

**The 1689 Confession; Chapter 8, Paragraph 10 – “Of Christ the Mediator”, Message # 34 –
“1260 Days Clothed in Sackcloth” Presented in the Adult Sunday School Class,
by Pastor Paul Rendall on August 16th, 2020.**

Paragraph 3 – The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of mediator and surety; which office he took not upon himself, but was thereunto called by his Father; who also put all power and judgement in his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.

Paragraph 10 – This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office; and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best of our services, we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable unto God; and in respect to our averseness and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.

We have been thinking together about the Intercession of Christ our Mediator on two levels; the level of individual Christians and the level of the Church and our progress together as the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, over all the generations of this Church age, to fulfill the Great Commission, so that many among the nations will be saved, and many among the nations will become holy. Christ is interceding for this; both for the suffering saints and for their being able to be victorious in overcoming the schemes of the Devil. I have said to you that The Great Commission will be completely fulfilled in the time period of the Millennium which is yet to come. But all the generations of Christians since Christ ascended have been laboring toward this great goal of seeing the Great Commission fulfilled. It has, and is being fulfilled all during this Church age as it goes along, generation by generation, by saints who have been faithful witnesses; Christians who have been willing to suffer for the truth of the word of God, to suffer for Christ, and for His cause, and for His kingdom's advance in truth. I have said to you that there are different time periods within this Church age. And the first 3 of these time periods of Church History have all been related to Rome, the 4th World Monarchy, which is the last and final World Monarchy to politically and spiritually oppress and persecute the people of God. Rome is the beast who was, and who is, and who is to come.

Even though we cannot know for certain the exact timing of the Church's triumph and the subsequent spiritual reign of Church among the nations and kingdoms of this world, the Lord has given us an overview if we will pay attention to the details. If we pay attention to the details of prophecy, we will know, in general, what to expect in the future. I need to show this to you because it has been at this point that so many Christians have failed to understand what is coming; what the Church should expect in the future. Just as Christ triumphed in and through His sufferings, and purchased redemption for us, even so His Church will triumph, in and through her sufferings, and finally be victorious with Christ's cause, on this greater level that we are speaking of, among the nations. What is the goal? It is that holiness will prevail among the many nations of the world. This is predicted in many places in the word of God; especially in the Prophets, but also in picture form in the book of Revelation.

What I want you to focus on now is Revelation chapters 10 and 11, and talk to you about the little book which was given to the apostle John to eat. Chapter 10, verse 8 – Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, ‘Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.’ “So I went to the angel and said to him, ‘Give me the little book.’ “And he said to me, ‘Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.’ “Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.” “But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter.” “And he said to me, ‘You must prophesy about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.’”

Now this little book that John was given, relates in small compass the whole 3rd time period of Church History; the time of the 1260 days prophecy, or the spiritual reign of the Antichristian powers among the nations of the world. This little book that John ate is called by some commentators a codicil; that is, it is a little book which summarizes this great 3rd time period of Church History, altogether. This time period would be a time when the truth of God's holy word would be suppressed, and God's people oppressed and persecuted if they did not conform to the doctrine and practice of the false Roman Catholic church. She is the great harlot, Mystery Babylon, of the book of Revelation. John says in chapter 11, verse 1, that he was given a reed like a measuring rod in Chapter 11, verse one, and he was to arise and measure the temple of God which is the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he was only to measure the temple, that is God's true Church, and not the court that was outside the temple, for it was given to the Gentiles. The Gentiles here are not all the peoples who are not Jewish, as they literally are in other parts of the Bible. They are rather, those people who claim to know God and Christ but who tread down the holy city, the true Church, underfoot for 42 months.

Revelation 11: 3-15 – “And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” “These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.” “And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies.” “And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.” “These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.” “When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.” “And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” “Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.” “And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.” “Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’” “And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.” “In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past.” “Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’”

The Prophecy of the 1260 Days – The Time Period of the spiritual Reign of Antichrist.

What are these time periods in the book of Revelation? Well, I hope that you can see that the 42 months and the 1260 days are two ways of saying the same thing. 42 months is the same time period as the 1260 days, and they both refer to the spiritual reign, in years, of the Antichristian powers. How do we know that the days are years here? It is because they are referring to a divine judgment which came upon the visible church, the people of God, for compromising the word of God concerning what the true gospel was, and what true and godly worship was; what was to be believed in order to become a Christian, and also how worship was to be conducted by Church leaders. This divine judgment could not simply be completed in 3 and a half literal years, but it would be worked out over many generations. I want to give you two examples of this in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Numbers chapter 14, verse 34 God said to the children of Israel concerning their believing the bad report brought back by the spies who went into the land of Canaan to see what kind of a land that it was – “According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt for one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.” And you will further recall that in **Ezekiel chapter 4, verse 4**, that Ezekiel was told – “Lie also on your left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it.” “According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity.” “For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.” “And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days.” “I have laid on you a day for each year.”

So this is the Biblical and reasonable explanation of prophetic days in the Scriptures. The visible church, composed of Roman Catholics and all those with her who believe in a salvation by works, a sacramental salvation, and teaching people that idolatry and immorality are acceptable, even desirable practices in the church, this is why the witness of the True Church was opposed, persecuted, and eventually killed. In the book of Revelation these days are years and they represent a time period in which those who professed to be God's people fell under His divine chastisements and judgements. It was a very certain and specific period of time with a definite beginning and a definite end.

I want you to see that the time period of the 1260 days in the book of Revelation is a time when the Church of Jesus Christ is downtrodden by the "Gentiles", a word picture representing the Roman Catholic church and the "daughters" of this spiritual harlot, liberal Protestantism. These people and their churches and denominations, it says here, were not to be measured as true Christians for they would tread down the true Church of Jesus Christ's witness to truth for this whole time period. They would find many ways to persecute them, and keep their witness to a minimum. Now look at verse 3 of chapter 11. "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These are not two literal men, but they are mystical spiritual witnesses who represent those faithful pastors and the saints, both Christian men and Christian women who bore witness for the truth of the gospel and the word of God, taking their stand against Antichristian Papal Rome; many, many generations of them. Verse 7 says – "When they, that is, these two witnesses, finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them." "And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." All of those countries of the ten kingdoms of the beast, at the end of the 1260 days/years prophecy will make war against the true Church's witness and slay it; suppress it to the point that it looks like the true cause of Christ is lost.

Again, let us remember what I am trying to teach you; that on this higher level of Christ's cause and kingdom among the nations that there will come a time at the end of the 1260 years when the witness of Christ's Church shall be slain, in the 10 kingdoms of the beast, and it is very likely in all the world. All the world shall wonder after the beast, with the harlot riding it. But we see here in verse 7, that even though the dead bodies of these witnesses will lie in the street of the great city, that is in the most prominent place in the 10 kingdoms of the beast, for 3 and a half days, which once again are years, and many people supporting the antichrist will rejoice, that at the end of that time, the breath of life from God shall enter them, and they shall stand on their feet. It is at this point that the seventh angel sounds in verse 15, and there were loud voices in heaven saying, the kingdom of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

That is the overview of Church History until the Millennium. The suffering of the saints under Pagan Rome first, and then under Papal Rome following it, down through the many generations of the 1260 years, until the First Resurrection takes place. The 1st Resurrection we shall see, is a spiritual resurrection of souls, not bodies, and John is shown thrones and those who sat upon them, judgment was given to them. John sees the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and not receive his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, in the Millennium. We will look more at this next Sunday; both the sufferings of the saints under Papal Rome, and the latter-day glory of the Church that follows Papal Rome's downfall.

The Suffering of the Saints under Rome Papal

So, when Constantine the Roman emperor was converted to Christ in about 323 A.D., Church and State were united temporarily, in a favorable way, for a short time. Satan was kicked out of his heaven, as it says in Revelation 12: 9 – "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." But over the next hundreds of years Satan realized that he could continue to deceive and persecute Christians if he could bring an emperor into the visible Church of Jesus Christ. By 800 A.D. this false Church of Rome, through the Bishop of Rome becoming the predominant Bishopric among all in the

Western Roman Empire, these bishops were, from that time forward, recognized as Popes; the head of the visible church, from about the year 600 A.D. on. Through the false doctrine put forward by the Popes, Satan raised up the Antichristian system which is still deceiving much of the world today. This system of false worship and a false head of Christ's Church are the focus of chapters 12-18 of the book of Revelation.

In Chapter 17 the great judgment of the great harlot who sits on the Beast is described in detail. The political beast is described as having seven heads and 10 horns. The woman who was arrayed in purple with scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication is the false church. And on her forehead a name was written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth. The seven heads of the beast, it says in verse 9 are the seven mountains on which the woman sits. Everyone who knows something of the history and geography of Rome, knows that Rome is the city sitting on seven hills or mountains.

In chapter 17, verse 12 it says that the ten horns which John saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast; that is, with the final manifestation of the Roman antichrist. These 10 kingdoms of Europe will be of one mind and they will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war with the Lamb it says in verse 14 and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful. The woman whom John saw it says in verse 18 of chapter 17, is that great city of Rome which reigns over the kings of the earth. That is, the Roman Catholic church through her false doctrine reigns over the kings, that is those nations of the earth, spiritually speaking, who believe her doctrine and are supportive of her. But verse 16 says that the ten horns, or the 10 kingdoms of Europe will come to hate the harlot at the time when the Lord decides to judge her, and they will make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. In other words, those countries and nations which formerly supported her will turn on her so that she will be destroyed.

In chapter 18, this Babylon is brought down by God's judgments and in chapter 19, praise ascends from a great multitude in heaven saying Alleluia!" "Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to our Lord God!" "For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." "Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" This, being the Devil's greatest system of heresy and error that he has ever raised up; his deceiving people into thinking that it was Christ's true Church when it was not, this will come to an end. And thus Satan's warring against the Church, his ability to war against her witness to Christ and His word, Christ and His gospel, on the level of nations, shall come to an end during the time of the Millennium.