

Blessed is he who reads  
and those who hear the  
words of this prophecy,  
and keep those things  
which are written in it; for  
the time is near.  
Rev. 1:3

# Verse by Verse Through the Book of Revelation

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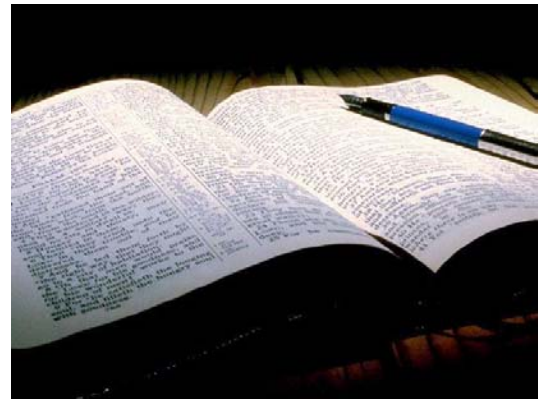
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## Revelation Chapter 1 1

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Thrilling as was the message which swept through the churches prior to 1844, it was not the final message of God. New light was to break upon the path of the searchers of God's word. A message embracing prophecies not even thought about was to come into focus as the result of that study.

We believe that what John witnessed was the battle between God's Word and atheism. It reached its climax in the French Revolution.



The command to John to “prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings,” was prophetic of the church, which, following the great disappointment, was to hasten to the earth's far ends with a message for all, kings and peasants alike.

1. **And there was given me a reed like unto a rod:** This reed was to be used as a measuring rod. Compare Zech 2:1,2

**And the angel stood, saying, Rise,** John is told to enter into the action of the vision

**And measure** To measure suggests restoration and preservation—John wouldn't be told to measure something that was to be abolished.

**the temple of God, and the altar,** Following the great disappointment of October 22, 1844, the attention of the Adventist believers was directed to the heavenly sanctuary and to the work of Christ as high priest in that sanctuary.

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That the reference is not to the literal temple in Jerusalem may be deduced from the fact that when John received his visions, the temple lay in ruins.

Because of the rejection of the Jews as God's chosen representatives (Matt. 21:43) that temple will never be restored as a divinely recognized center of worship.

**And them that worship therein** Consequently, "them that worship" are not literal Jews worshipping in their literal temple, but those who direct their worship to the heavenly temple, where Christ ministers in behalf of His children. (Heb. 8:1,2)

In a special sense and in the context of this prophecy the measuring takes place at a specific period in the history of the church. The "measuring" of worshippers suggests judgment. See Amos 7:7-9 for God's vision of a "plumb line" used to measure the straightness of a wall.

2. **But the court which is without the temple** In the temple of Herod, which John had known well, there was an inner court divided into the Court of the Women, the Court of Israel, and the Court of the Priests. Beyond these was a great outer court, the Court of the Gentiles. A barrier—a "middle wall of partition" Eph. 2:14) divided the outer and inner courts and no Gentile was allowed to pass the barrier on pain of death.

In view of the fact that the court mentioned here is "given unto the Gentiles," it would appear that John has this great outer court particularly in mind. The court has been regarded as representing this earth in contrast with "the temple of God" in heaven (vs. 1).

**Leave out and measure it not;** John is to measure none but the worshippers of God, those who have a right to enter within the barrier where Israelites alone could go. Only such can hope to be preserved from the final judgments that fall on the earth.

**For it is given unto the Gentiles** This was true of the Court of the Gentiles in the earthly temple. Here "Gentiles" may be understood as those who are not worshippers, who have not confessed themselves as belonging to the Israel of God.

**And the holy city shall they tread under foot** The present passage is parallel with the description in Dan. 7:7, 23, which delineates a treading down by the fourth beast (see Dan 7:7, 8, 25). Inasmuch as this beast's activities are directed particularly against the "saints of the most High" (Dan. 7:25), it seems that the 'Holy City' here represents the people of God.

**Forty and two months** This period is clearly identical with the “time and times and the dividing of time” of Dan. 7:25

3. **And I will give power** This passage reads literally in the original Greek “I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy,” that is, I will cause my two witnesses to prophesy.

**Unto my two witnesses** Inasmuch as the fullest expression of the Holy Spirit to men is contained in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament, they may be considered to be the two witnesses. (See John 5:39—Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.) Remember that the language of Revelation is figurative. Some teach that the two witnesses are two *people*. The scriptures are a witness to God. Witnesses don't have to be human beings.

**And they shall prophesy** In spite of the dominance of evil during the period of 1260 days the Spirit of God, especially as manifested in the Scriptures, would nevertheless bear His witness to those men who would receive Him.

**A thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.** The identical period with the 42 months of v. 2.

**Clothed in sackcloth.** Wearing sackcloth was a common sign of mourning (2 Sam. 3:31) Thus the Scriptures might be described as being in mourning at a time when human traditions are in the ascendance (See Dan. 7:25)

4. **These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.** The two witnesses/lampstands represent God's Word in the Old and New Testaments, which gives light to the world and testifies to His love. In Zechariah 4:11-14 the two olive trees represent the Word of God.

5. **And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt the, he must in this manner be killed.** This is reminiscent of Elijah's judgment on the messengers of Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:10,12)

6. **These have power** Authority

**To shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy:** As in verse 5, this appears also to be an allusion to Elijah, who predicted that there would be no rain in Israel for 3 years (1 Kings 17:1).

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**And have power over waters to turn them to blood,** This appears to be an allusion to Moses and the first plague on Egypt (Ex. 7:19-21)

**And to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.** Not only do the witnesses have the power to call down on their enemies the same plague as that which fell first on Egypt, but they have authority to call down any of the plagues. **Meaning: in the Name of God he will hear and answer our prayers—we have that power to move mountains through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

7. **And when they have finished their testimony** That is, at the end of the 1260 days (Dan. 7:25)

**The beast** Commentators who hold that the expression “the beast” implies some previous identification since such identification is not to be found in the Revelation find it in the Book of Daniel, where the beast par excellence is the fourth beast of Dan. 7.

**That ascendeth out of the bottomless pit** It arose from Satan. A new form of satanic power manifested itself.

**Shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.** That is, attempt to destroy the Word of God. Many see this as being fulfilled in France when they searched out every Bible and burned them in the streets.

8. **And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,** Many commentators identify “the great city” as France, which toward the close of the 1260-day period, manifested the characteristics symbolized by these expressions. (Study: French Revolution)

**Which spiritually is called Sodom** Symbolic of moral degradation.

**And Egypt,** Known for its denial of the existence of the true God and for its defiance of the commands of God.

**Where also our Lord was crucified.** That is, in the person of His followers, many of whom perished in the persecutions in France.

9. **And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations** Other nations would observe the war on the Bible in France
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**Shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.** In harmony with the principle of prophetic interpretation, that a day stands for a year, “three days and a half” would be equivalent to three years and a half.

What John witnessed and recorded for us was the battle between the Bible and atheism. This battle reached a climax in the French Revolution. Terrible as that was, it was but a skirmish in comparison with the battle to be waged on a world-wide scale just before the return of Christ.

In 1793 the French assembly passed a decree suppressing the Bible. By the legislature of France, the two witnesses, the Old and New Testaments, were figuratively slain in the streets. On November 11 of that year a “Grand Festival” was held in the leading church of Paris in honor of “Reason and Truth” while the authorities attending this burlesque-type gathering carried out an insulting ceremony. Such mottoes as “Crush the Wretch” (Meaning Christ) were carried through streets that ran with blood.

10. **And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.** Godless revelers may make merry for a time, but when men have done their worst the Almighty can always add a closing chapter. And He always does.
11. **And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.** John declared that after 3 1/2 prophetic years, the witnesses would come to life again, and, standing on their feet, would cause great fear to fall upon all men. The great fear was a guilty conscience.
12. **And they heard a great voice from heaven** This voice is not identified, but presumably he is God.

**Saying unto them, Come up hither.** Not only are the witnesses resurrected by God; they are bidden to enter heaven.

The represents the remarkable popularity that the Scriptures have enjoyed since the early 19th century. We are still enjoying this prophecy as we see the Bible translated into almost every language in the world today. And the work continues rapidly.

**And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.** There are people today who would burn every Bible if they had the power.

13. **And the same hour** Almost immediately afterward

**Was there a great earthquake,** The symbol of an earthquake is used repeatedly in Scripture to portray the turmoil and upheaval that characterized the world immediately preceding the second advent. See Mark 13:8; Rev. 16:18.

**And the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.** This earthquake signifies a temporary judgment that frightens into submission some of those who have gloried in the death of the witnesses. 7,000 men signify a small number of people but enough to bring survivors to recognize the sovereignty of God, whose witness they had despised.

14. **The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.** That is, the events portrayed under the 7th trumpet.

15. **And the seventh angel sounded;** This marks the beginning of the third woe and the end of the parenthesis between the sixth and seventh trumpets (ch. 10:1 to 11:14) [Seventh-day Adventists date its beginning as 1844.](#)

**And there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.** The greatest issues of all times are before us. We are on the very borders of the eternal world. The last battle is soon to be fought: the battle between the forces of light and darkness truth and error. Christ is ready to receive His kingdom forever! The victor!

16. **And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God,** See ch. 4:4 for comment on these elders

17. **Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou has taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.** The reign of sin has been only by His sufferance, that the true nature of evil might be revealed to created beings throughout the universe. When that purpose has been accomplished, He then takes His "great power" and once more reigns supreme. See I Cor. 15:24-28.

18. **And the nations were angry,** Such will be the condition of the nations prior to the coming of Christ. They will band together to oppose the work and people of Christ. (See Rev. 13:12; 14:8)

**And thy wrath is come,** The wrath of God is summed up in the seven last plagues (15:1) The opposition against Christ is brought to a halt by these plagues.

**And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,** A particular time with a definite purpose. Kairos in the Greek. John is speaking of the final judgment, which takes place after the millennium (ch. 20:12-15)

**And that thou shouldest give reward unto they servants the prophets,** God's special servants who speak forth for Him and often suffered most severely for their Lord.

**And to the saints,** Or "holy ones" The members of the body of Christ characterized by the purity of their lives.

**And them that fear they name, small and great;** Greek hoi phobaumenoi—a term used in Acts for those who, though not fully proselytes to Israel, nevertheless worshipped the true God (Acts 10:2) If the same general meaning is intended here, this third class to receive a reward in the judgment may be understood as those who have not completely known Christ and His way, but who have lived in the fullness of the light that has come to them. Because they have feared the name of God, as He has been revealed to them, they too receive a reward.

**And shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.** The fate of the wicked, who have destroyed the earth—physically, and also spiritually—is strikingly fitting. They themselves are destroyed.

19. **And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:** There was opened before John a view of God's heavenly temple, with the "ark of his testament" the focal point of the vision.

Now, in the typical sanctuary, which was a "copy of the true one" (Heb. 9:24) in heaven, the ark was in the most holy place, which was the center of the service of the Day of Atonement—a typical day of judgment.

It is in connection with the beginning of the seventh trumpet that John sees the temple in heaven and very particularly "the ark of his testament." This indicates that the second and last division of Christ's heavenly ministry — the Day of Atonement — has opened. This marks the beginning of the blowing of the 7th trumpet.

**Ark of his testament** The ark in the sanctuary was the depository of the Ten Commandments, God's immutable moral law, for all men in all ages. No believer in God in Jewish times could think of the ark without becoming immediately conscious of the Ten Commandments. John's vision of the ark above argues eloquently that in earth's last hours God's great moral law is to be central in the thinking and in the lives of all who seek to serve God in spirit and in truth.

**And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings and an earthquake, and great hail.** We will study these in Chapter 16

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