolic time, with additional references to the period in Dan 7:25; 12:7. Relating all five of these time references to one single symbolic period is a perspective shared by Adventist and non-Adventist interpreters. Where Adventist interpreters differ is in the additional steps of taking each day of the 1,260 days of Revelation to represent one actual year of historical time and then connecting the whole to 1,260 years in which the Papacy played a major role in the affairs of Europe from 538 CE to 1798 CE. Exegetical reflections on the 1,260 days of Revelation suggest that limiting the time period to this specific part of church history does not in fact cohere with the text. To argue this position, the article first looks at Rev 12 to pinpoint when the text suggests the 1,260 days begin. Then the article turns to Rev 10–11 to pinpoint when the text suggests the 1,260 days end.

Introduction

Biblical exegesis is the art and science of discovering what a biblical text meant when it was conceived.¹ As such it involves the modern interpreter attempting to transcend the distances

¹ Thomas R. Schreiner defines exegesis as “the method by which we ascertain what authors meant when they wrote a particular piece of literature.” See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 7. He also notes here that this method assumes that one can figure out what an author’s intended meaning was (Schreiner, *Interpreting*, 7–8). Cf. Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 23; and Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 1. A more detailed defining of exegesis along these lines is available in Darrell L. Bock, “Opening Questions: Definition and Philosophy of Exegesis,” in *Interpreting the New Testament Text: Introduction to the Art and Science of Exegesis*, ed. Darrell L. Bock and Buist M. Fanning (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006), 23–27. Meanwhile, Stanley E. Porter and Kent D. Clarke discuss the fact that modern interpreters can differ in their definitions of exegesis and in their conceptions of how it should be conducted. See Stanley E. Porter and Kent D. Clarke, “What Is Exegesis? An Analysis of Various Definitions,” in *Handbook to Exegesis of the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Boston: Brill Academic, 2002), 3–21.

in time, space, language, and culture that exist between the modern reader and the ancient writer. As a church that adheres to the principle of *sola scriptura*, the Adventist church upholds the Bible as the sole infallible authority for Christian belief and action. I have been trained to believe that our beliefs about the world and the norms of behavior that we derive from the Bible must at their foundation come from the exegesis of biblical texts. Before I can say what the Bible means to me today, I must first know what the Bible meant at its origins.² It is one of the safeguards to prevent interpreters from making the Bible say whatever they want it to say. It guides us in addressing the questions of today, which were not necessarily the questions of the past. Of course, it is not a perfect endeavor and therefore exegetical conclusions must be open to discussion and to correction. The following article offers some exegetical reflections on a particular facet of the book of Revelation.

Rev 11:2 and 13:5 speak of a time period of 42 months. Rev 11:3; 12:6 speak of 1,260 days. Rev 12:14 speaks of “a time, and times, and half a time.”³ Traditionally, Adventists have

² It should be noted, as well, that, while one may attempt to separate what the Bible meant at its origins from what the Bible means to me today, one cannot make a strict distinction between the two, since the message that comes from the ancient biblical text, whether it is speaking to the people of the past or to the people of the present, is always filtered through a reader who stands at some other point in time relative to when the text was written and stands outside the author of the text and the text itself. Consider the critique of the “what it meant”/“what it means” distinction and the references given in N. T. Wright and Michael F. Bird, *The New Testament in Its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians* (London: SPCK; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 63–65. These authors argue that the interpretive endeavor as a whole, when approaching the biblical text, should involve the author, the text, and the reader (Wright and Bird, *New Testament*, 60–75). Exegesis, as I see it, emphasizes the author and the text and is part of a wider reading endeavor.

³ Unless otherwise noted, translations come from the NRSV.

interpreted these time references in Revelation as all referring to a single period of symbolic time, with additional references to the period in Dan 7:25; 12:7.⁴

⁴ See, for example, “The Book of Daniel” in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol et al. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976–1980), 4:833, 880; Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 108–109; Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 97, 111–112; Mark Finley, *Understanding Daniel and Revelation* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2020), 278, 293, 301, 304–305; Mark Finley, *The War between Good and Evil* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2023), 56; Gerhard F. Hasel, “Divine Judgment,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 835; Frank B. Holbrook, “The Great Controversy,” in Dederen, *Handbook*, 988–989; William G. Johnsson, “The Saints’ End-Time Victory over the Forces of Evil,” in *Symposium on Revelation, Book 2*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOM 7 (Silver Springs, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 18; William G. Johnsson, “Biblical Apocalyptic,” in Dederen, *Handbook*, 797–798; Hans K. LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies of the Bible: A Biblical-Contextual Approach*, enl. ed. (Bradenton, FL: First Impressions, 2007), 158–159, 169, 171, 177–178; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 1: The Message of Daniel for You and Your Family* (Mountain View CA: Pacific Press, 1981), 124; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 2: The Message of Revelation for You and Your Family* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), 270, 300, 326; C. Mervyn Maxwell, “The Mark of the Beast,” in Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation, Book 2*, 72–73; Ekkehardt Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte: Studien zum Buch der Offenbarung*, Adventistica 11 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2011; repr., St. Peter am Hart, Austria: Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, 2011), 180n20, 203n126, 218–219, 223, 368–369, 389n27, 407, 445–446; “The Revelation of St. John the Divine,” in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol et al. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976–1980), 7:801–802, 809; Ángel Manuel Rodríguez et al., eds., *Andrews Bible Commentary: Light, Depth, Truth* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2020–2022), 1036, 1968, 1972–1973, 1975–1976; Heinz Schaidinger, *Historical Confirmation of Prophetic Periods*, Biblical Research Institute Release 7 (Silver Springs, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 3; William H. Shea, “The Mighty Angel and His Message,” in *Symposium on Revelation, Book 1*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, DARCOM 6 (Silver Springs, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 306; William H. Shea, “Time Prophecies of Daniel 12 and Revelation 12–13,” in Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation, Book 1*, 329–330, 346–348; Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1944), 144, 279, 533, 558; Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009), 346–347, 350–351, 356, 387, 392, 400, 411, 415; Adenilton Tavares de Aguiar, “‘You Must Prophesy Again’: The Mission of God’s People in Revelation 10–14” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2022), 290–293. Referring all the passages about this period in Daniel and Revelation to one symbolic period of time is more implied than stated in Nicholas P. Miller, “Calculating the 1260-Year Prophecy,” in *Eschatology from an Adventist Perspective: Proceedings of the Fourth International Bible Conference, Rome, June*

The parallels concerning the woman that appear between Rev 12:6 and 12:14 suggest that “a time, and times, and half a time,” which is drawn from Dan 7:25 and 12:7, is equated with 1,260 days. One thousand two hundred sixty days, when divided up as months of 30 days, equals 42 months, which is the figure used elsewhere in Rev 11 and 13. Then there is another reference to 1,260 days in Rev 11:3, with a focus on the two witnesses. One thousand two hundred sixty days or 42 months equals three and a half 360-day years, which suggests that “a time, and times, and half a time” is really three and a half “times” and that a “time” represents a year. The designation, 1,260 days, occurs along with “a time, and times, and half a time” in strict association with positive images: the two witnesses prophesying and the woman being nourished.⁵ There is a little irony here in that, at its origin in Daniel, “a time, and times, and half a time” is strictly associated with the oppression of the people of God.⁶ In Revelation, that association is actually made with the designation, 42 months: the holy city is trampled and the

11–20, 2018, ed. Elias Brasil de Souza et al. (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2021), 559–572.

⁵ Cf. Craig R. Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYB 38A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 495–496, 562; Ian Paul, “The Reimagining of Theological Time: Revelation’s Use of the OT in Defining Its Temporality,” in *The Scriptures in the Book of Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature: Essays in Honour of Steve Moyise*, ed. Susan E. Docherty and Steve Smith, LNTS 634 (London: T&T Clark, 2023), 113; James L. Resseguie, “Narrative Features of the Book of Revelation,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Book of Revelation*, ed. Craig R. Koester (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 45–46; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 383; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 347, 356, 387, 411; John Christopher Thomas and Frank D. Macchia, *Revelation*, THNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 201–202; Robby Waddell, “What Time Is It? Half-past Three: How to Calculate Eschatological Time,” *JEPTA* 31.2 (2011): 149–150.

⁶ Of the many commentators that I reviewed for this study, only two commentators notice this reversal in what is associated with the phrase, “a time, and times, and half a time.” Grant R. Osborne calls it “the flip side” of the “emphasis” in Daniel. See Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 482–483. Thomas and Macchia call it “a subtle inversion” (*Revelation*, 227).

sea beast exercises authority.⁷ The equivalencies between the designations in Revelation and the ironic turn of the designation, “a time, and times, and half a time,” all support seeing these as references to the same period of time.⁸

Two considerations speak to the symbolic nature of the 1,260-day time period in Revelation. First, Revelation is predominantly a symbolic book, which suggests that the time periods mentioned in the book should not be taken literally.⁹ Second, numbers in general in

⁷ Cf. Koester, *Revelation*, 495–496, 562; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 113; Resseguie, “Narrative Features,” 45–46; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 383, 469; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 347, 356, 387, 411; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 201–202; Waddell, “What Time Is It?” 149–150.

⁸ The phrase, “a time, and times, and half a time,” comes from Dan 7:25 and 12:7. In the more apocalyptic parts of Daniel, besides this period, there are the 2,300 “evenings and mornings” (8:14), the 70 “weeks” (9:24–27), the 1,290 days (12:11), and the 1,335 days (12:12). These other apocalyptic numbers do not explicitly appear in Revelation. John has interpreted “a time, and times, and half a time” as three and half 360-day years: 1,260 days or 42 months of 30 days each. Technically speaking, this is an interpretation of the Danielic time period, since the figures 1,260 days and 42 months do not appear in Daniel and Daniel never expressly says that “a time, and times, and half a time” represents three and a half years. Cf. Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (London: T&T Clark, 1993), 401; Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 293, 318n30; Ian Paul, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, TNTC 20 (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2018), 37, 198n10; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 111–112. In spite of the obvious differences among scholars as to how specifically John uses the OT (e.g., with or without respect to the original context), Gregory K. Beale states, “There is unanimous consensus that John uses the OT with a high degree of liberty and creativity”; see Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1999), 81. If this is an accurate assessment, it would not be surprising to find that John has used an apocalyptic number from Daniel with some degree of freedom, which would explain in part why Daniel does not speak of 1,260 days or 42 months but John does.

⁹ Cf. Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 449; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 565, 574; Brian K. Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 232; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 171, 178; Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. 2, 300; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 386; Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 558; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 351, 356, 392; Sigve K. Tonstad, *Revelation*, PCNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), 163. Beale makes a significant case for seeing the majority of the material in Revelation as symbolic (*Book of Revelation*, 50–55).

Revelation appear to carry symbolic significance.¹⁰ With respect to the numbers 42 and 1,260, Ian Paul, following Richard Bauckham, highlights how these are “rectangular” numbers.¹¹ The “square and cubed” numbers of 144 and 1,000 in Revelation are associated with God and his people, while the “triangular” number of 666 is associated with Satan’s minion, the sea beast.¹² Forty-two and 1,260 as “rectangular” numbers bring together features of squares and triangles and so “designate that period of time when God’s people are oppressed by their opponents and yet enjoy the protection of God.”¹³ As Bauckham states, “If a triangular number represents the beast and a square number the saints, then it may seem appropriate for the third class of numbers, the rectangular, to designate this ambiguous period in which the beast and the saints oppose each

¹⁰ See, for example, the discussions in Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 29–37, 384–407; cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 58–64; Paul, *Revelation*, 34–39; Resseguie, “Narrative Features,” 44–48.

¹¹ Other qualitative senses have been ascribed to these numbers. The length of three and a half years recalls historical understandings about the length of Elijah’s ministry, Jesus’s ministry, and the Roman siege of Jerusalem before its fall in 70 CE. See Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 565–567, 647; Jeremy S. Crenshaw, “Will the Real Church Please Stand Up? An Exegetical Examination of Revelation 11:1–13,” in *But These Are Written ...: Essays on Johannine Literature in Honor of Professor Benny C. Aker*, ed. Craig S. Keener, Jeremy S. Crenshaw, and Jordan Daniel May (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014), 203–204; Osborne, *Revelation*, 414; Stephen S. Smalley, *The Revelation to John: A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse* (London: SPCK, 2005), 274; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 346, 392, 415. The number 42 may relate to the wilderness wanderings of the people of Israel after the Exodus. See Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 565, 647; Crenshaw, “Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?” 203; Osborne, *Revelation*, 414; Paul, *Revelation*, 197; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 112; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 386. Also, three and a half is half of the number seven. See Blount, *Revelation*, 194, 205; J. Ramsey Michaels, *Revelation*, IVPNTC 20 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 138–139, 152; Resseguie, “Narrative Features,” 45; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 383, 386; Peter S. Williamson, *Revelation*, CCSS (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 189.

¹² Paul, *Revelation*, 36–37, 198; cf. Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 400–404; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 111–112.

¹³ Paul, *Revelation*, 37; cf. Paul, *Revelation*, 198–199; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 112.

other.”¹⁴ Bauckham and later Paul point out as well that there are special features to these two “rectangular” numbers.¹⁵

Relating all five of these time references to one single symbolic period is a perspective shared by Adventist and non-Adventist interpreters.¹⁶ Where Adventist interpreters differ is in

¹⁴ Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 401.

¹⁵ Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 401–402; Paul, *Revelation*, 37, 198–199; Paul, “Reimagining of Theological Time,” 112.

¹⁶ Some non-Adventist interpreters see the period as a symbol for the era of the Christian church between the two comings of Christ. See, for example, Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 565–568, 646–647, 667–669, 695; Keener, *Revelation*, 287, 292–293, 319, 322; Craig S. Keener, “One Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Days: A Charismatic-Prophetic Empowerment Reading of Time and God’s People in the Book of Revelation,” in Keener, et al., *But These Are Written ...: Essays on Johannine Literature in Honor of Professor Benny C. Aker*, 242–243; Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, NTC 20 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 327, 329–330, 352, 359–360, 368, 382; Koester, *Revelation*, 486–487, 495–496, 498, 547, 553, 562–563, 566, 572–573, 585; Gerhard A. Krodel, *Revelation*, ACNT (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1989), 219–221, 241, 251; Paul, *Revelation*, 36–37, 195, 197–199, 218, 224–226, 232–233; Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John*, trans. Wendy Pradels (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 332, 338–339, 345–346, 349–350, 366–368, 387, 395, 408; Resseguie, “Narrative Features,” 45–46; Mathias Rissi, *Time and History: A Study on the Revelation*, trans. Gordon C. Winsor (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1966), 23, 25–27, 35–41, 64–65, 69, 98–100; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 383, 386–387, 391, 435, 449, 452, 468–469; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 274, 276, 321, 331, 340.

Some non-Adventist interpreters see the period as a symbol for a time of difficulty for the people of God in the future before the consummation. See, for example, Gerhard Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 1–11*, HTA (Witten, Germany: SCM R. Brockhaus, 2009), 459–460, 463–464, 472–473, 478, 481, 483, 485, 492–493; Gerhard Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 12–22*, HTA (Witten, Germany: SCM R. Brockhaus, 2012), 18, 21, 36–38, 40, 57, 64, 69, 78, 80, 87–89, 96, 98, 103, 111, 123–124; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 215, 217, 234, 241, 249–250; Osborne, *Revelation*, 409–411, 414–415, 420, 464–465, 482–483, 499.

Some non-Adventists interpreters see the period as symbolizing the era of the church and having a special reference to the time before the consummation. See, for example, George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 153–154, 170, 173–174, 180; Williamson, *Revelation*, 188–189, 191, 194, 210, 219, 227.

Still others see it as a single symbolic period, but are less specific about where it fits in the course of history. See, for example, David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, WBC 52B (Nashville: Nelson, 1998), 609–611, 616, 691, 706, 742–743; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 252, 261–263, 284, 400–402, 449; Blount, *Revelation*, 194, 205, 232, 240, 250; Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John*, BNTC (London: Continuum, 2006), 162–163, 181, 184–185, 190; G. B. Caird,

the additional steps of taking each day of the 1,260 days of Revelation to represent one actual year of historical time and then connecting the whole to 1,260 years in which the Papacy played a major role in the affairs of Europe from 538 CE to 1798 CE.¹⁷ Looking at several Adventist scholars, however, it is clear that this process of getting from 1,260 days or 42 months or three

The Revelation of St. John the Divine, 2nd ed., BNTC (London: Black, 1984), 127–129, 132, 159, 167; Crenshaw, “Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?” 202–204; Gordon D. Fee, *Revelation*, NCC (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 149–150, 167, 176, 181; Michaels, *Revelation*, 137–138, 148, 152, 156; Henry Barclay Swete, ed., *The Apocalypse of St. John*, 2nd ed., CCGNT (New York: Macmillan, 1906), 131, 149–150, 155, 162; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 200–202, 220, 227.

¹⁷ See, for example, “The Book of Daniel,” 4:834, 880; Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel*, 108–109; Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 97, 111–112, 115; Finley, *Understanding*, 278–280, 293, 301, 304–305; Finley, *War*, 56–57; Hasel, “Divine Judgment,” 835; Richard P. Lehmann, “The Second Coming of Jesus,” in Dederen, *Handbook*, 905; Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 1*, 124–125, 230, 271; Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 2*, 188, 281, 293, 299, 302–304, 321, 323, 325, 328–329, 515–517; Maxwell, “The Mark of the Beast,” 62–66, 73–77, 121–132; Miller, “Calculating the 1260-Year Prophecy,” 559–572; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 41n43, 44, 83, 160, 180, 193, 195, 219, 360, 363–364, 368–369, 392, 405, 445; “Revelation,” 7:809; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1036–1037, 1968, 1976; Schaidinger, *Historical Confirmation*, 3–33; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 306; Shea, “Time Prophecies,” 349–350; Smith, *Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 144–146, 279, 533, 535, 553–554, 558, 562, 564–565, 583; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 346, 350–351, 356, 387, 392, 402, 411, 415. Johnsson does not mention dates, but clearly supports taking a prophetic day to be a literal year of time (“The Saints’ End-Time Victory,” 18; “Biblical Apocalyptic,” 797–798). LaRondelle supports taking a prophetic day to be a literal year of time and relates the period to the Middle Ages, but does not want to be specific about dates (*How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 172–173, 177–178, 180–182). Tavares de Aguiar notes the traditional dates, but does not want to discuss when in history the 1,260 days begins and ends (“You Must Prophecy Again,” 293n1152). Tonstad, like some non-Adventist interpreters, sees the 1,260-day period as a single symbolic period, but is less specific about where it fits in the course of history (*Revelation*, 163, 179, 185, 191).

For Adventist defenses of the year-day principle, see Gerhard Pfandl, “In Defense of the Year-day Principle,” *JATS* 23.1 (2012): 3–17; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 51–55; William H. Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, rev. ed., DARCOM 1 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 67–110; Alberto R. Timm, “Miniature Symbolization and the Year-Day Principle of Prophetic Interpretation,” *AUSS* 42.1 (2004): 149–167.

and a half “times” in Revelation to a specific period from 538 to 1798 is actually quite involved.¹⁸

Keeping in mind the Adventist interpreters cited in the previous paragraph, the process seems to involve the following elements in roughly this order: (1) the little horn that appears on the fourth beast of Dan 7 is identified with the historical Papacy; (2) the three and a half “times” that the little horn is apparently active (Dan 7:25) are interpreted as 1,260 days based upon how the three and a half “times” is dealt with in Revelation (Rev 11:2–3; 12:6, 14; 13:5); (3) the sea beast of Rev 13 is equated with the little horn of Dan 7 and so also identified as the historical Papacy; (4) each prophetic day is taken to represent a historical year, so now there are 1,260 years; (5) the circumstances of the appearance of the little horn (Dan 7:7–8) and key characteristics of the sea beast of Revelation (Rev 13:2–3) are used to help pinpoint appropriate dates and events in history for the beginning and end of the 1,260 years; (6) having determined the appropriate start and finish for the period in Dan 7:25 and Rev 13:5, it is then carried over to the other verses in Daniel (12:7) and in Revelation (11:2–3; 12:6, 14) that mention the period.

A key assumption in all of this is that John in Revelation is using material from Daniel (e.g., the time period and characteristics of the little horn) in the exact same way as it was originally intended to be understood and consequently the interpreter can move freely between Daniel and Revelation. This a bold assumption given how John clearly interprets and adapts

¹⁸ From a historical point of view, the Adventist interpretation of the period in Daniel and Revelation was inherited from the Millerite movement of the mid-19th century, out of which the Seventh-day Adventist Church developed. Regarding this prophetic time period in Millerite interpretation, see Kai Arasola, *The End of Historicism: Millerite Hermeneutic of Time Prophecies in the Old Testament*, University of Uppsala, Department of Theology (Sigtuna, Sweden: Datem, 1990), 128–134; cf. LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1954), 4:429–851 passim.

other OT material apart from Daniel (e.g., Isaiah and Ezekiel), given that the sea beast is not an exact reproduction of the little horn—it draws on all the beasts of Dan 7 and is shaped to mimic the true messiah—, and given that the time period does not appear in the same way in Daniel and Revelation apart from the somewhat ambiguous phrase, “a time, and times, and half a time.” Obviously, Daniel and particularly Dan 7 are significant to John for the final shape that Revelation takes. Yet, is it legitimate to move from this observation to the assumption that John handles Daniel in a hermeneutically distinct way from how he handles other prophetic material from the OT? While Daniel is important to John, does he really manipulate the text of Daniel in a way different from how he manipulates the text from either Isaiah or Ezekiel? Moreover, is it a legitimate exegesis of Daniel to read back into it thoughts from Revelation, written many years later in a different social and cultural environment? Should not Daniel at some point be read from the vantage point of Daniel’s place in the stream of human history?

One may observe something else in this interpretive process that ends up with a specific period from 538 to 1798. Possibly the application of the year-for-a-day principle and definitely the linking of particular dates and events in history with matters stated in the biblical text are arguably steps beyond exegesis. With these steps, one is less engaged with what the text meant and more engaged with what the text means.¹⁹ With regard to the former step, I find it unsettled whether the authors of Daniel and Revelation understood that the time periods about which they spoke were all supposed to be interpreted as one year for each prophetic day. Particularly, in the case of Revelation, where John records the resurrected Jesus saying four times, “I am coming

¹⁹ Again, concerning the limits of this distinction and presenting an alternative perspective on the whole interpretive endeavor, see Wright and Bird, *New Testament*, 60–75. Again, I believe exegesis emphasizes the author and the text and is part of a wider reading endeavor.

soon” (Rev 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20), it is hard to imagine that John at the same time is aware that history shall continue at least 1,260 more years. As for the other step of dealing with dates and events long after the author lived and wrote, one is obviously more engaged with contemporary meaning than what the text meant. While author and text do not disappear, they clearly recede.

In any case, the purpose of the present article is not to critique this interpretive process, either in its entirety or even in some of its key facets, like the year-for-a-day principle. Rather, it is primarily to offer exegetical reflections on whether limiting the 1,260-day period of Revelation to 1,260 specific years of church history coheres with an exegetical reading of Revelation. Naturally, however, the results of such reflections have implications for the above noted interpretive process.

After reviewing the traditional position in Adventist scholarship for the 1,260 days of Revelation and noting that it has its critics,²⁰ Jon Paulien gives an exegetical reassessment of the five 1,260-day texts in Revelation and concludes that “the traditional position is exegetically defensible.”²¹ He comes to this conclusion primarily by showing that Revelation places the time periods within the span of church history between the time of the apostles and the final events of

²⁰ Jon Paulien, “The 1260 Days in the Book of Revelation,” in Brasil de Souza et al., *Eschatology from an Adventist Perspective*, 296–301. For the traditional position on the 1,260 days in Revelation, Paulien refers to the works of Uriah Smith, C. Mervyn Maxwell, William H. Shea, William G. Johnsson, and Hans K. LaRondelle. As for critics, Paulien focuses on the comments that Samuele Bacchiocchi shared at various times in his newsletter, *Endtime Issues*, in 2002. I am aware of three more recent pieces that criticize the traditional position, focusing on the selected dates for the period. See Desmond Ford, “*The Case for the Investigative Judgment Found Wanting*,” *Adventist Today* 18.4 (2010):25–26; Clarence Pamphile, “Why We Shouldn’t Build Eschatology on History,” *Adventist Today Website*, 9 December 2021, <https://atoday.org/why-we-cant-build-eschatology-on-history/>; Donald Edward Casebolt, *Father Miller’s Daughter: Ellen Harmon White* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2022), 213–245.

²¹ Paulien, “The 1260 Days,” 295.

history.²² This assessment of the time periods in Revelation is clearly compatible with highlighting 1,260 years of medieval church history. The assessment, however, still allows for the possibility that John did not limit the time period to a specific 1,260 years of church history. In the rest of this article, I would like to add some further exegetical reflections on the 1,260 days of Revelation that suggest that limiting the time period to this specific part of church history does not in fact cohere with the text. While not being an exhaustive study of the texts involved, I hope to draw enough from the texts to make my point. My observations are based primarily on the literary features of Revelation.²³ I will begin by looking at Rev 12 to establish when the 1,260 days begins. First, I would like to lay out some key elements of sequence in Rev 12.

Revelation 12 and the Start of the 1,260-day Period

The first sequence to note is Rev 12:4–6. The dragon is prepared to devour the child of the woman once it is born. The child is indeed born, but is taken to God and to his throne. Then the woman flees into the wilderness, where she is taken care of for 1,260 days.

The second sequence to note is Rev 12:13–16. The dragon, after his defeat in heaven narrated in Rev 12:7–12, pursues the woman on earth, but she is taken away to the wilderness, where she is taken care of for “a time, and times, and half a time,” usually interpreted as three and a half “times.”

²² Paulien, “The 1260 Days,” 305, 310, 312–313, 317, 319–320.

²³ As a justification for paying particular attention to “the literary composition” of Revelation, Bauckham insightfully states in the introduction to his collection of essays on Revelation, “Revelation has been composed with such meticulous attention to the detail of language and structure that scarcely a word can have been chosen without deliberate reflection on its relationship to the work as an integrated, interconnected whole” (*Climax of Prophecy*, x).

The two sequences complement each other and end in the same place with the woman in the wilderness for a period associated in Daniel with a time of travail for God's people. The second sequence adds more details about the woman's transition to the wilderness and gives an additional reason for the move to the wilderness: she is escaping the dragon. The birth of the child and his ascension would seem to be linked to the defeat of the dragon in heaven. Combining the two sequences renders the following: the dragon is prepared to devour the child of the woman; the child is born and taken to God and to his throne; the dragon loses to Michael and is cast out of heaven to earth; the dragon pursues the woman, but God secrets the woman away in the wilderness to be taken care of for 1,260 days.

The two sequences make clear that the time in the wilderness for the woman begins after the ascension of the child and the defeat of the dragon in heaven. The woman can be seen as a symbol for God's people from the Old Testament and New Testament periods. The child is Christ, who through his life, death, resurrection, and exaltation to the throne of God led to the expulsion of Satan, the dragon, from heaven. There are Adventist and non-Adventist interpreters who generally agree with this basic reading of Rev 12.²⁴ The traditional Adventist position on the 1,260 days though would move beyond this basic reading to envision a large time gap between the work of Christ and the beginning of the 1,260 days, interpreted as a period of years during

²⁴ Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 624–632, 639–643, 650–661; Blount, *Revelation*, 225–228, 230–235; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 178–184; Keener, *Revelation*, 314–322, 324; Keener, “One Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Days,” 242–243; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 354–355, 358, 360–366; Koester, *Revelation*, 542–544, 546–551, 560–564; Krodell, *Revelation*, 237–242; William G. Johnsson, “The Saints’ End-Time Victory,” 16–20; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 12–22*, 18–26, 33–38, 42–57; Paul, *Revelation*, 215–224; Paulien, “The 1260 Days,” 306–310; Prigent, *Commentary*, 375–380, 383–393; James L. Resseguie, *The Revelation of John: A Narrative Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 170–175; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1972–1973; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 427–428, 432–435, 437–447, 449; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 386–397; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 214–216, 218–226.

the Middle Ages in Europe. Seeing a gap here is, of course, not unique to Adventist interpreters. Interpreters who place the 1,260 days strictly in the distant future also see a gap. For example, Buist M. Fanning justifies such an interpretive procedure based on “the elliptical character” of Rev 12 (e.g., the text moves directly from the birth of the child to his ascension) and its grounding in the prophecies of Daniel, which are taken to pertain to the future.²⁵

I see two ways in which the text of Rev 12 may allow for a gap in historical time after the ascension of the child and casting down of the dragon. First, Rev 12:13–14 says, “And when the dragon saw that he was thrown to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child, but two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman” (my translation). While the casting to the earth of the dragon is associated with the life of the male child, potentially the dragon’s pursuit of the woman before her flight could represent a section of historical time. Second, if one assumes that Rev 12:17 actually refers to the beginning of the 1,260 days, there is the possibility for another historical gap between the removal of the child and the 1,260-day period. The gap would encompass the flight of the woman to the wilderness and the dragon’s watery attack. This second opening for a gap could be added to the first.²⁶

For typical Adventist interpreters, however, to accept the second opening for a gap would require them to alter their understanding of Rev 12:17. Adventists usually see another element of sequence occurring in Rev 12:17, which they see as a stage of history after the 1,260 days in the wilderness.²⁷ I do not find it a logical necessity of the text, however, to take Rev 12:17 as

²⁵ Buist M. Fanning, *Revelation*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020), 353.

²⁶ Caird would appear to accept these gaps. See Caird, *Revelation of St. John*, 159.

²⁷ See, for example, Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 112; Johnsson, “The Saints’ End-Time Victory,” 18–19; Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. 2, 324, 406–407; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 368–369, 377; Paulien, “The 1260 Days,” 309–310; Gerhard Pfandl, “The Remnant

subsequent to the completion of the 1,260 days and would argue that its temporal context is actually the start of the 1,260 days.²⁸ Yet, that is a topic for another study.

Another consideration concerning the beginning of the 1,260-day period is that Rev 11:2–3 seem to place the trampling of the holy city (for 42 months) and the testifying of the witnesses (for 1,260 days) in John’s future through the use of future tense verbs.²⁹

Thus, Rev 12:13–17 has openings for a historical gap between the life of the male child and the 1,260 days, and Rev 11:2–3 would seem to necessitate one. Yet, one wonders if it strains the text to envision these events of Rev 11 and 12, which are likely related to God’s people, as being postponed approximately 400 years after John has died. It seems more credible to see the future tense verbs as looking beyond the prophet but not strictly so³⁰ or to see the future tense verbs as looking to the near future, perhaps after the prophet has died and the people of God can

Church and the Spirit of Prophecy,” in Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation, Book 2*, 301–302; Leslie N. Pollard, “The Function of *Loipos* in the Contexts of Judgment and Salvation in the Book of Revelation” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2007), 358–359, 370–371; “Revelation,” 7:815; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1973–1974; Shea, “Time Prophecies,” 348; Smith, *Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 559; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 403–404; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophecy **Again**,”” 292–293, 340–341. Cf. the citations in Mark Allen Turner, “An Evaluation of the Traditional SDA Understanding of the Identity of ‘The Rest of Her Seed’ in Revelation 12:17” (MPh thesis, Avondale College of Higher Education, 2015), 26–28.

²⁸ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 664; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 12–22*, 67. Turner argues in more detail that the flow of the narrative in Rev 12 and 13 supports taking Rev 12:17 as occurring at the start of the 1,260-day wilderness sojourn (“An Evaluation,” 69–72, 82–83).

²⁹ Concerning the future tense in general in Revelation, see David L. Mathewson, *Verbal Aspect in the Book of Revelation: The Function of Greek Verb Tenses in John’s Apocalypse*, Linguistic Biblical Studies 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 108–114. Concerning the use of verb tenses in Rev 11:1–13, see Mathewson, *Verbal Aspect*, 137–143.

³⁰ See, for example, how Beale addresses the future tenses here at Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 572; cf. Crenshaw, “Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?” 201; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 391; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 276.

then carry on the commission that the prophet was given at the end of Rev 10.³¹ These readings fit better with the picture in Rev 12:5–6 that places the 1,260-day sojourn of the woman in close proximity to the ascension of the child.³² Moreover, the openings for gaps in Rev 12:13–17 present only possibilities. The time gaps in the narrative may not represent time gaps in history. Nothing in those verses requires interpreters to see a significant historical gap between the exaltation of the child and the start of the 1,260-day sojourn. In fact, it should be remembered that Revelation seems to suggest that the prophesied events are going to happen soon.

³¹ On the two witnesses in their prophesying being linked to John's commission at the end of Rev 10, cf. Alan S. Bandy, *The Prophetic Lawsuit in the Book of Revelation*, New Testament Monographs 29 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 219, 224; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 265–266; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 572; Blount, *Revelation*, 207; Fanning, *Revelation*, 331; Michaels, *Revelation*, 138; Osborne, *Revelation*, 420; Prigent, *Commentary*, 337–338, 347–349; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 372, 388–389, 391; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 253–254, 276; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophesy Again,”” 302, 328, 444–445; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 201. V. Samuel Clintoc would go so far as to say that John is among those people (the church for Clintoc) represented by the two witnesses. He presents several parallels between the experience of John and the experience of the two witnesses. See Viorel Samuel Clintoc, “The Theme of Witness in the Book of Revelation as Divine Testimony” (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019), 203–208, 266. I would argue, as above, that another possibility is that the two witnesses as the people of God are meant to continue John's commission after he has passed. In support of the link between John and the two witnesses, among other things, one may note that Rev 10:11 and Rev 11:3 are the only places where the verb *προφητεύω* appears in Revelation. Moreover, John and the two witnesses appear to have similar audiences. Rev 10:11 speaks of John prophesying in relation to “many peoples and nations and languages and kings.” Rev 11:9 speaks of those who see the bodies of the witnesses as “members of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations.” This second connection may be even stronger if Adenilton Tavares de Aguiar is to be believed and Rev 10:11 should be translated, “You must prophesy again to many peoples and nations and languages and kings,” instead of “against many” or “about many.” See the arguments about this issue of translation at Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophesy Again,”” 277–286, 443.

³² As Koester says, in relation to futurists who see a temporal gap between Rev 12:5 and 12:6, “Yet in the text there is no suggestion of such a gap” (*Revelation*, 563). Cf. Keener, *Revelation*, 319.

Revelation 10–11 and the End of the 1,260-day Period

Now I turn to data specifically related to determining the end of the 1,260-day period.

The context for the initial presentation of the 1,260 days in Revelation provides significant clues on how to interpret the period. Specifically, I refer to Rev 10:5–7, which says,

The angel, whom I saw standing on the sea and on the earth, raised his right hand to heaven and swore by the One who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will no longer be a period of time, but in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is to trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as He announced to his servants, the prophets (my translation).

When these verses are read with Greek grammar in mind, within the context of the rest of Revelation, and as an allusion to Dan 12:7, one finds further textual grounds for not limiting the 1,260 days of Revelation to a 1,260-year period in the Middle Ages of European history.

The Greek construction in 10:6–7 is a negative clause followed by the conjunction, ἀλλά (“but”), and then another clause. Ἀλλά is commonly found following a negative clause or following some other grammatical unit modified by a negative particle. Ἀλλά, in this case, usually introduces a contrast with what was negated.³³ Another way of looking at it is to say that, in this case, the grammatical unit headed by ἀλλά usually replaces some detail in what precedes.³⁴ Examples are found in Rev 2:9; 3:9; 9:5; 17:12; and 20:6. **The construction of Rev**

³³ Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §448(1). Cf. Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 313; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 265.

³⁴ Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), 92–93. As Christopher J. Fresch’s study points out, however, this conceptualization of the function of ἀλλά is limited to a specific context in which ἀλλά is preceded by a grammatical unit modified by a negative particle. See Christopher J. Fresch, *Discourse Markers in Early Koine Greek: Cognitive-Functional Analysis and LXX Translation Technique*, SCS 77 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2023), 163, 168–170, 173–174. Fresch argues, based on evidence from Greek papyri and the LXX of the Pentateuch, that the “core function” of ἀλλά is “as a corrective marker” that signals

10:6–7, which uses οὐκέτι (“no longer”) as the negative particle, has no parallel in Revelation, but it is found several times elsewhere in the New Testament.³⁵ For example, John 11:54 says, “Jesus therefore no longer [οὐκέτι] walked about openly among the Jews, but [ἀλλά] went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.” Jesus walking about openly is replaced by his going away to Ephraim. Or, for instance, John 16:25 says, “The hour is coming when I will no longer [οὐκέτι] speak to you in figures, but [ἀλλά] will tell you plainly of the Father.” Jesus speaking figuratively is replaced by him speaking plainly. Or, in the case of Eph 2:19: “So then you are no longer [οὐκέτι] strangers and aliens, but [ἀλλά] you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.” “You” as “strangers and aliens” is replaced by “you” as “citizens” and “members.” Unlike the instances in John, the other instances in the NT are like Eph 2:19, where the verb carries over in some way from one clause to the next. Nevertheless, in each case, one state is replaced by another state. The negative particle, οὐκέτι, functions to signal what is being replaced by the grammatical unit headed by ἀλλά. The same can be said for all of the other instances of this

to the recipient of the communication that what follows ἀλλά corrects “some element within [the recipient’s] ... mental representation of the discourse for the purpose of realigning it according to the communicator’s concerns” (*Discourse Markers*, 173; cf. 138–163). Whatever is being corrected “may be textually based, an assumption, an implication, or a discourse topic—whatever is most manifest and relevant to the recipient upon processing the correction and integrating it into the mental representation (i.e., takes the least amount of processing effort)” (Fresch, *Discourse Markers*, 173–174; cf. 160–163). Fresch also shows that his claim about the core function of ἀλλά is for the most part supported by “other recent Greek linguistic studies, both in Classical Greek and later Koine” (*Discourse Markers*, 181–182; cf. 163–173).

³⁵ See Matt 19:6; Mark 9:8; 10:8; John 11:54; 16:25; Rom 7:17, 20; Gal 4:7; Eph 2:19; and Phlm 16. One can compare the construction where the negative is the semantically similar μηκέτι, “no longer,” which is followed by ἀλλά and its grammatical unit, in Mark 1:45; Rom 14:13; 2 Cor 5:15; 1 Tim 5:23; and 1 Pet 4:2.

construction with οὐκέτι and ἀλλά in the NT outside Rev 10:6–7. This same sense with οὐκέτι and ἀλλά appears to be dominant also in the LXX, the Greek OT Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, and the Apostolic Fathers.³⁶ This sense of the construction can be applied to Rev 10:6–7. The negative clause in Rev 10:6 is literally, “time will be no longer.” The state replacing “time” in 10:6 is introduced in 10:7 with ἀλλά and is “the mystery of God ... fulfilled.”³⁷ A temporal phrase and temporal clause specify when the mystery is completed and thus when “time” is “no longer.”

It is possible to see Rev 10:7 as saying, “but in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is *about* to trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled (emphasis added),” which might suggest that the “mystery” is completed sometime before the seventh trumpet sounds.³⁸ The “mystery of God” though seems to refer to God’s purposes to establish his kingdom and all that that entails.³⁹ Accordingly, the “mystery of God” in its essence is thematically linked to

³⁶ I limited my search to οὐκέτι preceding within ten words of ἀλλά. There were thirty-two relevant instances in Philo, twenty-five in Josephus, five in the Greek OT pseudepigrapha, five in the Apostolic Fathers, and two in the Septuagint.

³⁷ Cf. Rissi, *Time and History*, 24. After quoting Runge on this construction, David L. Mathewson says, “Rather than there being any more time of waiting (‘time will be no longer’), the mystery of God is now going to be fulfilled” (*Revelation: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016], 134).

³⁸ Cf. NASB, NIV, Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 260–261; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 156; Paul, *Revelation*, 189–190; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 312–315; Tavares de Aguiar, “‘You Must Prophesy Again,’” 426–428.

³⁹ Cf. Isbon T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction with a Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), 583; Keener, *Revelation*, 282; Koester, *Revelation*, 480–481, 489–492; Ladd, *Commentary*, 144; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 145–146; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 207–208; Kevin J. O’Brien, “An Examination of the Meaning, the Purpose, and the Function of the Interlude within the Sevenfold Series of the Book of Revelation” (PhD diss., [Union Theological Seminary \[in Richmond, VA\]](#), 1996), 136–141; Osborne, *Revelation*, 400–401; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 368–

what happens when the seventh trumpet sounds (Rev 11:15–18). This in turn would rule out the reading of Rev 10:7 that makes a significant distinction between the completion of the mystery and the sounding of the seventh trumpet.⁴⁰ Therefore, the “mystery” is completed and “time is no longer” when the seventh trumpet sounds.⁴¹ At that point, God’s kingdom arrives and the very last things happen, namely, the seven last plagues and all that follows.⁴² Rev 11:18 in particular

369; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 314–315; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 329–330, 333–334; Thomas Witulski, *Apk 11 und der Bar Kokhba-Aufstand: Eine zeitgeschichtliche Interpretation*, WUNT 2/337 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 54–55.

⁴⁰ In this case, the construction of the temporal clause, ὅταν μέλλῃ σαλπίζειν, involving the verb μέλλω with the infinitive would have a note of “divine determination” or carry “the sense of a future indicative” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 541). Cf. Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 582; Fanning, *Revelation*, 316n17; Koester, *Revelation*, 480; Ladd, *Commentary*, 144–145; Mathewson, *Revelation*, 135; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 206n32; Osborne, *Revelation*, 400; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 368; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 265.

⁴¹ Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 544; Blount, *Revelation*, 194–195; Fanning, *Revelation*, 315–316; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 314; Koester, *Revelation*, 479–481, 490–492; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 206–207; Prigent, *Commentary*, 332; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 155; Rissi, *Time and History*, 24, 33–34; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 367–368; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 265.

⁴² Note the language of Rev 11:15–18 in the NRSV, which renders the Greek well, and suggests a singular moment in the course of history: “Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever.’ Then the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, singing, ‘We give you thanks, Lord God Almighty, who are and who were, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but your wrath has come.’” I find it difficult to read this any other way than as a reference to the consummation, with the rest of vs. 18 describing all that follows upon its commencement. Particularly telling is the absence of “who are to come” in vs. 17, following “who are and who were.” This contrasts with the similar constructions in Rev 1:4, 8; 4:8 that have God as the one “who is to come.” Cf. Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 209–210; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 611–614; Blount, *Revelation*, 220–221; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 168, 170–171; Caird, *Revelation of St. John*, 141–142; Finley, *Understanding*, 282–284; Krodel, *Revelation*, 229–230; Ladd, *Commentary*, 162; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 204–207; Osborne, *Revelation*, 438, 440–444; Paul, *Revelation*, 208–209; Flavio Prestes III, “Dominion Shifts in Biblical Apocalyptic Literature: A Narrative Reading of Daniel 7 and Revelation 12–14 Vis-À-Vis Genesis 1–3” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2023), 379–382; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 367–368; Tavares de Aguiar, “You Must Prophesy Again,” 424–425, 436, 438; Waddell, “What Time Is It?” 147–148.

summarizes what happens in the visions in the rest of the book.⁴³

This interpretation of Rev 10:5–7 runs contrary to some Adventist perspectives on these verses.⁴⁴ A number of Adventist interpreters see the time at an end in Rev 10:6 as the completion of the time prophecies of Daniel. Thus, for them, the time ends in 1844, the last date they see set by Daniel’s prophetic calendar.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, these Adventist interpreters also place the seventh trumpet and the completion of the mystery in the future with the consummation. In this way, either implicitly or explicitly, these interpreters place a temporal gap between when “time is no

⁴³ Jon Paulien, *What the Bible Says about the End-Time* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1994), 105–108; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 368–369.

⁴⁴ See Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 91–92, 100–102; Finley, *Understanding*, 264–267, 282–284; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 142, 145–146; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 204–205, 207, 443; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1966–1967; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 312–315; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328–330, 332–334; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophecy Again,”” 276–277. It should be noted that Shea and Tavares de Aguiar do make a distinction between “the mystery of God” finishing and the sounding of the seventh trumpet and prefer to render *ὅταν μέλλῃ σαλπίζειν* as “when he is about to trumpet.” Although they see the two events as distinct, however, Shea and Tavares de Aguiar see a strong connection between the two events and appear not to see a significant temporal gap between them. See Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 312–315; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophecy Again,”” 266–269, 426–428. Perhaps similar to Shea and Tavares de Aguiar is Finley, *Understanding*, 264–267, 282–284.

⁴⁵ Note that there is an assumption here that Revelation to some degree looks at the book of Daniel in the same way as a Seventh-day Adventist would. An Adventist pays attention to all the different time designations in Daniel and distinguishes **among them and among their** associated events. Revelation, however, shows no explicit interest in Daniel’s time designations beyond “a time, and times, and half a time.” Moreover, key events related to Daniel’s other time designations are missing from Revelation, such as an attack on the sanctuary of God and its restoration, the removal of the daily sacrifices, and the setting up of an abomination in their place (Dan 8:11–14; 9:26–27; 12:11–12; cf. 11:31). The closest one comes to seeing those events in Revelation is Rev 11:1–2. Bauckham argues that underlying Rev 11:1–2 is Dan 8:11–14. In this case, Rev 11:1–2 would be taking up the removal of the daily offerings and the overthrowing of “the place of his sanctuary” from Dan 8:11 and taking up “the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled” from Dan 8:13. See Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 267–273. Notably, Revelation connects this with 42 months, which relates back to the three and a half “times” of Dan 7:25 and 12:7. The 2,300 “evenings and mornings” of Dan 8:14 are absent here.

longer” and when the seventh trumpet sounds and the “mystery” is completed.⁴⁶ This modern Adventist reading presumes that the ἀλλά clause about the mystery finished is correcting the incorrect assumption of the reader that “the end” will occur since “time” is no longer. This is a possible reading of the grammatical construction of οὐκέτι and ἀλλά in Rev 10:6–7.⁴⁷ As far as I know, this understanding of the construction in these verses is exclusively among Adventists, at least when one considers more contemporary Revelation scholarship. Interestingly, the Adventist understanding stands in contrast to what William Miller and others associated with the Millerite movement expressed prior to the disappointment of October 22, 1844. They were in agreement with the perspective advocated in this study, whereby the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God being finished, and time being no longer all synchronize.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Interestingly, Smith sees no gap between the “time” of Rev 10:6 and the seventh trumpet, but does see a gap between that “time” ending and the “mystery” completed (*Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 522–527); cf. “Revelation,” 7:798, 804–806. Beckwith may have a similar view of Rev 10:6–7 (*Apocalypse of John*, 582, 606). The problem with this view is that it makes the contrast between “time” and “the seventh trumpet,” when the grammar pinpoints the contrast as being between “time” and “the mystery of God ... fulfilled.” Smith also has a different view of the “mystery of God” than some of the authors cited in the previous note. For Smith, “the mystery of God” is related to the gospel message of the church. Finley and Tavares de Aguiar agree with this sense of the “mystery.” See Finley, *Understanding*, 266–267; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophecy Again,”” 266–269, 426–428, 443.

⁴⁷ I base this on my limited survey of instances of this grammatical construction in non-Jewish and non-Christian ancient Greek literature. I found two examples out of 150 where the grammatical unit headed by ἀλλά could be correcting an assumption that that readers might make from what precedes, rather than replacing something clearly in the text. Moreover, Fresch points out the possibility of this type of reading in an instance where the negative particle is not οὐκέτι (*Discourse Markers*, 145–147). With Fresch’s example from the Greek papyri, cf. Rom 5:13–14 with οὐκ and ἀλλά.

⁴⁸ See, for example, among others, Joshua V. Himes, ed., *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology, Selected from Manuscripts of William Miller, with a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Himes, 1842), 239; A. D. Low, “The End of Time,” *Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy* 6.3 (September 6, 1843): 22; Sylvester Bliss, “Why Do We Believe That ‘The

The modern Adventist understanding of the grammatical construction in Rev 10:6–7, however, does not appear to be the most natural way of reading this grammatical construction, at least from the perspective of Greek Jewish and Christian texts from around the time Revelation was composed (late first century CE). Moreover, nothing in the text of Rev 10 acts as a cue to the reader that this is a special use of οὐκέτι and ἀλλά, and nothing in the text precludes the idea that “the mystery of God ... finished” replaces “time.” The only reason that I can see for choosing to read the Greek construction in this exceptional way is that one is already predisposed to favor the modern Adventist interpretation of Rev 10:6–7. The sense that Adventists now typically see in these two verses might have been better conveyed if the angel had said, “There will no longer be a period of time, but the fulfillment of the mystery of God, as He announced to his servants, the prophets, will not happen then. It will occur in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is to trumpet.” Therefore, accepting the apparent synchronicity of the completed “mystery” and sounding of the seventh trumpet, Rev 10:6–7 are most likely saying that the “mystery” is completed and “time is no longer” when the seventh trumpet sounds. The likelihood that this is the correct meaning of the passage increases when one considers the context of the rest of Revelation and when one considers Rev 10:5–7 as an allusion to Dan 12:7.

Turning to the larger context of Rev 10, one sees that “time” (χρόνος) is last mentioned

Kingdom of God is Nigh at Hand,”” *The Advent Herald, and Signs of the Times Reporter* 7.1–2 (February 14, 1844): 2.

with the events following the breaking of the fifth seal (Rev 6:9–11).⁴⁹ The “souls”⁵⁰ of the slain faithful are under the altar⁵¹ and ask God how long until he “judges and avenges [κρίνεις καὶ ἐκδικεῖς]” their “blood [αἷμα].” They are told to rest “a little longer,” literally in the Greek “yet a

⁴⁹ Cf. Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 221–222; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 541–542, 545; John Paul Heil, “The Fifth Seal (Rev 6,9–11) as a Key to the Book of Revelation,” *Bib* 74 (1993): 233–234; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 313; George R. Knight, “The Controverted Little Book of Revelation 10 and the Shape of Apocalyptic Mission,” *JATS* 28.1 (2017): 136, 151–152; Koester, *Revelation*, 410, 480, 490–491; Ladd, *Commentary*, 144; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 142; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 205–206; Osborne, *Revelation*, 289, 400; Paul, *Revelation*, 189–190; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 154; Akira Satake, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, ed. Thomas Witulski, KEK 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 256; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 329, 333; Tonstad, *Revelation*, 159.

⁵⁰ Many commentators see these “souls” as representing at least Christian martyrs. Among others, note Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 406; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 390; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 113–114; Koester, *Revelation*, 399; Michaels, *Revelation*, 105; Prigent, *Commentary*, 274. As well, it must be remembered that the content of Revelation is highly symbolic and stems from John’s visionary experiences. As such, one ought not to see in these “souls” under the altar a picture of the intermediate state between earthly life now and resurrected life later. See Richard Bauckham, “Judgment in the Book of Revelation,” in *The Book of Revelation: Currents in British Research on the Apocalypse*, ed. Garrick V. Allen, Ian Paul, and Simon P. Woodman, WUNT, 2nd ser., 411 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 66; Koester, *Revelation*, 399; Ladd, *Commentary*, 102–104; Michaels, *Revelation*, 106; Stephen Pattemore, *The People of God in the Apocalypse: Discourse, Structure, and Exegesis*, SNTSMS 128 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 76–80; Paul, *Revelation*, 149; Rainer Schwindt, “Der Klageruf der Märtyrer: Exegetische und theologische Überlegungen zu Offb 6,9–11,” *BN* 141 (2009): 121–122.

⁵¹ It is a debated issue as to whether Revelation envisions one altar or two; and if two altars, the debate goes further sometimes as to which altar is meant when the term appears without qualification. The term appears in Rev 6:9; 8:3 (2 times); 8:5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7. Stefanovic argues quite convincingly for the presence of two altars in Revelation. He also argues for the altar in Rev 6:9 to be that for burnt offerings. See Ranko Stefanovic, “The Angel at the Altar (Revelation 8:3–5): A Case Study on Intercalations in Revelation,” *AUSS* 44.1 (2006): 80–86; cf. Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 244, 290–291. Others also see two altars, but may not always agree as to what altar is in view in Rev 6: Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 405; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 269; Bauckham, “Judgment,” 66; Blount, *Revelation*, 133; Krodell, *Revelation*, 177; Ladd, *Commentary*, 102–103; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 238–239; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 88, 105–106.

little time [ἐτι χρόνον μικρόν].” The implication is that, once the “time” passes, the plea for justice will be met.⁵² The Greek of the plea of the slain faithful literally says, “Until when [ἕως ποῦτε] ... do you not judge and avenge....” The immediate response in 6:11 uses the same particle as the plea: “And to each of them was given a white robe, and it was said to them to rest a little longer, until [ἕως] their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, who were to be killed, as they themselves had been, were completed” (my translation).⁵³ These are the only occurrences of this particle in Revelation. The repetition of the particle makes it clear that the delay **does not end and justice does not arrive until the fellow servants are “completed.”**⁵⁴ The completing refers to the completion of their number, the completion of their work, or the perfection of their character.⁵⁵

⁵² Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 394; Fanning, *Revelation*, 248; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 1–11*, 335; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 165.

⁵³ Many commentators see “fellow servants [σύνδουλοι]” and “brothers and sisters [ἀδελφοί]” as representing one group. See, for example, Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 411; Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 527; Blount, *Revelation*, 132, note “e”; Fee, *Revelation*, 99; Koester, *Revelation*, 400; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 1–11*, 334n530; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 149; Osborne, *Revelation*, 290; Paul, *Revelation*, 150; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 278; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 165; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 245. A few see reference to two groups with the second referring to specifically to Christian martyrs. See Fanning, *Revelation*, 248; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 235; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 90.

⁵⁴ Cf. Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 205; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 234; Mathewson, *Revelation*, 90; Rissi, *Time and History*, 24.

⁵⁵ The first option is chosen by many commentators. The most extensive argumentation that I have seen for this is Paul Middleton, *The Violence of the Lamb: Martyrs as Agents of Divine Judgement in the Book of Revelation*, LNTS 586 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 200–204. Cf. the extensive treatments of Jewish apocalyptic parallels in Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 48–56; Schwindt, “Der Klageruf,” 131–133. For the second option for the meaning of “completed” in Rev 6:11, see the presentations in Blount, *Revelation*, 136–137; Koester, *Revelation*, 400–401; Paul, *Revelation*, 150. For the third option, see the arguments in Edwin Reynolds, “Resolving the Confusion in Revelation 6:11,” *AUSS* 59.1 (2021): 35–48; cf. Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1957; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 245, 248.

Contrary to certain Adventist readings of the fifth seal, the judgment does not begin with the immediate response of the giving of white robes and the call to rest.⁵⁶

Compare Rev 6:11 that speaks of resting “a little longer [ἔτι χρόνον μικρόν]” with Rev 10:6 that says literally, “time will be no longer [χρόνος οὐκέτι ἔσται].” The language speaks to identity: ἔτι and χρόνος in one case and οὐκέτι and χρόνος in the other case.⁵⁷ The “time” spoken of in Rev 6:11 comes to an end in Rev 10:6.⁵⁸ The possible allusion to Deut 32:40 in Rev 10:5–7 would further support the link between Rev 10:5–7 and Rev 6:9–11, since the Deuteronomy verse has in its context the vindication of God’s people and the rendering of justice on the enemies of God and his people (see Deut 32:36, 41–43).⁵⁹ Therefore, Rev 10:6–7, seen in light of Rev 6:9–11, announces that God will judge and avenge the deaths of the faithful at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.⁶⁰

This reading is confirmed when Rev 11:18, which is connected to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, is seen in light of events described later in Revelation. The seventh plague, Rev 16:17–21, completes the “wrath [ὀργή]” of God intimated in 11:18: “God remembered great

⁵⁶ This idea is suggested by Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 64–66; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 158–161, 441–442; Jon Paulien, “The Seven Seals,” in Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation, Book 1*, 236; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 303–304; cf. Finley, *Understanding*, 226–227.

⁵⁷ Cf. Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 222; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 256n282.

⁵⁸ Cf. Keener, *Revelation*, 322.

⁵⁹ Beale argues this point at Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 542; cf. Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 134, 204, 221–222; Blount, *Revelation*, 193.

⁶⁰ Cf. Keener, *Revelation*, 282.

Babylon and gave her the wine-cup of the fury of his wrath [ὀργῆς]” (16:19).⁶¹ Rev 19:1–3 celebrates the destruction of Babylon introduced in the seventh plague and later described in Rev 17–18. Significantly, the same language used earlier by the souls under the altar is now used to celebrate Babylon’s destruction: God “has judged [ἐκρίνεν] the great whore [Babylon] ... and he has avenged [ἐξεδίκησεν] the blood [αἷμα] of his servants [shed] by her hand” (19:2, my translation).⁶² Furthermore, Rev 19:2 uses a word in its description of Babylon’s actions that is cognate to one used in 11:18: Rev 19:2 says that Babylon “corrupted the earth [ἐφθείρεν τὴν γῆν] with her fornication,” while 11:18 says the time had come “for destroying [διαφθεῖραι] those who destroy the earth [τοὺς διαφθείροντας τὴν γῆν].”⁶³ The sounding of the seventh trumpet hints at

⁶¹ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 644; Osborne, *Revelation*, 596.

⁶² Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 407; David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, WBC 52C (Nashville: Nelson, 1998), 1025; Bandy, *Prophetic Lawsuit*, 246–247; Bauckham, “Judgment,” 66; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 392, 928–929; Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 526; Blount, *Revelation*, 134, 341–342; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 267; Fanning, *Revelation*, 247n47; Heil, “The Fifth Seal,” 238; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 510; Koester, *Revelation*, 727, 735; Krodel, *Revelation*, 310; Ladd, *Commentary*, 245; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 299; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 12–22*, 329–330; Middleton, *Violence of the Lamb*, 195–196; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 342; Osborne, *Revelation*, 287, 665, 667; Paul, *Revelation*, 306; Pattemore, *People of God*, 92n105, 100–106; Prigent, *Commentary*, 274–275, 521; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 234; Rodríguez et al., *Andrews Bible Commentary*, 1994; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 222, 371; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 627; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 160, 478; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 245, 248, 555; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 240; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 327; Tonstad, *Revelation*, 272.

⁶³ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1025; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 615–616, 927; Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 610; Fanning, *Revelation*, 342, 477; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 345, 510; Krodel, *Revelation*, 311; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 206; Osborne, *Revelation*, 447, 664; Paul, *Revelation*, 305–306; Prigent, *Commentary*, 364; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 371; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 416–417, 626–627; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 477; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 367, 369, 555; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 141, 239–240; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 327.

the destruction of Babylon, and that destruction fulfills the plea made by the souls under the altar in Rev 6:9.⁶⁴

Many commentators have seen that Rev 10:5–7 alludes to Dan 12:7.⁶⁵ Dan 12:5–7 says,

Then I, Daniel, looked, and two others appeared, one standing on this bank of the stream and one on the other. One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was upstream, ‘How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?’ The man clothed in linen, who was upstream, *raised his right hand* and his left hand *toward heaven*. And I heard him *swear by the one who lives forever* that it would be for a time, two times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things *would be accomplished*.

I have noted here the apparent parallels with Rev 10:5–7. It is also interesting that the oath about time comes in response to a question of “how long.” As implied above, the oath about time in Rev 10 seems to address the question of “how long” from the fifth seal events.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Incidentally, it can be argued that all of the judgment language in Rev 16:5, 7; 17:1; 18:8, 10, 20; 19:2; and even Rev 14:7 is in some way a response to the language of the martyrs’ cry in the fifth seal. These passages all have to do with the execution of justice on the perpetrators of injustice towards God’s people and on those complicit in the crimes.

⁶⁵ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 566; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 252, 260–263; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 537–539; Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 582; Blount, *Revelation*, 193; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 155; Caird, *Revelation of St. John*, 127; Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 91–92; Fanning, *Revelation*, 315; Keener, *Revelation*, 282; Knight, “The Controverted Little Book,” 146–147; Koester, *Revelation*, 479, 488–490, 492; Krodell, *Revelation*, 214; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 142; Tremper Longman III, *Revelation through Old Testament Eyes: A Background and Application Commentary*, Through Old Testament Eyes (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2022), 156; Michaels, *Revelation*, 134–135; O’Brien, “An Examination,” 131–136; Osborne, *Revelation*, 398; Paul, *Revelation*, 189; Prigent, *Commentary*, 331, 345; Rissi, *Time and History*, 24–25; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 256; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 367; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 298–301, 307–310; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 263–264; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328–329, 332–333; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 126; Tavares de Aguiar, ““You Must Prophesy Again,”” 260–261; Tonstad, *Revelation*, 158–159; Williamson, *Revelation*, 181.

⁶⁶ Cf. Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 582; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 155; Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 92; Koester, *Revelation*, 489; LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 142; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 205; Osborne, *Revelation*, 398, 400; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328–329, 332–333.

Notable here is that Rev 10 places “time will be no longer” in place of the three and a half times and “the shattering of the power of the holy people.” Reading Rev 10 in light of Dan 12 seems to suggest that the “time” that ends in Rev 10 at least encompasses the three and a half times of Dan 12. Given the relationship between “time” in Rev 6:11 and that in Rev 10:6, it is not surprising that some commentators equate the “time” of rest in 6:11 with the three and a half times of Daniel and Revelation.⁶⁷ As will be seen, lining up the “time” of Rev 6:11, the “time” of Rev 10:6, and the three and a half times is where the text of Revelation leads. Whether the “time” of Rev 6:11 and the “time” of Rev 10:6 are precisely equivalent to the three and a half times is, however, not as clear, because it is unclear, as seen below, whether the tale of the witnesses represents a historical sequence or not. Nevertheless, the lining up of these three periods in any way runs contrary to the view presented by some Adventists interpreters that distinguishes the “time” of rest of Rev 6:11 from the three and a half times. A number of Adventist interpreters associate the three and a half times, or 1,260 days, with the martyrs that cry out in Rev 6:10, such that the cry of the martyrs comes at the completion of that period and thus the “time” of rest follows that period.⁶⁸

Moreover, reading Rev 10 and Dan 12 in light of the fifth seal events, it seems significant that thematically “the shattering of the power of the holy people” coincides with the fellow servants being killed as the souls under the altar were. Recall Rev 6:11 where it says that, during

⁶⁷ See Koester, *Revelation*, 400, 410–411; Paul, *Revelation*, 150.

⁶⁸ LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 97–98; Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. 2, 186–190; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 160; Shea, “The Mighty Angel,” 303–304; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 244–248, 254. Interestingly, Smith puts the cry of the martyrs at the time of the Reformation, before the 1,260-day period, representing so many years, has ended in 1798 (*The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 432, 436–437; cf. Finley, *Understanding*, 226–227; “Revelation,” 7:778).

the period of rest for the souls under the altar, their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters in the faith, will suffer death and “be completed.”

The content that follows the oath of the mighty angel and the giving of the little scroll to John confirms these suggestions. In Rev 11:2, the nations are set to “trample over the holy city for forty-two months,” which is equivalent to 1,260 days or three and a half times (cf. Rev 11:3; 12:6, 14). The holy city in Revelation is representative of the faithful, just as the great city is representative of the unfaithful (cf. Rev 20:9; 21:2, 10 for the holy city).⁶⁹ This image of oppression of the faithful in Rev 11:2 reminds one of the fate of the holy people in Daniel.⁷⁰ Like Dan 12, Rev 11:2 combines the 1,260-day time period with an attack on the people of God. At the very least, the nations appear to be in control during this time period; compare Rev 13:5, where the beast has authority for 42 months. **Inasmuch as** Rev 11:2 appears to allude to the combination from Dan 12:7 of the time period and an attack on the people of God, one can say that this aspect of Dan 12 seems to be in John’s consciousness. It would, therefore, not be surprising to think that this aspect of Dan 12 also plays a role in Rev 10:5–7, especially since there are explicit references to other aspects of Dan 12 in those verses.

⁶⁹ Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 568; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 272; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 162; Fee, *Revelation*, 149; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 326–327; Koester, *Revelation*, 486, 496; Krodel, *Revelation*, 219; Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 1–11*, 459; Maxwell, *God Cares, Vol. 2*, 302, 304; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 215; Osborne, *Revelation*, 413; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 382; Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 350; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 200; Robby Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation*, JPTSup 30 (Dorset, UK: Deo, 2006), 169; Williamson, *Revelation*, 188.

⁷⁰ Koester and Smalley point out how the trampling indicates oppression, but not necessarily destruction. See Koester, *Revelation*, 486, 495; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 274. In a similar vein, Tonstad points out how the trampling evokes “disrespect and contempt” (*Revelation*, 162).

Meanwhile, in Rev 11:3–13, the two prophet-witnesses testify for 1,260 days, at the end of which the witnesses are killed, just as the fellow servants of the souls under the altar were to be killed (Rev 6:11).⁷¹ It has been proposed that the tale of the two witnesses lays out the mission of the faithful during the time of waiting for God to render justice.⁷² John may have seen the death of the witnesses as representing the shattering of the power of the holy people. Rev 11:3–13 also then appears to allude to the combination from Dan 12:7 of the time period and an attack on the people of God. Accordingly, in addition to Rev 11:2, Rev 11:3–13 also heightens the likelihood that this aspect of Dan 12 plays a role in Rev 10:5–7.

Rev 11:3–13 is significant for one's reading of Rev 10:5–7 in another way as well. Soon after the narration of the witnesses comes the narration of the seventh trumpet. The sequence of (A) 1,260 days and an attack on the people of God followed by (B) the seventh trumpet (Rev 11:3–18) mirrors what I see as implied by Rev 10:5–7, when it is read in light of Dan 12:5–7.

The following table summarizes the events and sequencing **that are apparent** from reading all of these texts in light of each other.

⁷¹ Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 587–588; Heil, “The Fifth Seal,” 234–235; Osborne, *Revelation*, 424; Waddell, *The Spirit*, 180. Beale finds confirmation of the connection between Rev 6:9–11 and Rev 11:1–10 in that both texts appear to allude to Ps 79 (*Book of Revelation*, 392–393, 595).

⁷² Koester, *Revelation*, 401, 489–492, 495–496, 505. Cf. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 603; Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 273; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 573; Blount, *Revelation*, 206; Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 164–165; Fee, *Revelation*, 150; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 329; Krodel, *Revelation*, 222–223; Paul, *Revelation*, 197–198; Prigent, *Commentary*, 349–350; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 162; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 265–266; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 275; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 131–132; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 203; Williamson, *Revelation*, 192. I am assuming here, based on arguments developed elsewhere, that the two witnesses represent the people of God, not the two testaments of the Bible, as traditionally argued by Seventh-day Adventists.

Rest yet a little time	God will judge and avenge the blood of his slain servants
Fellow servants also slain and completed	
Time that will be no longer	The seventh trumpet sounds and the world once again belongs to God
42 months of trampling the holy city	
1,260 days of the witnesses testifying	
The witnesses are slain	
Three and a half times	End of these wonders
Shattering of the power of the holy people	

What this all means is that the fifth seal events put forward a time period and then judgment. Accordingly, assuming that the time period of Rev 10 is the same as that spoken of with the fifth seal, it is only natural to see the time period of Rev 10 to be followed by judgment, which comes with the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev 11:15–18). The sounding of the seventh trumpet inaugurates the consummation. The judgment on the perpetrators of injustice towards God’s people and on those complicit in the crimes forms part of the consummation. The sequence of the time period followed by the seventh trumpet agrees with the Greek grammar of Rev 10:6–7. During the time of waiting, signified primarily by the 1,260 days or 42 months or three and a half “times,” the people of God bear witness but also then suffer, as is borne out by Rev 6 and Rev 11.

There are two ways of conceiving the time of waiting depending on whether or not the tale of the two witnesses is supposed to represent a strict chronology. One perspective understands the tale of the witnesses as being like a parable; consequently, it is not saying that

there will be a time of witnessing followed by a time of great suffering.⁷³ Rather, the time of witnessing and suffering coincide historically for the people of God. In this case, the trampling of the holy city in 11:2 is substantially the same as the fate of the two witnesses. Considering the content of Rev 12 and 13, where the 1,260 days is also mentioned, the sojourn of the woman in the wilderness, the reign of the beast, and the beast's war against the saints would all coincide with this era.⁷⁴ Another perspective does see an actual progression where there is first witnessing

⁷³ The tale of the witnesses should not be understood as “an allegory in which each detail has a distinct symbolic meaning,” but rather as “something like a parable” in which “each part contributes to the whole” in order to show readers their task before the consummation (Koester, *Revelation*, 505; cf. Koester, *Revelation*, 505–507). Koester says concerning the tale of the witnesses, “The plot has three parts. In scene one, the witnesses prophesy with remarkable power and are protected from their foes (11:3–6). In scene two, readers find that despite the prophets’ power, the beast slays them, and their bodies lie unburied in the street of the great city while their foes rejoice (11:7–10). Then in scene three, the witnesses are raised and taken to heaven, judgment falls on earth, and many come to glorify God (11:11–13). The narrative does not outline a series of coming events, as if to say that God will protect the church for a time, allow it to be slaughtered, and then bring the world to repentance after the Christian community has been resurrected. Instead, the three scenes must be taken parabolically as a whole and the message brought to bear on the issue that lies before the audience” (*Revelation*, 506). Bauckham expressed similar thoughts earlier in Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 273–274. Cf. Ross Colby Jones, “Identity and Memory in Revelation 11:3–12: The Two Witnesses and the Prototype of Prophetic Witness” (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022), 138–139; Schreiner, *Revelation*, 396, 403–404, 406–407. For those who at least assert that the tale of the witnesses should not be understood as a strict chronology, see Fee, *Revelation*, 154–155; Prigent, *Commentary*, 357–358.

⁷⁴ Rev 12:17 looks towards this war, with the saints being portrayed as the other children of the woman, besides the male child. Thus, the children of the woman also represent the church, but from the perspective of their being persecuted temporarily, rather than from the perspective of their ultimate security. Cf. Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 273n52; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 676–677; Ladd, *Commentary*, 167, 174–175; Osborne, *Revelation*, 485; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 177; Satake, *Die Offenbarung*, 292; Smalley, *Revelation to John*, 333–334. Maier has a slightly different view of the woman versus the rest of her children and still maintains that Rev 12:17 does not represent a separate stage from 12:13–16. For him, the woman represents the true church in totality, while the rest of her children are believers individually. See Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 12–22*, 67; with Maier, cf. Beckwith, *Apocalypse of John*, 619–620, 628, 630; Blount, *Revelation*, 241–242; Caird, *Revelation of St. John*, 159; Krodel, *Revelation*, 246; Swete, *Apocalypse of St. John*, 157; Turner, “An Evaluation,” 42–44. Schreiner appears to advocate both perspectives on the woman and the rest of her children (*Revelation*, 452). Assuming the dynamic in Rev 12 of the other children of the woman pointing

and then afterwards great suffering.⁷⁵ From this perspective on Rev 11, the shattering of the power of the holy people of Dan 12:7, which is alluded to in Rev 10:5–7, is being seen as a separate event following the three and a half times of the same verse. Moreover, the trampling of the holy city in 11:2 is essentially different from the fate of the witnesses. The trampling would characterize one level of suffering for the people of God, but the fate of the witnesses would characterize another level of suffering. From this vantage point, the sojourn of the woman and the reign of the beast coincide with the time of the witnesses and the trampling of the city, but the war against the saints (Rev 11:7; 13:7) happens after the 1,260-day period.⁷⁶

Assuming the first perspective where witnessing is overlapping with suffering, the text does not appear to allow for an extensive gap in history between the end of the 1,260 days and the consummation of history. The text of Revelation in this scenario suggests the 1,260 days

to temporary persecution and the woman pointing to ultimate security, one can compare a similar dynamic in Rev 11. While the casting out of the outer court and the trampling of holy city may represent the persecution of the church, the measured worshipers in the heavenly temple and the fact that the city is still termed, “the holy city,” may represent the church in its spiritual security. Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 557–565, 568–569; Pattemore, *People of God*, 161; Thomas and Macchia, *Revelation*, 198–201; Waddell, *The Spirit*, 166–170. In this regard, note Michael Bachmann’s discussions of the temple in Rev 11:1 as the heavenly temple: Michael Bachmann, “Himmlisch: der ‘Tempel Gottes’ von Apk 11:1,” *NTS* 40.3 (1994): 474–480; Bachmann, “Ausmessung von Tempel und Stadt: Apk 11,1f und 21,15ff auf dem Hintergrund des Buches Ezechiel,” in *Das Ezechielbuch in der Johannesoffenbarung*, ed. Dieter Sänger, *Biblisch-Theologische Studien* 76 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2004), 64–77; Bachmann, “Der ‘Tempel Gottes’ von Offb 11,1: (zeitgeschichtlich zu verstehen und) als irdisch zu begreifen? Synchrone und diachrone Gegenargumente,” *BZ* 56.2 (2012): 274–278.

⁷⁵ Beale sees the narrative as a series of events: a time of witnessing for the people of God, a final attack against the people of God at the end of the age, a time where the people of God seem as if non-existent, then their vindication, and finally the commencement of judgment on their enemies. See Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 572–608 passim; cf. Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 328–340 passim. Similarly, but with a futuristic focus, is Maier, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Kapitel 1–11*, 462–489 passim.

⁷⁶ Again, Rev 12:17 would look towards this war.

leads up to the consummation. This does not cohere with seeing the 1,260 days as ending in 1798. Of course, it would not cohere either with seeing the period as ending at some other point in the past. This textual scenario coheres best with seeing the 1,260 days as currently ongoing.

Assuming the other perspective on the time of waiting, with witnessing and then suffering in sequence, one could propose that the time of suffering is extensive and allows for a gap in history between the end of the 1,260 days (at 1798) and the consummation, which is expressed in the sounding of the seventh trumpet. This line of reasoning, however, runs into a couple of problems. First, the narrative in Rev 11:3–7 suggests that the prophetic activity or witnessing activity of the two witnesses lasts the 1,260 days and then ends.⁷⁷ Taking seriously this narrative, assuming as I have that the two witnesses represent the people of God, and assuming the 1,260 days ends in 1798—all this leads to a conclusion that is difficult to accept, namely, that in some way the people of God were bearing witness before 1798, but are no longer doing so after. A similar difficult conclusion would result if the traditional Adventist view of the two witnesses as the OT and NT was assumed. In some way, the Scriptures would no longer be testifying after 1798.

⁷⁷ In this regard, note the whole interchangeability of witness terminology and prophetic terminology that goes on in Rev 11:3–13 as well as the detail that the witnesses were to prophesy for 1,260 days. While Rev 11:3 calls the figures “two witnesses” (τοῖς δυσὶν μάρτυσιν μου), Rev 11:10 calls them “two prophets” (οὗτοι οἱ δύο προφῆται). While Rev 11:6 speaks of “the days of their prophecy,” (τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς προφητείας αὐτῶν), Rev 11:7 speaks of the completion of “their testimony” (ὅταν τελέσωσιν τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτῶν). The strong connection between witness terminology and prophetic terminology is present elsewhere in Revelation. Rev 1:2–3 show that substance of John’s testimony is considered a “prophecy.” Rev 19:10 links “the testimony of Jesus” to “the spirit of prophecy.” Moreover, Rev 17:6 seems to vary from similar phraseology in Rev 16:6 and 18:24, substituting “witnesses of Jesus” for “prophets,” when speaking of the spilled blood of the people of God. Cf. Clintoc, “The Theme of Witness,” 212.

Incidentally, the traditional Adventist view of the two witnesses as the Scriptures, at least in the way it is usually conceived, where the Scriptures suffer during the chaos of the French Revolution, has the additional problem that the two witnesses do not prophesy the full 1,260 days, taken as 1,260 years. The Scriptures cease to prophesy a few years before 1798.⁷⁸ There appears to be no textual basis for doing this.⁷⁹

A second problem exists with taking the time of suffering as extensive and allowing for a gap in history between the end of the 1,260 days (at 1798) and the consummation. The narrative of Rev 11:7–10 suggests a much more devastating and negative experience for the two witnesses after the 1,260 days than during the period. Taking this narrative seriously, assuming again that the witnesses represent the people of God, and assuming the 1,260 days ends in 1798—all this leads to another conclusion that is difficult to accept, namely, that the present experience for the people of God after 1798 is characterized by suffering to a degree far greater than it was before 1798. Again, a similar difficult conclusion would result if the traditional Adventist view of the two witnesses as the OT and NT was assumed.

Even if one were to dispense with the specific dates of 538 and 1798 and look for some other 1,260-year interval in church history, the same two problems would still arise. Of course, the problems disappear if one assumes that the 1,260 days is currently ongoing.

⁷⁸ This is explicit in the traditional treatment found in Finley, *Understanding*, 279–281; Finley, *War*, 57–59; “Revelation,” 7:802–804; Smith, *Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, 535–540; Jean Vuilleumier, “The Two Witnesses in Prophecy,” *Ministry* 13.6 (1940): 23–24; 13.7 (1940): 11–13; it is more implicit in Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. 2, 287–293; Müller, *Der Erste und der Letzte*, 230, 407.

⁷⁹ For a different Adventist critique of the attempt to relate the end of the tale of the two witnesses to events in revolutionary France, see LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies*, 164–165, 347–351.

Therefore, from the second perspective on the time of waiting, the text does allow for a gap between the end of the 1,260 days and consummation, but adding the supposition that the end of the 1,260 days has already happened in history leads to problems matching text to history. Besides these problems, the fact that the text portrays the time of suffering as three and a half days suggests a very short period relative to the 1,260 days of bearing witness.⁸⁰

Thus, from one perspective on the time of waiting, the 1,260 days **end** and the consummation arrives. Meanwhile, from the other perspective, the 1,260 days **end** and a time of unprecedented suffering arrives. Neither textual scenario coheres well with seeing the 1,260 days as ending in 1798. In fact, neither textual scenario coheres well with seeing the 1,260 days as ending somewhere else in the past. These textual scenarios cohere best with seeing the 1,260 days as currently ongoing.

Conclusion

Therefore, I see two options for the start of the 1,260-day period and two options for what occurs within it. The 1,260-day period either begins with the apostolic church, after Jesus has been exalted to the throne of God, or begins after John's ministry ends. These possibilities appear to fit the text of Rev 12 better and make better sense of the association of the 1,260-day period with the trampling of the holy city and the prophesying of the two witnesses in Rev 11. As for how to characterize the 1,260-day period, one option comes from assuming that the tale of the two witnesses does not give an exact chronology for the history of the church, but is rather paradigmatic of the ends to which Christian witness may go before the consummation. If this is the case, then the trampling of the holy city and the fate of the two witnesses represents the

⁸⁰ Cf. Waddell, *The Spirit*, 183, 184n184.

persecution that the church undergoes, while it **bears witness**, and the dragon and the beast make war on the church during the 1,260 days, and then the consummation comes. However, if the tale of the two witnesses is meant to show a chronology of church history, then the trampling of the holy city and the reign of the beast for the 1,260 days show the dominate powers of this age, while the church bears witness; and then, once the testimony is completed, the dragon and the beast make war on the church successfully, just before the consummation. Whichever way the beginning point of the 1,260 days is understood and whichever way the substance of the 1,260 days is taken, it is clear from the earlier examination of Rev 10 and its context that the 1,260-day period ends in close proximity to the consummation as laid out in the seventh trumpet. Of course, for the chronological scenario, this conclusion is true only if one also assumes that the three and a half days **are meant** to represent a much shorter period of time than 1,260 days of prophesying.

All of these exegetical reflections suggest that the 1,260-day period as presented in Revelation cannot be limited to a specific segment of church history many years before the consummation. The most natural reading of the text suggests that the 1,260 days symbolize the period from the ascension of Christ or from the era of the apostles to the consummation of history or nearly so. A clear implication of this conclusion is that it brings into doubt the applicability of the year-for-a-day principle, at least to Revelation. If the principle cannot apply to one of the main temporal periods delineated in Revelation, on what basis can it be applied to the related period of three and a half days or to other less significant periods in Revelation (e.g., the ten days in Rev 2:10)? Another clear implication is that it raises questions about the traditional Adventist identification of the sea beast with the historical Papacy and all that that entails for interpreting the enemies of God's people in Revelation. If the sea beast is operative for the whole Christian era or nearly so, then how can it be limited to the historical Papacy? The

end result of both implications is that the typical Adventist historicist interpretation of Revelation must be reconceived and reworked.

Appendix

Here I present additional thoughts to consider as one thinks through the things I have presented in the above paper, which is controversial from an Adventist perspective.

οὐκέτι or μηκέτι with One Grammatical Unit Followed by ἀλλά with Another Grammatical Unit in the NT

Here I cite all of the NT passages, apart from Rev 10:6–7, that have the construction of the particular negative οὐκέτι with the adversative ἀλλά in a conjoined element. The element headed by ἀλλά corrects or more specifically replaces the element headed by a negative particle.

First is Matt 19:6: “So they are no longer [οὐκέτι] two, but [ἀλλά] one flesh.” The state of one flesh replaces the state of two separate “flesh.”

Second, Mark 10:8 parallels the saying in Matthew.

Third, earlier in Mark is Mark 9:8: “They saw no one with them any more [οὐκέτι], but [ἀλλά] only Jesus.” The state of one person with the disciples replaces the state of three people with the disciples.

Fourth, John 11:54: “Jesus therefore no longer [οὐκέτι] walked about openly among the Jews, but [ἀλλά] went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.” The state of Jesus going to a town called Ephraim replaces the state of Jesus walking openly among the people. Jesus at one time walked openly among them, but now does not; instead, he heads to Ephraim. The two states are juxtaposed.

Fifth, John 16:25: “The hour is coming when I will no longer [οὐκέτι] speak to you in figures, but [ἀλλά] will tell you plainly of the Father.” The state of telling plainly of the Father replaces the state of speaking in figures.

Sixth, Rom 7:17: “But in fact it is no longer [οὐκέτι] I that do it, but [ἀλλά] sin that dwells within me.” The state of Paul doing **the things** he hates is replaced by the state of sin doing the things he hates.

Seventh, Rom 7:20 is similar to Rom 7:17. The two states are juxtaposed.

Eighth, Gal 4:7: “So you are no longer [οὐκέτι] a slave but [ἀλλά] a child.” The state of being a child replaces the state of being a slave.

Ninth, Eph 2:19: “So then you are no longer [οὐκέτι] strangers and aliens, but [ἀλλά] you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.” The state of being citizens and members replaces the state of being strangers and aliens.

Tenth, Phlm 15–16: “Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, no longer [οὐκέτι] as a slave but [ἀλλά] more than a slave, a beloved brother.” The state of being more than a slave replaces the state of merely being a slave.

The NT provides a similar construction with *μηκέτι* as the negative particle. I will note those as well.

First, Mark 1:45: “But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer [μηκέτι] go into a town openly, but [ἀλλά] stayed out in the country.” **The possibility of finding Jesus** out in the country replaces the possibility of catching Jesus in a town.

Second, Rom 14:13: “Let us therefore no longer [μηκέτι] pass judgment on one another, but [ἀλλά] resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another.” Literally in the Greek, it says “**Let us no longer judge one another, but rather you judge this,**” which is then elaborated. One state of judgment replaces a different state of judgment.

Third, 2 Cor 5:15: “And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer [μηκέτι] for themselves, but [ἀλλά] for him who died and was raised for them.” Living for themselves is replaced by living for Christ.

Fourth, 1 Tim 5:23: “No longer [μηκέτι] drink only water, but [ἀλλά] take a little wine.” The “only” is not actually in the Greek. In any case, literally, taking a little wine replaces drinking water.

Fifth, 1 Pet 4:1–2: “Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer [μηκέτι] by human desires but [ἀλλά] by the will of God.” One way of living gives way to another way of living.

Negative with One Grammatical Unit Followed by ἀλλά with Another Grammatical Unit in the Book of Revelation

The following are other instances in Revelation of a negative particle heading one element, which are then followed by ἀλλά and another element. I see no deviation here from the general pattern, where that which follows ἀλλά replaces what is negated.

Rev 2:9: “I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and [they] are not [οὐκ], but [ἀλλά] are a synagogue of Satan.” The thought that they are Jews is corrected or more specifically replaced by the thought they are a synagogue of Satan.

Rev 3:9: “I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and [they] are not [οὐκ], but [ἀλλά] are lying—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.” The thought that they are Jews is found to be a lie.

Rev 20:6: “Over these the second death has no [οὐκ] power, but [ἀλλά] they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.” That they will be priests and reign corrects or more specifically replaces the idea that the second death has authority over them.

Rev 9:5 (my translation): “And it was given to them not [μὴ] to kill them, but [ἀλλά] to torment them for five months.” Torment replaces killing.

Rev 17:12: “And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet [οὐπω] received a kingdom, but [ἀλλά] they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.” A kingdom that is yet to be is replaced by a kingdom that is.

In all of these instances, there is no in-between state. The two states are juxtaposed and the element following ἀλλά replaces the negated element.

More Thoughts on the Adventist Interpretation of Rev 10:6–7

The earliest clear articulation of the Adventist understanding of “time will be no longer” that I have found is in John N. Andrews work on the three angels’ messages from 1855. He says as follows:

We understand that this angel is the same as that brought to view in Chap. 10. We shall therefore briefly refer to that chapter as explanatory of Chap. 14:6, 7, and as furnishing an important argument respecting the time of its fulfillment. Chap. 9 presents the first and second woes. And the prophetic period connected with the second woe, terminated with the political power of the Ottoman empire, August 11th, 1840. See Litch’s Prophetic Exposition. Thus ends the ninth chapter, and the tenth opens with the descent of a mighty angel from heaven with a little book in his hand, who cries with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth, and then lifts up his hand to heaven and swears that time shall be no longer.

This oath cannot mean duration as measured by days and years, for in Chap. 20, we have 1000 years measured off; and, for ought that appears to the contrary, duration will ever be measured thus. Nor can it mean probationary time, for two reasons: 1. It is certain from verse 9, that this announcement precedes the voice of the seventh angel, and it is in the days of the commencement of his voice that the mystery of God is finished. 2. After this oath of the angel, it is said to John, who doubtless personates the church that he must

prophecy again. These reasons furnish conclusive proof that probation has not closed when this oath is uttered. Hence we understand that this oath has reference to the prophetic periods, and that this angel with the little book open in his hand, is the same as the angel of Chap. 14, announcing that the hour of God's judgment has come. The little book which is open in his hand referring to the prophecy of Daniel which was to be sealed up until the time of the end. The angel of Chap. 10, preaches from this little book, and it is this prophecy of Daniel that contains the prophetic time on which the angel of Chap. 14:6, bases his proclamation, that the hour of God's judgment is come.⁸¹

A few years later appear the following thoughts in the *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald* from

Uriah Smith:

He swears to time, and declares that it shall be no longer. What kind of time does he refer to? It must be one of three kinds: literal, probationary, or prophetic. But it cannot be literal time as measured off by months and years; for the angel immediately after speaks of the days of the voice of the seventh angel: no doubt meaning years, as in other prophecies. And we have further a period of 1000 years measured off, even after the resurrection. Revelation 20. It cannot therefore be what we understand by literal time. But does it not mean probationary time? We answer, No; for the angel declares to John, who doubtless personates the church, that he must "prophecy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and **kings.**" Probation then still lingers after this angel utters his oath. These considerations compel us to the conclusion that it is prophetic time to which he refers. In other words, he declares that with his testimony the prophetic periods end. Look carefully, reader, at this subject. Walk all around it. Look in every direction and see if you can find an avenue to any other conclusion than is here presented. An angel swears that time—some kind of time—shall be no longer. He immediately speaks of days (years) to succeed, and he tells John, and through him the church, to prophecy again before many peoples, showing that there is yet mercy to plead for them, and yet room to receive them. Now as it is certain that some time ends, according to the angel's oath, and as it is certain that only three kinds can be referred to, and as the angel by his testimony settles the matter in regard to two kinds, that he does not refer to them, it is certain that he must refer to the only other kind remaining, and that is prophetic time. This will appear further as we consider the next item (emphasis original).⁸²

Neither Andrews nor Smith consider the grammar of the angel's oath. Nor do they consider that the time spoken of may well be the time given for the souls under the altar to rest.

⁸¹ John N. Andrews, *The Three Angels of Revelation 14:6–12* (Rochester, NY: Advent Review Office, 1855), 20.

⁸² Uriah Smith, "Synopsis of the Present Truth, No. 13: The Angel on Land and Sea," *Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald* 11 (February 4, 1858): 100.

They limit the time to three different things. Contrary to them, I believe the rest time could be considered probationary time. It could additionally be considered prophetic time, since the angel's oath appears to allude to Dan 12:7. The problem with Andrews's and Smith's arguments is that they assume that the angel making his oath refers to a specific event in historical time and that when the angel utters his oath it necessarily means that in historical time "time is no longer." These assumptions ignore the possibility that the angel's oath is simply a declaration of a future event in the vision and that the oath itself is simply part of the vision and has no historical counterpart. This is not to say that the seventh trumpet does not reflect events that will happen in history, since apart from the visions of Revelation there is still an expectation of the consummation of history and this expectation is echoed elsewhere in the NT. The angel's appearance and words to John do not have to signal some special situation in historical time any more than Jesus's appearance and words to John earlier in Rev 1 have to signal some special situation in historical time.

By chance, the grammar of Rev 10:6–7 could be interpreted to mean that the *ἀλλά* clause is correcting a false assumption about the end arriving when time is no longer. Of course, none of that is in the pioneers' writings. It just happens to be a possible reading. As I argue, however, the more natural reading of the grammar, the one that has more documentary support and that is recognized by those outside of Adventism and even by pre-disappointment Millerites, is that time ends and the seventh trumpet sounds and the mystery of God is fulfilled all according to the angel's oath. This is the most plausible exegetical explanation. It is the one that recognizes that Rev 10 looks back to Rev 6. It does not try to read Daniel's 2,300 evening-mornings back into Revelation when John makes no mention of that. It also does not assume that Revelation reads Daniel's prophecies like a Seventh-day Adventist would. Daniel has a little horn, whereas John

has a seven-headed beast. Daniel has the daily sacrifice taken away and an abomination put in its place and the sanctuary restored after 2,300 evening-mornings. John mentions none of those things. His focus is on the holy city trampled and the three and a half times.

The Warning Signs of a Problem

The very fact that **Adventists** cannot even adhere in every case to their own proposed dates for the 1,260 days interpreted as years suggests already that there is a problem with the traditional Adventist interpretation of the period. Whether the two witnesses are the people of God or the Scriptures, no historical event in 1798 seems comparable to the death of the two witnesses. Moreover, whether the two witnesses are the people of God or the Scriptures, it is debatable that an event or events in history bound exactly on one side by 538 and then on the other side by 1798 can be compared with the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth.

One might go so far as to say, even in the interpretation of Rev 12, Adventists cannot adhere to the proposed dates of 538 and 1798. No remnant people who keep the commandments of God and are a people of prophecy appear in 1798. Arguably they do not even begin to develop into being until William Miller starts preaching years later. Granted Rev 12 is elliptical in some parts (e.g., the child does not live out a life and die before ascending to heaven), but those elements are not bound by a stated duration of time to which Adventist attach specific dates.

Thoughts on the Implications of the Proposal in this Study

I am aware that the thrust of my arguments is controversial from an Adventist perspective. I am aware that it has consequences for the Adventist interpretation of prophecy. It points to a radical shift. **Yet, I would disagree with the notion that, if Adventists shift their perspective on prophecy, they must therefore say that God did not lead the Seventh-day Adventist church into existence and that God did not lead in the lives of the pioneers and Ellen**

White. White assures us that God led in the life of William Miller. Nevertheless, many things that Miller espoused are not currently upheld by Seventh-day Adventists. Adventist doctrine itself has changed and shifted over time. It is not exactly the way it was when the founders of the church studied the Bible in the 1840s and 1850s. For instance, the modern Adventist perspective on Rev 10:6–7 is not exactly the same as that of Andrews and Smith. Adventist scholars today do not argue that the seventh trumpet began to sound in 1844. They recognize that it refers to a future consummation.

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