

**Aim:** The prophecy of the Messiah

**Refer:** The Great Controversy chapter 15, Daniel 6, 11, 12

By the 1500's the Reformation had been taken to all the countries of Europe. Some countries had welcomed it with gladness but in others, the Pope had been too strong, and it had been almost, totally stopped. In many countries, a great struggle had been going on for centuries. This was particularly true in France.

For hundreds of years, at the encouragement of the priests, protestant Christians were killed or imprisoned, and many families fled to other countries. During the Massacre of St Bartholomew, which lasted two months, 70,000 protestant Christians, both young and old, were killed!

At the same time, those who were of the noble class did not have to pay land taxes and they owned most of the land; the rich and powerful became richer and more powerful, taking advantage of those who were poorer who also had to pay taxes to the Priests. As a result, the poor people came to hate the rich people.

In 1793, what is now called 'the Reign of Terror' began. The poorer people gained the greatest majority in the government, something that they had never had before and now they sought for payback.

The Legislative Assembly declared 'there is no god.' Bibles were collected and publicly burned. The 7 day week was changed to a 10 day week. Baptism and communion were forbidden, and signs were placed over the cemeteries declaring that death was eternal – in other words that this is no resurrection or heaven. All religious worship was prohibited. A new god was chosen, called the 'goddess of reason' and represented by a dancing girl. Liberty, which means freedom, in this case freedom to do anything and everything, was their aim. The laws of the land concerning marriage were changed such that one famous actress called the new laws, the 'laws of adultery' instead.

For hundreds of years, the protestant Christian's had suffered. Now the rich, the nobles and the priests became the targets; even the king and queen were executed. Different groups fought for power, killing, or jailing anyone who opposed them, no one was safe.

Ellen White writes in the Great Controversy that this was the natural result of the rejection of God and the laws of God.

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Read Daniel 10:1

Read Daniel 10:4 – 7

At the sight of this vision Daniel felt faint, but the being lifted him up, telling Daniel that he had been sent by God. When he touched Daniel again, Daniel felt stronger.

Now the angel tells Daniel more details about the kingdoms from his previous visions.

Read Daniel 11:2

The angels told Daniel more about Greece and then goes on to talk about a King of the North and a King of the South and tells about some of the things that they do.

Read Daniel 12:1-3

Does this sound familiar? (It's the second coming – 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 20:11-15 also talks about the book of life)

Read Daniel 12:4

Then Daniel looked and saw 2 more angels, one standing on either side of the stream, and one of them asked, "How long will it be until the end?"

Read his answer in Daniel 12:7

Daniel didn't understand, but the angel reminded him that it was sealed or locked.

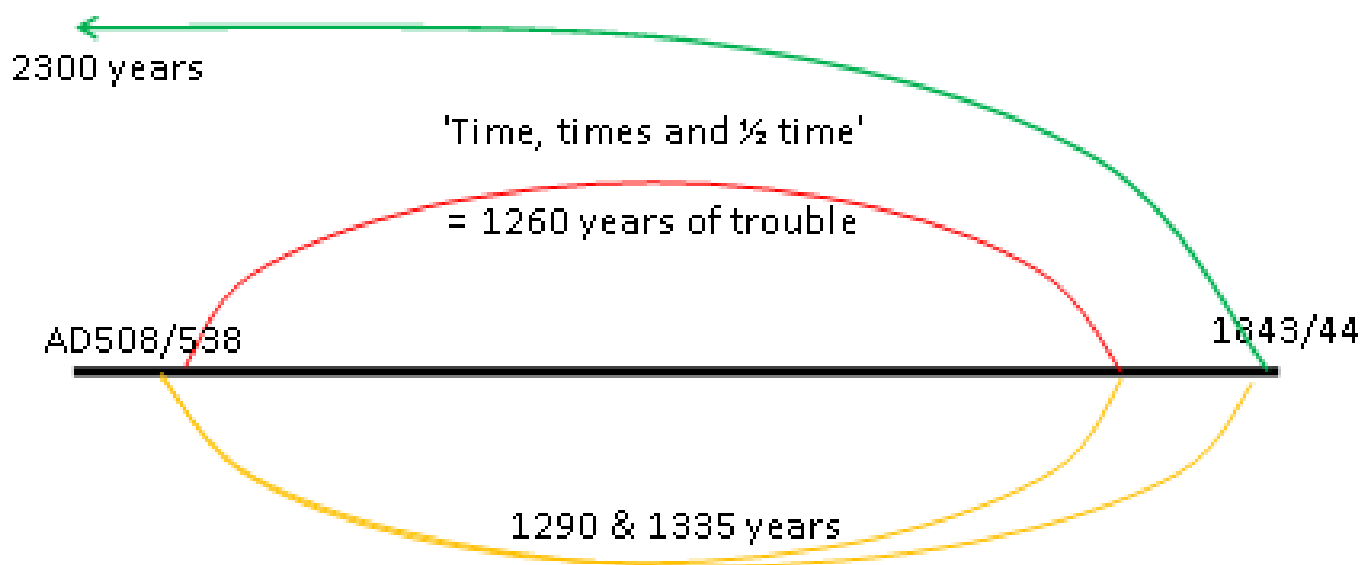
Read the last things that the angel said in Daniel 12:11-13

For a long time, these prophecies made no sense to readers. It was as if, as the angel had commanded, the book was sealed, or locked shut. It wasn't until the 1800's that people started taking an interest in them again and started to understand them.

The 'time, times and half a time' that the angel spoke of can be translated as '1 year plus 2 years plus half of a year' which works out as 42 months or 1260 days (since each Bible month had 30 days). Various events in world or church history can be pinpointed at each calculated date.

The 1260 years of trouble covers the times that we have been learning about this term, from the Waldenses, to the events that happened in France that we just learned.

During this time the Bible was not commonly available. Many of the church leaders were corrupt and evil, and those who wanted to learn more about God and share what they had learned, were persecuted.



(We will learn about the 2300 years in a few weeks)