

1260 DAYS

Scripture uses three different expressions to describe a particular time: “three years and six months”, “1260 days”, “42 months” and “a time, times and the dividing of time”¹. All but Jesus’ and James’ references to Elijah’s drought² apply to prophecies found in the books of Daniel and Revelation. There are nine instances where these expressions occur:

Expression	Reference
“time, times, and half a time (or, dividing of time)”	1 Daniel 7:25; 2 Revelation 12:14; 3 Daniel 12:7
“42 months”	4 Revelation 11:2; 5 Revelation 13:5
“1260 days”	6 Revelation 11:3; 7 Revelation 12:6
“3 years and 6 months”	8 Luke 4:25; 9 James 5:17

Most Bible students are familiar with the *Dark Ages*, foretold by Daniel (7:25), during which the Church of Rome ruthlessly tortured to death many millions of Christians whose enlightened consciences forbade compliance with Rome’s unbiblical mandates. It began in 538 AD and ended when Napoleon’s General Louis-Alexandre Berthier stormed the Vatican on February 15, 1798 AD, took Pope Pius VI prisoner and shut down the church’s appalling corruption. The time span was 1260 **years**.

Later in Daniel’s book (12:7) the prophet foretells another event that spans a period of “a time, times and a half”:

“And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was standing on the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by him who lives for ever that it will be for *a time, times, and a half*; and when he has succeeded in scattering the power of the holy people, all these things will be finished. . . .”

The time span is 1260 **days**.

It seems, at first blush, that all expressions, Elijah’s drought excepted, are pointing to the same time of papal persecution. Ellen White *appears* to endorse that conclusion.³ A careful, contextual examination of Daniel 12:7, however, reveals an important distinction between the event in chapter seven and that of chapter 12. And after a closer look at what Ellen White actually said it becomes abundantly clear there are two distinct events that in fact are separated by centuries. These two events reveal the same iron⁴ principle in recurring action.⁵ One event spans “prophetic time” (a ‘day’ represents a Jewish year) while the other time period is literal, 24-hour days.

Conflating the *events* and assuming the year-for-a-day “principle” applies to *all* time prophecies, as has traditionally been done, has produced much confusion.⁶ The book *1335 Days* by David Cahill investigates the issue. [Synopsis](#)

¹ “Time” = 1 Jewish year (360 days long).
1 + 2 + ½ = 3½ years = 1260 days.

² Luke 4:25, James 5:17.

³ “The forty and two months [of Revelation 13:5] are the same as the “time and times and the dividing of time,” three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God’s people. This period . . . began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798” (*Great Controversy* 439.2).

⁴ The “feet of iron and clay” in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Daniel 2).

⁵ Prophecy is sometimes fulfilled in recurring instances, as in Jesus’ description of events in 70 AD and the same prophecy’s fulfillment at the end of time (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21).

⁶ Not all prophecies stipulating time periods in “days” necessarily translate to “years”. Jonah’s “40 days” warning to Nineveh were literal days, for example.

The Roman advance on Jerusalem under Cestius Gallus in autumn 66 AD and the siege by Titus beginning in spring 70 AD are separated by 3½ years.¹ The significance of this fact becomes apparent when we examine the counterpart at the “time of the end” described in Daniel 12 and highlighted by Jesus in Matthew 24. The span between the commencement of the 1335 days and the signing of the Death Decree is 3½ literal years, or 1260, 24-hour days.

¹ *These works explicitly reconstruct the timeline from Josephus:*

Emil Schürer — *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ Vol. I. Chronological framework of the revolt (66–70 CE).*

Martin Goodman — *The Jewish War: A New History. Clear modern synthesis of the campaign phases and timing.*

Steve Mason — *Josephus and the New Testament (and his Josephus commentaries). Careful treatment of Josephus’ sequencing and reliability.*

² *In process right now (Daniel 12:11).*

³ *Luke 4:25; James 5:17.*

The “general” who “sets up²” the Abomination of Desolation (counterfeit Sabbath laws in the United States of America) and the “general” who implements the universal Death Decree will likely be two different people (mirroring General Cestius Gallus in 66 AD and General Titus in 70 AD).

- ▶ Jesus’ urgency (Matthew 24:15–16) applied to *the end* of the 3½ years separating the two Roman military campaigns — not its *beginning*. The same message applies to us in the days we have now entered.

The first “siege” signals the cry, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him!” And those with trimmed lamps and much oil will have a focussed and dedicated commitment to warning all who will listen. For the “wise” there has been a reorientation of all temporal interests and the full consolidation of all spiritual values.

The second “siege” is the *signing* of the Death Decree and is the signal to flee. There will be a 30-day grace period before the violent destruction of the whole “City of Man (Babylon)”, which follows the failed attempt to execute God’s faithful, waiting ones.

A Call to Action — “Behold the Bridegroom cometh!”

Ellen White used the expression “The Elijah Message” repeatedly when speaking about the necessary reform, repentance and preparation for Christ’s return — especially in relation to the prophecy of Elijah in Malachi 4:5–6. Here’s one example:

“In this age, *just prior* to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as John did, is to be carried on in these last days . . . Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent” (3T 62).

Elijah’s climactic mission lasted 3½ years — “1260 days”.³ Coincidental?