

MEASURING OF THE TEMPLE AND THE TWO WITNESSES

1. After the bitter disappointment in 1844, what commission was given the church? Rev. 10:11
2. From that time what solemn work has been going forward in heaven? Dan. 8:14; Rev. 14:6; 10:7.
3. To what place is the faith of Israel directed in this hour of God's judgment? Heb. 8:1, 2; Rev 11:19 (first part); 3:8.
4. What, then, must be a special aim of the Gospel message in this time? — To call attention to the work going forward in the temple of God and to the means of grace by which to meet the standard, or measure, of the judgment.
5. What view in John's vision shows that this was the very message assigned the church after 1844? Rev. 10:11 and 11:1 together.
6. What is the standard of measurement in the temple and service of God? Rev. 1:19 (second clause); Eccl. 12:13, 14; John 12:48; Rev. 14:12. Note 1.

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7. What was to be left out in measuring? What would the nations do? What period of time is mentioned? Is it previously referred to in prophecy? Rev. 11:2. Note 2.

8. Was God to be left without witness in those days? Verse 3.

9. Who are these witnesses? Verse 4. Note 3.

10. What power have the witnesses to maintain their testimony? Verses 5, 6. Note 4.

11. What experience came to these witnesses as the long prophetic period drew to a close? Verse 7.

12. Where is this said to take place? Verse 8.

13. What was seen in fulfilment of this prophecy? — The infidel attack upon the Bible in the French Revolution. Note 5.

14. What was the attitude of other peoples? Verse 9.

15. Why did infidelity hate the Word of God and rejoice at silencing it? Verse 10. Compare 1 Kings 22:8.

16. Were the two witnesses permanently silenced? Verse 11. Note 6.

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17. What followed this infidel effort to overthrow the two witnesses? Verses 11 (last part), 12, 13. Note 7.

18. What lesson is there for us in these historical efforts, first of papal and then of infidel powers, to suppress the Word of God? Matt. 24:33-35; Isa. 40:8-10; Rev. 12:11.

NOTES

1. The standard of measurement that must be met by those who would worship in the heavenly temple is the standard of the temple itself — eternal righteousness and truth. It is summed up in Christ, who is the truth, and the mystery of the Gospel is to bring the members of the church "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." His measure is the measure of the perfect law of God, which is in his heart. Ps. 40:7, 8. Heaven itself is measured by this standard, hence those who are to enter there must also meet it, not unaided and alone, but hid in Christ.

2. The Gentiles (nations, R.V.) could not enter the inner court of the earthly temple. The nations are of this world, not of the world to come, with which this measuring work is dealing. Not all the powers of earth can help a man to meet the standard. Rom. 8:7, 8. The

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introduction of earthly powers, treading down the truth of God, here leads to reference to that forty-two months or 1,260 days (literal years) of papal rule, spoken of in Dan. 7:25. This historic period began in 538 and ended 1798.

3. The figure is borrowed from Zechariah 4, where, in verse 6, the olive trees and the candlesticks are explained to be "the Word of the Lord." Also Ps. 119:105; John 5:39. Through all the Dark Ages, the Scriptures, the Old and the New Testaments, testified for God. Because of this the enemy sought to burn the Word and keep it from the people. And all through these dark days God found men and women ready to hold forth the Word at the peril of life itself.

4. Not all the opposition to the Scripture could put it out of the world. God maintained His own Word. When He speaks judgments and warnings, none can turn aside the word. See Rev. 22:18, 19. In facing Bible truth men are not dealing with a common book, to be lightly accepted or rejected.

5. In the days of papal supremacy the Bible was kept in obscurity, as in sackcloth. But those days were shortened, and the light was shining out from the Word. "According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798, some power of Satanic origin and character would rise to make war upon the

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Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God's two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh ("Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice?"), and the licentiousness of Sodom." — *Great Controversy*, p. 268. It was fulfilled in the formal repudiation of God and the Bible by revolutionary France in 1793. Bibles were burned and every sacred institution turned to mockery. Afresh they crucified the Lord in seeking to blot out His truth.

6. Frightened by the fearful scenes that followed the decree suppressing the Bible in 1793, the assembly revoked the decree just three and a half years later.

7. The lesson taught by the bloody scenes of revolution startled men. From that time dates the Modern era of Bible circulation. Soon came the Bible societies and the Protestant missionary movement, putting the Bible into all the leading languages of earth, and exalting and glorifying it before the eyes of all. The shock, as of an earthquake, shattered France, one of the ten kingdoms (the Franks) of divided Rome. The marginal reading in verse 13, "names," or titles of men, suggests the titles of nobility that were abolished in the French Revolution.