*APPENDIX 1*

*WESLEY'S CHRONOLOGY OF THE REVELATION*

The present appendix is a presentation of the major chronological features found in Wesley's commentary on the Revelation in the *Expository Notes Upon the New Testament* supplemented by other sources. In addition to large number of dates within the text itself Wesley appended two tables to the end of the commentary.[[1]](#footnote-0) They are without title but are borrowed from Bengel.[[2]](#footnote-1) The first (hereafter "Table 1," whether Wesley's or Bengel's) is a "short view of the whole contents of this book [the Revelation]." It is organized around events described as in the Revelation with secular dates and the appropriate passages in the Apocalypse provided. The second (hereafter "Table 2," whether Wesley's or Bengel's) is a display of "the several ages, from the time of St. John's being in Patmos, down to the present time . . . according to the chief incidents mentioned in the Revelation." This table is divided into eighteen "ages" which are clearly intended to mean centuries given their correspondence with the text of the Revelation and the description given in Bengel's similar table. These centuries begin at 100 c.e. with "the destruction of the Jews by Adrian" as described in Revelation 8:7 and extend to 1700-1800 c.e. with the "the worship of the beast and his image" as described in Revelation 14:9. To facilitate reading references are placed directly in the text. What follows is only the broadest outline of the intricate historical portrait Wesley saw in the Apocalypse.[[3]](#footnote-2)

*THE FIRST CENTURY*

3 B.C.E of in 3,940 year of the world "Christ is born, three years before the common computation;" "In that which is vulgarly called, the thirtieth year of our Lord, Jesus Christ dies; rises; ascends" (*NNT*, Table 1).

[Bengel's Table 1 adds 3943 here as "the first year of the *Dionysian Aera*, or our usual way of reckoning the *year of our* LORD; which begin three years too late" {Bengel's Table 1}.]

[Bengel's Table 1 adds 30 here as the year of Christ's death and ascension {Bengel's Table 1}.]2

Age I is not listed on Wesley's or Bengel's second table, both of which begin with Age II. It is interesting that, although the century per age scheme (requiring that the first age be dated from the incarnation not the crucifixion) is clearly what both Wesley and Bengel had in mind, both comment on Hebrews 9:26 that the sacrifice of Christ, not his birth, which divides the world into two ages (*NNT*, Heb. 9:26; Bengel *Gnomon* Heb. 9:26).

The ten days of Revelation 2.10 refer to the end of Domitian's persecution of the early Christians, about 90 to 96 (*NNT*, Rev. 2:10).

75: "Vespasian dedicated a temple to Peace" one of the last peaceful events before the red horseman (*NNT*, Rev. 6:4).

96: "The Revelation is given; the coming of our Lord is declared to the seven churches in Asia, and their angels," Rev. 1-3 (*NNT*, Table 1).

97, 98: "The seven seals are opened, and under the fifth seal the chronos is declared;" c. Rev. 4-6 (*NNT*, Table 1).

The four and twenty elders of this portion of the Revelation represented "the most holy of all the former ages, Isai. xxiv.23; Heb. xii.1; representing the whole body of the saints" (*NNT*, Rev. 4:4).

The seven seals "swiftly follow the letters to the seven churches, and all begin almost at the same time." Seals 1-4 and their related symbolic horsemen described earthly things: the first a "flourishing state" toward the east, the second "much bloodshed: toward the west, the third "scarcity of provisions" toward the south, and the fourth "public calamities" toward the north. The seals began to be opened at the time of Trajan's ascension to the throne or about 98 (*NNT*, Rev. 6:1-8 and the introduction). Seals 5-7 related to the invisible world: the fifth to the "happy dead" and especially the martyrs; the sixth to the "unhappy" dead; and the seventh to the angels, especially to those with the trumpets (*NNT*, Rev. 6:9-17).

98-1209: The "*time*" or "*Chronos*" was declared under the fifth seal. A "*chronos"* is 1,111 years. Thus, this *chronos* would extend from 98 C.E to 1209 C.E. of from Trajan's persecution "to the first crusade against the Waldenses" (*NNT*, Rev 6:11). In his *Introduction* Bengel had the chronos extend from 97-1208 but in the commentary 98-1209, a small detail with respect to Wesley (Bengel, *Introduction*, Short Remarks, on Rev. 6:11).

*THE SECOND CENTURY*

100-200: "Age II. The Destruction of the Jews by Adrian," Rev. 8:7 (Table 2, 100-200 but focusing on the period 132-135 when the Jews were destroyed by Adrian [Hadrian] as the key event[[4]](#footnote-3)).

The trumpet of the first angel, c. Rev 8 (*NNT*, Table 1).

"Seven trumpets are given to the seven angels, C. vii, viii" (*NNT*, Table 1).

Wesley identified seven evil angels: four were at the corners of the earth restraining the winds (Rev. 7:1) which would otherwise mitigate the effects of the four good angels with the first four trumpets. Three additional evil angels, including one group, were discerned to parallel the good angels with the last three trumpets: "namely, the angel of the abyss, the four bound in the Euphrates, and Satan himself" (*NNT*, Rev. 7:1).

The "*children of Israel*" were those saved from the impending plagues (*NNT*, Rev. 7:4).

"Century, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, the trumpet of the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th angel, C. viii" (*NNT*, Table 1). (These centuries correspond to Ages II through V, below; see also *NNT*, Rev. 8:13).

The half hour of silence in heaven was understood as John's subjective experience of the event. Its real signification was to announce the great events of the seventh seal (*NNT*, Rev. 8:1).

100-200: "The destruction of the Jews by Adrian" (*NNT*, Table 2, c. Rev. 8:7).

The first trumpet was sounded with its focus on Asia as indicated by the phrase "the earth" or that which was near to St. John at the time of writing. The trumpet related to the various Jewish "insurrections" beginning under Trajan about 114 (*NNT*, Rev. 8:7).

133-135: This period corresponded to the even more violent revolt "under their false Messiah Barcochab" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:7).

*THE THIRD CENTURY*

200-300: Age "III. The inroads of the barbarous nations," Rev. 8:8 (*NNT*, Table 2, 200-300). Bengel identified the invaders as the Goths in his table (Bengel, Table 2). Wesley specified them as Goths only in the text of his commentary (*Rev*. 8:8).

The trumpet of the second angel; c Rev. 8 (*NNT*, Table 1).

The second trumpet was sounded with its focus on Europe as indicated by "the sea" in which the island Europe swims. The trumpet related to the various hordes which invaded the Roman empire, with a special focus on the Goths from 250 (*NNT*, 8:8)

*THE FOURTH CENTURY*

300-400: "AGE IV. The Arian bitterness," c. Rev. 8:10 (*NNT*, Table 2). The trumpet of the third angel; c. Rev. 8 (*NNT*, Table 1).

315: The year the Arian controversy "sprang up" (*NNT*, Rev 8:10).

The third trumpet sounded with its focus on "Afric" as indicated by "rivers" which characterize that great continent. The trumpet related to Arius and the Arians who are symbolized by the bitterness of "*Wormwood*" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:10-11).

*THE FIFTH CENTURY*

400-500: AGE "V. The end of the western empire," c. Rev. 8:12 (*NNT*, Table 2). Bengel added the specification "under Augustulus" (Bengel, Table 2).

The trumpet of the fourth angel c. Rev. 8 (*NNT*, Table 1).

403: The invasion of the Goths (*NNT*, Rev. 8:12).

The fourth trumpet sounded, but this time the focus was on the entire earth as indicated by the reference to the celestial bodies. The trumpet related to the "third part" of humanity which was destroyed. Special notice was given to the Goths and Huns (see immediately below; *NNT*, Rev. 8:12).

405: The invasion of the "Huns" (*NNT*, Rev 8:12).

410: Rome sacked by the Goths (*NNT*, Rev 8:12).

452: The north of Italy sacked by Attila (*NNT*, Rev 8:12).

455: "Valentinian the Third was killed, and Genseric invited from Afric" and he "plundered Rome for fourteen days together" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:12), cf. 540.

472: Rome plundered by Recimer (*NNT*, Rev 8:812).

474: The Jews oppressed in Persia by Phiruz (*NNT*, Rev. 8:13), cf. 540.

476: "Odacer seized upon Rome, deposed the emperor, and put an end to the empire itself" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:12).

483-532: "The main storm" of the Persian oppression beginning in the reign of Cabades," although it actually ended in 589 (*NNT*, Rev. 9:3), cf. 589.

*THE SIXTH CENTURY*

500-600: AGE "VI. The Jews tormented in Persia, C. ix.1" (*NNT*, Table 2, 500-600).

Here Wesley believed the Apostle John wrote an Introduction to trumpets 5-7 and woes 1-3. With this age begun, the last three trumpets and the three woes could occur. These are more circumscribed in their beginnings and endings than the previous calamities. Wesley noted that "toward the end of the fifth century there were presages of approaching calamities" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:13). The woes flowed from Patmos both eastward and westward over the entire world. The woes also had preparations which went before them: for the first, Isdegard of Persia's attempt to abolish the Sabbath in 454 (but cf. 455; *NNT*, Rev. 9:3) and Phiruz' persecution of the Jews in 474; for the second, it is the "rise of the Saracens" in 510; and for the third Innocent I (reigned 401-417) "and his successors" with their enlargement of the "episcopal jurisdiction" and "worldly power" leading to "ultimate monarchy" (*NNT*, Rev. 8:12-13).

"The Jews tormented in Persia" c. Rev. 9:1 (*NNT*, Table 2).

510: The rise of the Saracens (*NNT*, Rev. 8:13).

510-589: "The first woe," c. Rev. 9 (*NNT*, Table 1). In his second table Bengel indicated that this is done under the fifth angel (Bengel's Table 2). Wesley noted it in *NNT*.

The first woe was begun by the opening of the bottomless pit, "a deep and hideous prison; but different from 'the lake of fire'" by an angel, the "star," from the invisible world (*NNT*, Rev. 9:1). This woe related to the torment of the Jews by the Persians. The Persians were indicated by their striking similarity to "locusts," even to their coiffeurs! Their leader "Abaddon," like "Apollyon," signified "destroyer," but "is distinguished from the dragon, whose proper name is Satan." This distress continued for "five prophetic months" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:1-12).

540: The repression of the Jewish "academies" in Persia and the disallowance of a "president for nearly fifty years" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:3). The oppression had actually begun before this however, see 455 and 474 (*NNT*, Rev. 9:3).

589: The end of the Persian "affliction" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:3), cf. 483-532 (see also *NNT*, Rev. 9:12).

589-634: "The interval after the first woe," Rev. 9 (*NNT*, Table 1; see especially *NNT*, Rev. 9:8).

590: The beginning of image veneration; *NNT*, Rev 9:20.

591: "Chosroes II. reigned in Persia, who, after the death of the emperor, made dreadful disturbances in the east. Hence Mahomet found an open door for his new religion and empire" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:12).

*THE SEVENTH CENTURY*

600-700: Age "VII. The Saracen cavalry," c. Rev. 9:13 (*NNT*, Table 2).

" -" : "Mahomet himself; and, a little before him, Boniface III., with his universal bishopric" (*NNT*, Rev. 16:12); cc. 606 (see also *NNT*, Rev. 16:12).

606: "The usurper Phocas . . . not only declared the Bishop of Rome, Boniface III., universal bishop, but also the church of Rome the head of all churches" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:12); cf. 600-700 (see also *NNT*, Rev. 16:12).

634: "Abubeker . . . gained great advantage over the Persians and Romans in Syria" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:15).

634-840: "The second woe," Rev. 9 (*NNT*, Table 1).

634-847: The hour, day, month, and year of Revelation 9:15 or 212 common years is a period which "agrees with the slaughter which the Saracens made for a long time after Mahomet's death . . . until repulsed from Rome under Leo IV" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:15).

634-840: "The second woe," c. Rev. 9 (*NNT*, Table 1). Bengel (Table 1) adds that this is under the trumpet of the sixth angel.

The second woe, basically contemporaneous with the sixth trumpet, was "the loosing of the four angels who were bound in the Euphrates." This is related to the rise of Islam 638-849. The killing which ensued goes on for 212, presumably common, years from 634 to 847 when "the were repulsed from Rome under Leo IV." Both the two million horseman and the third of the men killed were totals from the entire period, "if we understand the expression literally" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:1-16). (There are slight discrepancies in the dates, including those between the body of the commentary and Table 1.)

647: "The total suppression of the Roman government" after the conquest by Osman in "Afric." This had followed the conquests of Omar in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Egypt" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:15).

651: The conquering by Osman of "Cyprus, and of all Persia" (*NNT*, Rev. 9:15).

*THE EIGHTH CENTURY*

700-800: AGE "VIII. Many kings," c. Rev. 10:11 (*NNT,* Table 2). (Wesley here did not follow Bengel precisely. Bengel's Table 2 cited "The Contention about *Image Worship*, making reference to Rev. 9:20. Wesley mentions it in the text of 9:20, however.)

726: Rome "revolted from the Greek emperor . . . and became a free state, governed by its senate. From this time the senate, and not the Pope, enjoyed the supreme civil power" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 796.

796: "Leo III., being chosen Pope, sent to Charles the Great, desiring him to come and subdue the senate and people of Rome, and constrain them to swear allegiance to him" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 796.

755: "The bishop of Rome became a secular prince, by king Pepin's giving him the exarchate of Lombady" (*NNT*, Rev. 11:14).

787: "The worship of images was established by the second Council of Nice," (*NNT*, Rev. 9:20).

*THE NINTH CENTURY*

800-900: "The ruler of the nations born," c. Rev. 12:5 (*NNT*, Table 2). (This entry is not in Bengel's Table 1 nor in his comment on 12:5. Bengel's Table 2, however, spoke of "The *Age of Photius:* and also the *Ruler of the Nations born*," citing Rev. 10:11.)

The preparation for the seventh trumpet was described in two sections "which run parallel" in time: 10:1-7 and 10:8-11:13. The third woe actually covered 12:12 to 13:18. Thus, the "mystery of God" of 10:7 was not realized until 15:1 and the beast of the bottomless pit of 11:7 came only in 17:8 (*NNT*, Rev. 10, the introduction). The entire passage introduced what would occur in the rest of the book functioning as a sort of parentheses in the "great vision of this book [which] goes straight forward, from the fourth to the twenty-second chapter" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:1). Much of this material was only a foreshadowing of a reality which is described later in the Apocalypse (e.g: the description of the actuality of the seventh trumpet, Rev. 11:15-22:5; *NNT*, Rev. 10, the introduction).

The seventh trumpet is the most severe, particularly as indicated by the "solemnity" of the swearing of its angel (*NNT*, 10:6-7).

"The beginning of the non-chronos[,] many kings," c. Rev. 9-10 (*NNT*, Table 1; see particularly *NNT*, Rev. 10:6). (Bengel's Table 1 gives both terminuses: "800-1836," which Wesley also stated in *NNT*, Rev. 10:6.)

The Non-*chronos*. Since the "time" or *chronos* of Revelation 10:6 would not pass before the mystery of God was fulfilled, Wesley, following Bengel, designated interval a "*non-chronos*" because a *chronos* was 1,111 years and "it seems to begin in the year 800, (when Charles the Great instituted in the west a new line of emperors, or of 'many kings'" (*NNT*, Rev. 10:11) and "to end in the year 1836; and to contain, among other things, the 'short time' of the third woe, the 'three times and a half' of the woman in the wilderness, and the 'duration' of the beast" (*NNT*, Rev. 10:6).

The eleventh verse of the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse disclosed

A most important period of time. We live in the *little time* wherein Satan hath great wrath; and this *little time* is now upon the decline. We are in the "time, times, and half a time," wherein the woman is "fed in the wilderness;" yea, the last part of it, "the half time," is begun. We are, as will be shown, towards the close of the "forty two months of the beast; and when his number is fulfilled, grievous things will be (*NNT*, Rev. 11:11).

The little time "is probably four-fifths of a chronos, or somewhat above 888 years." This is also the time of the third woe (synonymous with the twelve hundred and sixty days) which "may reach from 947, to the year 1836" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:12).

Revelation 11 speaks of the fate of "the holy city,' Jerusalem until the mystery of God is fulfilled by the removal of the dragon (cf. Matt 4:5; *NNT*, Rev. 11:2; 12, the introduction, cf: 11.7; 19; 20). The temple which St. John measured in Revelation 11:1 is the same one described by Ezekiel (Ezek. 40-48; *NNT*, Rev. 11, the introduction). Wesley made five points in this regard:

1. Ezekiel's prophecy was not fulfilled at the return from the Babylonish captivity.

2. Yet it did not refer to the "New Jerusalem," which is far more gloriously described.

3. It must infallibly be fulfilled even then "when they are ashamed of all that they have done," Ezek. xliii.11.

4. Ezekiel speaks of the same temple which is treated here.

5. As all things are there so largely described, St. John is shorter and refers thereto. [*NNT*, Rev. 11, the introduction]

The Gentiles "tread" or "inhabit" Jerusalem for "forty-two months" or 1,260 literal days (*NNT*, Rev. 11:2-4; see also 17:10). The two witnesses of that time would not Moses and Elijah, "as some have supposed (though without foundation)," but Zerubbabel and Joshua, "*the two olive trees*" of Zechariah 3:9 and 4:10. (*NOT*, Zech. 3:9 is not helpful 3:9. *NOT*, Zech. 4:3 says the two olive trees are part of "an emblem of the church."). They prophesy and Jerusalem was trodden until the beast ascended from the bottomless pit (previously, he had ascended from the sea, Rev 13:1 (*NNT*, Rev. 11:7). The passing of the two witnesses would be celebrated by Turks, Jews, and false Christians for a literal three and one-half days (*NNT*, Rev. 11:9-10). God then would speak, there would be a terrible earthquake, a tenth of the literal 70,000 people assembled at Jerusalem would perish and the remaining 63,000 would be converted.

Prior to the fulfilling of the mystery of God the seven phials must be poured out. The fulfilling of the mystery was "unfolded" in Revelation 11:15-19 (*NNT*, Rev. 10:7-8). With this the "treading of the holy city" would end and the "fulfilling of the mystery of God is unfolds" (*NNT*, Rev. 11:13-19). "The word of God would be fulfilled by the destruction of the beast; *the mystery*, by the removal of the dragon."

The seventh "trumpet comprises all that follows from these voices to Rev. xxii:5" (*NNT*, Rev. 11:15).

It would also be at this point that the "royal government" of God "is extended over the whole world" as "God now puts an end to this monstrous rebellion, and maintains his right to all things" (*NNT*, Rev. 11:15).

The wrath of God in the seventh trumpet would strike out against the rebellious nations through several ages (*NNT*, Rev. 11:18).

The seventh trumpet, unlike the others, may not only be heard in heaven but also on earth as is alluded to in 1 Thess. 4:16 (*NNT*, Rev. 11:15; *NNT*, 1 Thess. 4:16 make no direct connection to Rev.).

The judgment of the dead is mentioned in Revelation 11:18 as present for although it does not actually happen until Rev. 22:12, it is nonetheless "infallibly certain" (*NNT*, Rev. 11:18).

840: The end of the second woe (*NNT*, Rev. 12:12).

840-947: "The interval after the second woe" c. Rev. 9-10 (*NNT*, Table 1).

The woman of Revelation 12:1 is the Church as represented by this Old Testament image of Israel. She is depicted as in struggle both in heaven and on earth revealing once again Wesley's apocalyptic vision of reality (*NNT*, Rev. 12:1). The great red dragon, Satan, of Rev. 12:3 attacked the woman trying to prevent the spread of the Gospel, but was unsuccessful. It was during this time, the ninth age, when many nations and their princes were added to the Church anticipating the millennial reign (*NNT*, Rev. 12:3). The wilderness into which she escaped Satan's fury was western Europe. She stayed there for 1,260 prophetic days or "seven hundred seventy-seven, common years . . . . 847 to 1524" as shown by Bengel in his "Introduction." The reader will note that these latter dates yield a difference of six hundred forty seven years.

There was a great war in heaven, principally between Michael and Satan. Michael is clearly a created angel as indicated by his refusal to confront Satan directly and the meaning of his name: "Who is like God." The irony of this name as one who is confronting Satan is emphasized in the commentary (*NNT*, Rev. 12:7). As a result, Satan was cast from heaven. The fact that he had a place in heaven at all is caused Wesley to remark: "How deep a mystery this! One may compare this with Luke x.18; Eph. ii.2; iv.12" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:8).

"840-1521 The twelve hundred and sixty days of the woman, after she had brought forth the man child," c. Rev. 12:6 (*NNT*, Table 1).

This period seems to extend to Age XVII. The "Woman" of Revelation 12, is "the emblem of the church of Christ, as she is originally Israel, though built and enlarged on all sides by the addition of heathen converts (*NNT*, Rev. 12:1). The Woman's travail is spiritual, awaiting the return of Christ (Rev. 12:1) in part fulfilled in the spread of Christianity during this period, that is, the male child (*NNT*, Rev. 12:5). The Dragon seems to be identified with the Manichees (*NNT*, Rev. 12:4). There are problems with this since it would seem to have to extend until the early 1500's, (see above). War in heaven begins in 12:7 the Dragon is cast out of heaven in 12:9.

842: The death of the iconoclast emperor Theophilus and the resurgence of image worship under his widow Theodora ensues (*NNT*, Rev. 9:20).

847: "The butchery made by the Saracens ceased" and thus passed the second woe (*NNT*, Rev 11:14).

847-947: A time of "pestilent doctrines, particularly that of the Manichees in the east" (*NNT*, Rev 12:4).

847-1058: "The former part of the twelve hundred and sixty days [of the woman], before the three times and an half" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14). During this time the woman "was fed by others, being little able to help herself" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14). The entire period of the 1,260 days is "the wilderness" during which the dragon is imprisoned (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

847-1521: "The twelve hundred and sixty days of the woman, after she had brought forth the man child," c. Rev. 12:6 (*NNT*, Table 1). The "man child" here is a reference to Christ in the presence of His body the Church as many nations were added to the sphere of Christian influence, or as Wesley puts it: "not in his person, but in his kingdom" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:5). Bengel's Table 1 has 864-1521. Wesley in his comment on 12:12 says: "the 777 years of the woman, which began about the year 847, quickly after which followed the war in heaven, fix the beginning not long after 864; and thus the third woe falls in the tenth century, extending from 900 to 1000" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:12).

847-1524: The 1,260 or 777 common years (*NNT*, Rev. 12:6 also 12:12; 12:14). (A discrepancy exists not only between Wesley and Bengel at this point, but also between Wesley's Table 1 and his *NNT*, Rev. 12:6 and between his 777 years and either set of beginning and ending dates. Clearly the 777 years would indicate that 1624 is the correct date given Wesley oft-repeated beginning date of 847.)

863: The Council of Constantinople's endorsement of image worship (*NNT*, Rev. 9:20)

871: The Council of Constantinople's second endorsement of image worship (*NNT*, Rev. 9:20).

900: The martyrdom of "Olam, king of Sweden," for refusing to be compelled by his subjects to idolatry is seen as an instance of the third woe (*NNT*, Rev. 12:11).

*THE TENTH CENTURY*

900-1000: AGE "X. The third woe," C. Rev. 12:12 (*NNT*, Table 2).

" -" : "The dark, the iron, the unhappy age" of the third woe (*NNT*, Rev. 12:12).

900-1000: "Both the Turks and Gregory VCII. carried all before them," (*NNT*, Rev. 16:12).

916: Queen Drahomire's persecution of "multitudes of Bohemian Christians," (*NNT*, Rev. 12:11).

947-1836: "The third woe," Rev. 12:12 (*NNT*, Table 1, Rev. 12:12).

947-1836: The "little time" or four-fifths of a chronos, or about 888 years, apparently Ages 10-17 (*NNT*, Rev. 12:12).

With the dragon being cast out of heaven the third woe began to exert its force. It extended from some considerable period of time (Rev. 12.1-12, and introduction).

This period contained Wesley's time and the rise of Methodism, the half time of "the time, times, and half a time," perhaps 888 years, or about 947-1836 (Rev. 12.12).

948: Christianity brought to Denmark (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

965: Christianity brought to Poland and Silesia (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

997: Adellbert of Prussia killed (*NNT*, Rev. 12:13).

997: Christianity brought to Hungary, Sweden, and Norway (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

*THE ELEVENTH CENTURY*

1000-1100: AGE "XI. The ascent of the beast out of the sea," c. Rev. 13:1 (*NNT*, Table 2). (Bengel's Table 2 makes particular reference to Hildebrand cf. his *Introduction*: Conclusion, II.VI; Conclusion IV.XXIII-XIV. He also noted that Luther held this position; *Introduction*, Conclusion IV.XXX.)

Christianity brought to Transylvania (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

"Shortly after" 1000: Christianity brought to "other parts of Cadia" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

1008: King Brunus killed (*NNT*, Rev. 12:13). Stephen of Hungary's advocacy of Christianity met violent opposition (*NNT*, Rev. 12:13).

1033: "Benedict the Ninth, a child of eleven years old, is bishop of Rome, and occasions grevious disorders for above twenty years" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1). The following list of dates relate to the papacy and the beast are included because Wesley considered it to be "the most remarkable particulars . . . taken so high as abundantly to show the rise of the beast, and brought down as low as our own time, in order to throw a light on the following part of the prophecy;" *NNT*, Rev. 12:13). The other dates in this series are: 1048, 1058, 1073, 1076, 1077, 1080, 1083, 1085, 1095, 1111, 1123, 1132, 1143, 1152, 1155, 1159, 1168, 1177, 1204, 1208, 1300, 1305, 1377, 1378, 1449, 1517, 1527, 1557, 1564, 1682, 1713, 1721.)

1048: "Damascus II. introduces the use of the triple crown" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1058: "Wings are given to the woman" (*NNT*, Rev. 17:10).

1058: "The church of Milan is, after long opposition, subjected to the Roman" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1058-1280: One of the "times" of Revelation. In the particular one "the Turkish flood ran higher and higher, though frequently repressed by the emperors, or their generals helping the woman" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:16); cf. 1280-1725 and 1725-1836.

1058-1524: During this latter period of the wilderness the woman, or the Church, "is both fed by others, and has food herself." Wesley referred to the "sciences" and "the Scriptures, in the original tongues" being "transplanted" from the east to the west and "most of all, the Reformation" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:14).

1058-1836: "The time, times, and half a time, and with that period, the beast, his forty-two months, his number 666," "to" c. Rev. 13:5 (*NNT*, Table 1). Note that in 1058 the "Wings are given to the woman" (*NNT*, Rev. 17:10).

1073: "Hildebrand, or Gregory VII., comes to the throne" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

Revelation 13 contains the identity of the beast, an issue of "which must be treated, not as a point of curiosity, but as a solemn warning from God!" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1; see also 17:1-14. Bengel did a similar demonstration in his *Gnomon* in 13:1).

This beast is the Romish Papacy, as it came to a point six hundred years since, stands now, and will for some time longer. To this, and no other power on earth, agrees the whole text, and every part of it in every point; as we may see, with the utmost evidence (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1).

Wesley then developed eight propositions and twenty three observations to support his contention (these are treated elsewhere). Significant for the present discussion is "the time of the ascent of the beast" which was "when Henry submitted, then Gregory began to reign without control. In the same year, 1077, on September 1, he fixed a new era of time, called the Indiction, used at Rome to this day" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1 see also 14:1 and 17:10). This is when "the beast ascends out of the sea" (*NNT*, Rev. 17:10).

1076: Hildebrand "deposes and excommunicates the emperor" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1077: Hildebrand "uses him shamefully and absolves him" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033).

1077: "On September 1, he [Hildebrand / Gregory VII] fixed a new era of time, called the Indiction, used at Rome to this day" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1077: "The beast rose out of the sea" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033 (see also *NNT*, Rev. 17:10).

1080: Hildebrand "excommunicates him [the emperor] again, and sends a crown to Rodulph [spelt as in the original], his competitor" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1080-1176: During this period when "the emperors asserted their right, there were . . . only, five open divisions, and at least as many antipopes, some of whom were, indeed the rightful Popes" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:3).

1083: Rome is taken. Gregory flees. Clement is made Pope, and crowns the emperor" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1085: "Gregory VII. dies at Salerno" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1095: "Urban II. holds the first Popish council, at Clermont, and gives rise to the crusades" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

*THE TWELFTH CENTURY*

1100-1200: AGE "XII Power given to the beast," c. Rev. 13:5 (*NNT*, Table 2) (Bengel's Table 2 states it more boldly: "The papal *Power* begins.")

1123: "The first western general council in the Lateran. The marriage of priests is forbidden" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1132: "Innocent II[.] declares the emperor to be the Pope's liege-man, or vassal" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1143-1810: "The forty-two months begin" which equal the 666 years of the beast (*NNT*, Rev. 7:10), cf. 1810.

1143: "The Romans set up a governor of their own, independent of Innocent II. He excommunicates them, and dies. Celestine II. is, by an important innovation, chosen to the Popedom without the suffrage of the people; the right of choosing the Pope is taken from the people, and afterward from the clergy, and lodged in the Cardinal alone" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1152: "Eugene II. assumes the power of canonizing saints" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1155: "Adrian IV. puts Arnold of Brixia to death for speaking against the secular power of the Papacy" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1159: "Victor IV. is elected and crowned. But Alexander III. conquers him and his successor" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1168: "Alexander III. excommunicates the emperor, and brings him so low, that," (this entry breaks off here and is continued in 1177) (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1177: "He submits to the Pope's setting his foot on his neck" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

*THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY*

1200-1300: AGE "XIIIII. War with the saints," c. Rev. 13:7 (*NNT*, Table 2). (Bengel's Table 2 specifies the "*Crusade* against the *Waldenses* (or *Vaudois*), which Wesley relegates to his text.)

1200: The Albigenses "possessed several towns in the year 1200" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:7).

1204: "Innocent III. sets up the Inquisition against the Vaudois" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1208: Innocent III "proclaims a crusade against them" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033; see also 13:7.

1209: "War with the saints: the end of the chronos" Rev. 13:7 (*NNT*, Table 1; see also *NNT*, 13:7). The reference to war with the saints has its historical connection in the Papal attacks on the Waldenses and Albigenses (*NNT*, Rev. 13:7). (Bengel's Table 1 specifies 1208-1209.)

1280-1725: The "two times" of Revelation. "During these . . . the Turkish power flowed far and wide; but still from time to time the princes of the earth *helped the woman*, that she was not carried away by it" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:16) cf. 1058-1280 and 1725-1836.

*THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY*

1300: Boniface VIII. introduces the year of jubilee" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033, 1725 (see also *NNT*, 16:12).

1300: "The Ottoman Porte" arose (*NNT*, Rev. 16:12).

1300-1400: AGE "XIV. The middle of the third woe" (*NNT*, Table 2). (Wesley's table gives no reference to Rev. here; but Bengel's Table 2 speaks of this period as "The *Age of Wickliff*" and repeats the previous reference to Rev. 13:7.)

1305: "The Pope's residence is removed to Avignon" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1377: The Pope's residence "is removed back to Rome" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1378: "the fifty years' schism begins" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

*THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY*

1400-1500: AGE "XV. The beast in the midst of his strength," c. Rev. 13:8 (*NNT*, Table 2). (Bengel's Table 2 gives more detail: "The *Age of Councils* [viz, at Constance, Basil and Florence] the middle and height of the papal power.")

1449: "Felix V., the last Antipope, submits to Nicholas V." (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

*THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY*

1500-1600: AGE "XVI. The Reformation; the woman better fed," c. Rev. 13:9 (*NNT*, Table 2).

The beast of the Papacy reigned from Revelation during chapters 13-16, Babylon reigned during the first seven verses of chapter seventeen, and then the Beast would reign again from 17:8. The brief period of Babylon's ascendancy would be the result of the Beast's kingdom being repressed under the fifth phial (*NNT*, Rev. 13:14).

The beast is a body of men for the first and second periods of his existence Revelation 13:1 to 17:7. He is both a body and an individual in Revelation 17:8-11. He is an individual 17:12-19:20 (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1, obs. 16).

1517: "The Reformation begins" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1518-1548: The Inquisition. Wesley noted that "some have computed . . . that fifteen millions of Protestants . . . perished" (*NNT*, Rev. 18:24).

1527: "Rome is taken and plundered" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1557: "Charles V. resigns the empire; Ferdinand I. thinks the being crowned by the Pope superfluous" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1); cf. 1033.

1564: ""Pius IV. confirms the Council of Trent" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

"Real fire" is brought down from heaven "by the power of the devil" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:13).

The wide ranging worship of the image of the beast described in Revelation 13 would be facilitated by the fact that "the original image will be set up where the beast himself shall appoint. But abundance of copies would be taken, which may be carried into all parts, like those of Diana of Ephesus" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:14). The impact of these images would be heightened by their speaking which is not surprising since "many instances of this kind have been already among the Papists, as well as the heathens" (*NNT*, Rev. 14:15).

"The most zealous of" the Beast's "followers will probably choose" to have his mark "*on their forehead*" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:16).

Following the spirit of Bengel Wesley states:

To have *the name of the beast* is, to acknowledge His papal Holiness; to have *the number of his name* is, to acknowledge the papal succession. The second beast will enforce the receiving of this mark under the severest penalties. (*NNT*, Rev. 13:17)

The infamous 666 is the length of years the beast will endure (*NNT*, Rev. 13:18).

Chapter 14: The hundred forty-four thousand of Revelation 14:1-5 would be "either those out of all mankind who had been the most eminently holy, or the most holy out of the twelve tribes of Israel[;] the same that were mentioned, Rev. vii.4, and perhaps also, Rev[.] xv.2." It would be through these "as a kind of chorus" that "the church on earth [is] instructed, animated, and encouraged, by the sentiments temper, and devotion of the church in heaven" (*NNT*, Rev. 14:1).

*THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY*

1600-1700: AGE "XVII. An everlasting gospel promulged," C. Rev. 14:6 (*NNT*, Table 2). (Bengel's Table 2 specifies Rev. "xiv. 6. 8.")

1614: "An everlasting Gospel promulged," c. Rev. 14:6 (*NNT*, Table 1). The Gospel mentioned here was "not *the* gospel, properly so called; but *a* gospel, or joyful message, which was to have an influence on all ages" (*NNT*, Rev. 14:6). In Rev. 14:6-8, Wesley cataloged the evils of Rome and the manner in which she has made all nations drink of them.

1682: "Doctrines highly derogatory to the Papal authority are openly taught in France" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

*THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*

1700-1800: AGE "XVIII. The worship of the beast and his image," c. Rev. 14:9 (*NNT*, Table 2; this is the last entry in Table 2).

1713: "The constitution *Unigenitus*" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1), cf. 1033.

1721: "Pope Gregory VII. canonized anew" (*NNT*, Rev. 13:1) cf. 1033.

This is the first period of the beast, when he "was," described in Rev. 13 (*NNT*, Rev. 17:8).

1725: "*Babylon the great*-Benedict XIII, in his proclamation of the jubilee" extolls the holy city in terms relating to Babylon (*NNT*, Rev. 17:5).

1725-1836: The "half time" of Revelation. "In the beginning of this period the Turks began to meddle with the affairs of Persia: wherein they have so entangled themselves, as to be the less able to prevail against the two remaining Christian empires. Yet this flood still reaches the woman 'in her place;' and will, till near the end of the 'half time,' itself be swallowed up, perhaps by means of Russia, which is risen in the room of the eastern empire" (*NNT*, Rev. 12:16), cf. 1058-1280 and 1280-1725.

*THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*

1810: "The end of the forty-two months of the beast; after which, and the pouring out of the phials, he is not, and Babylon reigns queen," c. Rev. 15-16 (*NNT*, Table 1), cf. 1143 (see also *NNT*, Rev. 17:10.

Chapter 15 contained the announcement of the seven phials of the seven last plagues. The plagues unlike, the trumpets, would follow one another in quick succession (*NNT*, Rev. 15:7). The phials' destruction would focus mainly on "the beast and his followers with swift and impetuous force" (*NNT*, Rev. 16:1). The first four would fall upon "the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun" here taken literally (*NNT*, Rev. 16:1-9). This plain literal interpretation was carried over into last three phials which affect successively "the throne of the beast . . . the Mahometans . . . [and] the heathens." The effects of the earthquake, sixty pound hail-stones, and the like would be devastating; causing Wesley to remark: "What a change must this make in the face of the terraqueous globe! And yet the end of the world is not come" (*NNT*, Rev. 16:20).

The second beast was also called the false prophet (*NNT*, Rev. 16:13).

1832: "The beast ascends from the bottomless pit," c. Rev. 17-18 (*NNT*, Table 1; see also *NNT*, Rev. 17:10).

In the seventeenth chapter of the Revelation John was carried away by an angel "in the vision" to see the judgment which is to come upon the "great whore" or the woman and the scarlet wild beast upon whom she sat ("the same which is described in the thirteenth chapter").

The woman is the city of Rome, with its buildings and inhabitants; especially the nobles. The beast, which is now scarlet-coloured, (bearing the bloody livery, as well as the person, of the woman) appears very different from before. (*NNT*, Rev. 17:3)

The name of blaspheny of Revelation 13:1 has in Revelation 17:4 multiplied into many names, which form are "the blasphemous titles of the Pope" "from the time of Hildebrand [Gregory VII, reigned 1073-1085]." Wesley noted that "both the scripture and other writers frequently represent a city under this emblem" of a woman (*NNT*, Rev. 17:1-3). The name "mystery" on the forehead of the beast (Rev. 17:5) is the same as that which "was inscribed on the front of the Pope's mitre, till some of the Reformers took public notice of it."

With regard to "Babylon the great" (*NNT*, Rev. 17:5):

Benedict XIII, in his proclamation of the jubilee, A.D. 1725, explains this sufficiently-His words are, "To this holy city, famous for the memory of so many holy martyrs, run with religious alacrity. Hasten to the place which the Lord hath chose. Ascend to this new Jerusalem, whence the law of the Lord and the light of evangelical truth hath flowed forth into all nations, from the very first beginning of the church: the city most rightfully called "The Palace," place for the pride of all ages, the city of the Lord, the Sion of the Holy One of Israel. This catholic and apostolic Roman church is the head of the world, the mother of all believers, the faithful interpreter of God and mistress of all churches." But God somewhat varies the style. *The mother of harlots*-The parent, ringleader, patroness, and nourisher of many daughters, that closely copy after her [*NNT*, Rev. 17:5].

Rome became "'The slaughter-house of martyrs'" (*NNT*, Rev. 17:6).

The duration of the beast is "divided into three periods which are expressed in a fourfold manner:"

I. He, 1. Was; 2[.] And is not; 3. And will ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.

II. He, 1. Was; 2. And is not; 3. And will be again.

III. The seven heads are seven hills and seven kings: 1. Five are fallen; 2. One is; 3. The other is not come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

IV. He, 1. Was; 2. And is not; 3[.] Even he is the eighth, and is one of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

The first of these three is described in the thirteenth chapter. This was past when the angel spoke to St. John. The second was then in its course; the third was to come. *And is not*-The fifth phial brought darkness upon his kingdom: the woman took this advantage to seat herself upon him. Then it might be said, He *is not*. Yet shall he afterwards *ascend out of the bottomless pit*-Arise again with diabolical strength and fury. But he will not reign long[:] soon after his ascent he goeth *into perdition* for ever. (*NNT*, Rev. 17:8)

The enigmatic "seven heads are seven hills" of Revelation 17:9 are understood by Wesley to be the seven physical hills of Rome only five of which are in use at the time of the beast (*NNT*, Rev. 17:9). A list of dates then follows:

1058. Wings are give to the woman[.]

1077. The beast ascends out of the sea[.]

1143. The forty-two months begin[.]

1810. The forty-two months end.

1832. The beast ascends out of the bottomless pit[.]

1836. The beast finally overthrown. (*NNT*, Rev. 17:9).

Wesley continued with a specific description of the antichrist:

The whole succession of Popes from Gregory VII. are undoubtedly antichrist. Yet this hinders not, but that the last Pope in this succession will be more eminently the antichrist, the man of sin, adding to that of his predecessors a peculiar degree of wickedness from the bottomless pit. This individual person, as Pope, is the seventh head of the beast; as the man of sin, he is the eighth, or the beast himself (*NNT*, Rev. 17:11).

Yet, he qualified this comment elsewhere. In the *Notes* on 1 John 2:18 he said:

Under the term antichrist, or the spirit of antichrist, he includes all false teachers, and enemies to the truth; yea, whatever doctrines or men are contrary to Christ. It seems to have been long after this that the name of antichrist was appropriated to that grand adversary of Christ, "the man of sin," 2 Thess. ii.3[.] Antichrist, in St. John's sense, that is antichristianism, has bee spreading from his time till now; and will do so, till that great adversary arises, and is destroyed by Christ's coming (*NNT*, 1 John 2:18).

And in 2 Thess. 2:3-7 he said that the:

*Falling away*-From the pure faith of the gospel . . . began even in the apostolic age[.] But *the man of sin, the son of perdition*-Eminently so called, is not come yet. However, in many respects, the Pope has an indisputable claim to those titles. He is, in an imphatical sense, *the man of sin*, as he increases all manner of sin above measure. And he is, too, properly styled, *the son of perdition*, as he has caused the death of numberless multitudes, both of his opposers and followers, destroyed innumerable souls, and will himself perish everlastingly. He it is that *opposeth* himself to the emperor, once his rightful sovereign; and the *exaltheth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped*-Commanding angels, and putting kings under his feet, both of whom are *called gods* in scripture; claiming the highest power, the highest honour; suffering himself, not once only, to be styled God of vice-god. Indeed no less is implied in his ordinary title, "Most Holy Lord," or, "Most Holy Father." *So that he sitteth*-Entrhoned. *In the* temple of god-Mentioned Rev. xi.1. *Declaring himself that he is God*-Claiming the prerogatives which belong to Go alone.

Verse 6. *And now ye know*-But what I told you when I was with you[.] *That which restraineth*-The power of the Roman Emperors. When this is *taken away, the wicked one will be revealed*[.] *In his time*-His appointed season, and not before[.]

[8] He will surely be revealed; *for the mystery*-The deep, secret power *of iniquity*, just opposite to the power of godliness, already worketh. It began with the love of honour, and the desire to power; and is completed in the entire subversion of the gospel of Christ. This *mystery of iniquity* is not wholly confined to the Romish church, but extends itself to others also. It seems to consist of, 1. Human inventions added to the written word. 2. Mere outside performances put in the room of faith and love. 3. Other mediators besides the man Christ Jesus. The two last branches, together with idolatry and bloodshed, are the direct consequences of the former; namely, the adding to the word of God. *Already worketh*-In the church. *Only he that restraineth*-That is, the potentate who successively has Rome in his power. The emperors, heathen or christian; the kings, Goths or Lombards; the Carolingian or German emperors (2 Thess. 2:3-7).

In this connection Wesley saw the entity of the seven heads as corporately comprising the eighth (*NNT*, Rev. 17:9). The "ten horns" are "secular potentates, contemporary with, not succeeding each other, who *receive authority as kings with the beast*, probably in some convention, which, after a very short space, they will deliver up to the beast (*NNT*, Rev. 17:12). The "woman," or the "great city," will reign while the beast "'is not,'" that is, while the woman is in ascendancy over him under the fifth phial (*NNT*, Rev. 17:8, 18).

The fall of Babylon mentioned prophetically in Rev. 14:8 was described in most dramatic terms in Rev. 18:2: Babylon

*Is become an habitation*-A free abode. *Of devils, and an hold*-A prison. *Of every unclean spirit*-Perhaps confined there where they had once practiced all uncleanness, till the judgment of the great day. How many horrid inhabitants hath desolate Babylon! ["!" in original] of invisible beings, devils, and unclean spirits; of visible, every unclean beast, every filthy and hateful bird. Suppose, then, Babylon to mean heathen Rome; what have the Romanists gained, seeing from the time of that destruction, which they say is past, these are to be its only inhabitants for ever [*NNT*, Rev. 18:2].

The intertwined reality of Rome and the papacy were seen again in Revelation 18:7, John's description of her self-appraisal of "sit[ting] as a queen" brought to Wesley's mind "those expressions, "the chair, the see of Rome: he sat so many years." She was the "'mistress of all churches; the supreme; the infallible; the only spouse of Christ; out of which there is no salvation'" (*NNT*, Rev. 18:7). The phrase "strong city" of Revelation 18:16 was seen as an ancient appellation of its own inhabitants ("*Valentia*," *NNT*, Rev. 18:10). The decadence of attributed to the "Babylon" of Revelation was seen as applying to the practices of the Roman Church (*NNT*, Rev. 18:12-18). Then angel would take a millstone and throw it into the sea making Rome and all her people, regardless of social rank, utterly desolate (*NNT*, Rev. 18:22).

Chapter 18 ends with a stirring condemnation of the sins of both Imperial and Papal Rome:

There is no city under the sun which has so clear a title to catholic blood-guiltiness as Rome. The guilt of the blood shed under the heathen emperors has not been removed under the Popes, but hugely multiplied. Nor is Rome accountable only for that which hath been shed in the city, but for that shed in *all the earth*. For at Rome under the Pope, as well as under the heathen emperors, were the bloody orders and edicts given: and wherever the blood of holy men was shed, there were the grand rejoicings for it. And what immense quantities of blood have been shed by her agents! Charles IX., of France, in his letter to Gregory XIII., boasts, that in and not long after the massacre of Paris, he had destroyed seventy thousand Hugonots. Some have computed, that, from the year 1518, to 1548, fifteen millions of Protestants have perished by the Inquisition. This may be overcharged; but certainly the number of them in those thirty years, as well as since, is almost incredible. To these we may add innumerable martyrs, in ancient, middle, and late ages, in Bohemia, Germany, Holland, France, England, Ireland, and many other parts of Europe, Afric, and Asia. (*NNT*, Rev. 18:24)

1836: "The end of the non-chronos, and of the many kings; the fulfilling of the word, and of the mystery of God; the repentance of the survivors in the great city; the end of the 'little time,' and of the three times and a half; the destruction of the beast; the imprisonment of Satan," c. Rev. 19-20 (*NNT*, Table 1; see also *NNT*, Rev. 17:10). (Bengel's Table 1 adds that Satan is bound for 1,000 years.)

In Rev. 19:1-6 Wesley commented on the eruption of praise from the multitudes in heaven. He noted that in 4:9-10 and 5:8 and 14 the living creatures were mentioned first but in 19:4 the elders take precedence. Since the living creatures were most near the throne, Wesley, in a most literal manner, attributed this reversal to the direction of the flow of praise from the center outward in the former passages while the latter is the result of praise moving from the circumference inward due to the judgments of God then being fulfilled (*NNT*, Rev. 19:1-6, esp. 4).

There then would follow marriage supper of the Lamb in 19:7-10. John is so moved that he had to be reminded to write by his "fellowservant." He also mistakenly worships one of his "brethren," confusing him for the Almighty. Interestingly, Wesley thought this was the same account as found in 22:8-9 (*NNT*, Rev. 19:7-10; on the imperative to "write" see 14:13; on John's confusion of angels and deity see 22:8-9).

Then "a new and peculiar opening" of heaven occurred "in order to show the magnificent expedition of Christ and his attendants, against his great adversary." The triumphal Lord would go forth on His white horse with eyes that are "a flame of fire;" no longer merely "as or like" it (Rev. 1:14; *NNT*, Rev. 19:11). "*He is clothed in a vesture dipped in . . .* the blood of enemies he hath already conquered. Isaiah lxiii. 1, &c" (*NNT*, Rev. 19:13). He would dispense His judgment against the nations. The meal motif is again used, although now not the rejoicing of the marriage supper but as a "strongly figurative expression, (taken from Ezekiel xxxix. 17,) denoting the vastness of the ensuing slaughter" (*NNT*, Rev. 19:17). The ten kings would gather together other rulers "whether Popish, Mahometan, or pagan" (*NNT*, Rev. 19:19). The wild beast and the false prophet would be cast alive into the lake of fire perhaps paralleling the translations of Enoch and Elijah (curiously, no reference is made to Rev. 11:12). Wesley noted that "none but the beast of Rome would have hardened himself thus against the God he pretended to adore." "Well is he styled a *beast*, from his carnal and vile affections; a *wild beast*, from his savage and cruel spirit!" (*NNT*, Rev. 19:20). Wesley considered it an "one exquisite beauty" that the great descriptions of the armies and their equipment in 19:11-19 was followed in verse 20 by "the account of the victory, without one word of an engagement or fighting" (*NNT*, Rev. 19:20).

*THE FINAL EVENTS*

"Afterward:" "The loosing of Satan for a small time; the beginning of the thousand years reign of the saints; the end of the small time," c. Rev. 20 (*NNT*, Table 1; see also *NNT*, Rev. 20:7. (Bengel's Table 1 adds that the end of the little season is in Rev. 20:7).

*THE FIRST MILLENNIUM*

Presumably 1836, the second half.

After the beast would be overthrown by Christ an angel would descend to bind the "proud dragon [Satan] . . . even as he and his angels were cast out of heaven by Michael and his angels" to be cast into the bottomless pit (*NNT*, Rev. 20:1). There he would spend a thousand years, the first of two millennial periods. Wesley (following Bengel) was adamant "that these thousand [years] to not precede, or run parallel with, but wholly follow, the times of the beast" (*NNT*, Rev. 20:2). His reasons include:

1. From the series of the whole book, representing one continued chain of events. 2. From the circumstances which precede. The woman's bringing forth is followed by the casting of the dragon out of heaven to the earth. With this is connected the third woe, whereby the dragon through, and with, the beast, rages horribly. At the conclusion of the third woe the beast is overthrown and cast into "the lake of fire." At the same time the other grand enemy, the dragon, shall be bound and shut up. 3. These thousand years bring a new, full, and lasting immunity from all outward and inward evils, the authors of which are now removed, and an affluence of all blessings. But such a time the church has never yet seen. Therefore it is still to come. 4. These thousand years are followed by the last times of the world, the letting loose of Satan, who gathers together Gog and Magog, and is thrown to the beast and false prophet "in the lake of fire." Now Satan's accusing the saints in heaven, his rage on earth, his imprisonment in the abyss, his seducing Gog and Magog, and being cast into the lake of fire, evidently succeed each other. 5. What occurs from Rev. xx. 11, to xxii. 5, manifestly follows the things related in the nineteenth chapter. The thousand years came between; whereas if they were past, neither the beginning nor the end of them would fall within this period. In a short time those who assert that they are now at hand will appear to have spoken the truth. Meantime let every man consider what kind of happiness he expects therein. The danger does not lie in maintaining that the thousand years are yet to come; but in interpreting them, whether past or to come, in a gross and carnal sense. The doctrine of the Son of God is a mystery, So is his cross; and so is his glory. In all these he is a sign that is spoken against. Happy they who believe and confess him in all! (*NNT*, Rev. 20:2.

It is interesting to note that the argument from experience (point 3, above) is utilized as it was with entire sanctification (see *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* para 19).

While in the bottomless pit for the first thousand years there would be great blessing on earth,

The grand enemy being removed, the kingdom of God holds on its uninterrupted course among the nations; and the great mystery of God, so long foretold, is at length fulfilled; namely, when the beast is destroyed and Satan is bound." This fulfillment approaches nearer and nearer; and contains things of the utmost importance, the knowledge of which become every day more distinct and easy. In the mean time it is highly necessary to guard against the present rage and subtlety of the devil. (*NNT*, Rev. 20:3).

This binding of Satan would be for a "comparatively" small time. Thus, humanity

Are shortly to expect, one after another, the calamities occasioned by the second beast, the harvest and the vintage, the pouring out of the phials, the judgment of Babylon, the last raging of the beast and his destruction, the imprisonment of Satan. (*NNT*, Rev. 20:3).

Those that sit on the thrones of Revelation 20:4 were defined by Wesley as neither "the saints already raised" and "*the souls*, or *persons*, mentioned immediately after" (*NNT*, Rev. 20:4). The souls of those beheaded in Revelation 20:4 would be reunited with their bodies as indicated by the term "lived" and reign with Christ in heaven as distinct from the reigning on earth of Revelation 11:15 (*NNT*, Rev. 20:4). It was here that Wesley instituted Bengel's doctrine of the two millennia:

It must be observed that two distinct thousand years are mentioned throughout this whole passage. Each is mentioned thrice; the thousand wherein Satan is bound, verses 2, 3, 7; the thousand wherein the saints shall reign, verses 4-6. The former end before the end of the world; the latter reach to the general resurrection. So that the beginning and the end of the former thousand is before the beginning and end of the latter. Therefore as in the second verse, at the first mention of the former; so in the fourth verse, at the first mention of the latter, it is only said, *a thousand years*; in the other places, "*the* thousand," verses 3, 5, 7, that is, the thousand before. During the former, the promises concerning the flourishing state of the church, Rev. x. 7, shall be fulfilled; during the latter, while the saints reign with Christ in heaven, men on earth will be careless and secure. (*NNT*, Rev. 20:4)

. . . .

The small time, and the second thousand years, begin at the same point, immediately after the first thousand. But neither the beginning of the first nor of the second thousand will be known to the men upon earth, as both the imprisonment of Satan and his loosing are transacted in the invisible world.

By observing these two distinct thousand years, many difficulties are avoided. There is room enough for the fulfilling of all the prophecies, and those which before seemed to clash are reconciled; particularly those which speak, on the one hand, of a most flourishing state of the church as yet to come; and, on the other, of the fatal security of men in the last days of the world[.] (*NNT*, Rev. 20:5)

*THE SECOND MILLENNIUM*

Presumably 2836.

The first resurrection (Rev. 20:6) would be contemporaneous with the end of the first thousand years and the beginning of the second (*NNT*, Rev. 20:7). It is during the second millennium that Satan would go forth and deceives the nations enlisting Gog and Magog. The latter was identified with "the second son of Japhet . . . the father of the innumerable northern nations toward the east. Both are noted in reference to Ezekiel 38:2. The *Notes on the Old Testament* give a cross reference to Revelation 20:8 and describe these evil forces at some length:

*Gog*-This cannot be one single person, or prince, though perhaps it points out some one, by whom the troubles foretold were begun. Some believe the time is still to come, wherein this prophecy is to be fulfilled. And that it must intend those enemies of God's church who descended from the *Scythians*, and ar now master of *Cappadocia*, *Iberia*, *Armenia*, or are in confederacy with the *Tartars*, and those northern heathens. But others think, all the enemies of *Israel* in all quarters, both open and secret are here intended, and that the *Antichristian* forces and combination, are what the prophet foretells. *Magog*-*Magog* is, at least, part of *Scythia*, and comprehends *Syria*, in which was *Hierapolis* taken by the *Scythians*, and called of the *Scythopolis*. It is that country, which now is in subjection to the *Turks*, and may be extended thro' *Asia minor*, the countries of *Sarmatia*, and many other, under more than one in succession of time. And in the last time under some one active and daring prince, all their power will be stirred up against Christians. (*NOT*, Ezek 38:2)

These evil forces surround the "beloved city" and the "camp of the saints" which may refer to "the gentile church, dwelling round about Jerusalem." Fire descends from God and Satan is cast into to lake of fire with the wild beast and the false prophet "without any intermission . . . there is only night there: not day, no sun, no hope!" (*NNT*, Rev. 20:9-10). So ends the know universe.

*THE RENOVATION OF THE WORLD*

Presumably 3836.

"The end of the world; all things new," c. Rev. 20-22 (*NNT*, Table 1). (Bengel's Table 1, specifies the end of the world in 22:11 and has a separate entry "ALL THINGS NEW" with reference to Revelation 21-22.)

The great white throne descends and "probably both the aerial and the starry heaven" pass away with a great noise. Wesley is quite adamant about the absolute nature of this process: They were wholly dissolved, the very "elements melting with fervent heat." It is not said, they were thrown into great commotions, but they *fled* entirely *away*; not, they started from their foundations, but they "fell into dissolution;" not, they removed to a distant place, but *there was found no place for them*; they ceased to exist; they were no more. And all this, not at the strict command of the Lord Jesus; not at his awful presence, or before his fiery indignation; but at the bare presence of his Majesty, sitting with severe but adorable dignity on his throne. (*NNT*, Rev. 20:11)

The judgment begins, the books of a very different nature from those of human judges were opened. These supernatural books reveal God's omniscience, natural law, revealed law, and the book of all those "accepted through the beloved" (*NNT*, Rev. 20:12) Death will give up the bodies of humanity and hades the souls the two then being reunited (*NNT*, Rev. 20:13). Death and hades are then cast into the lake of fire and thus "neither . . . could any more have a being" (*NNT*, Rev. 20:14).

"So it runs . . . all these several representations follow one another in order: so the vision reaches into eternity" (*NNT*, Rev. 21:1).

Not only the lowest part of the heaven, not only the solar system, but the whole ethereal heaven with all its host, whether of planets or fixed stars, Isai xxxiv.4; Matt. xxiv. 29. All the former things will be done away, that all may become new, verses 4, 5; 2 Peter iii 10,12. (*NNT*, Rev. 21:1)

This is a new creation without death, divorced not only from the original creation but even from the millennium (*NNT*, Rev. 21:4, 2). The scene is so overwhelming that John again needs to be reminded to write by the angel (*NNT*, Rev. 21:5). The same angel who had showed John Babylon (Rev. 17:1) carries him away in the spirit to show him the Bride of Christ, the new Jerusalem. Although this city is similar to Ezekiel's description (40-48) it has no temple and is "far more large, glorious, and heavenly." Ezekiel's vision, it seems, describes the city "soon after the destruction of the beast" whereas John's reflects its final state (*NNT*, Rev. 21:10). The characteristics of the city are real and figurative. Hence, "In treating all these things a deep reverence is necessary; and so is a measure of spiritual wisdom; that we may neither understand them too literally and grossly, nor go too far from the natural force of the words." The city occupies "finite and determinate space." The "reeds, the measure of a man, that is, of an angel" are "abundantly larger than human." But the city is twelve thousand furlongs on a side and these. (*NNT*, Rev. 21:15).

Chapter twenty-two opens with the river of the ware of life which is the "ever fresh and fruitful effluence of the Holy Ghost" (*NNT*, Rev. 22:1). The leaves of the trees in the celestial vision are for the continuation of the health of the nations not their restoration, which is unnecessary in a world devoid of sickness (*NNT*, Rev. 22:2). Yet even here Wesley found a place for striving for perfection. Some saints, due to their holiness will be "nearest" to and "thence the highest resemblance" to God. These shall reign over "the other inhabitants of the new earth. For there must needs be an everlasting difference between those who when on earth excelled in virtue, and those comparatively slothful and unprofitable servants, who were just saved as by fire" (*NNT*, Rev. 22:4)

Thus ends the doctrine of this Revelation, in the everlasting happiness of all the faithful. The mysterious ways of Providence are cleared up, and all things issue in an eternal Sabbath, an everlasting state of perfect peace and happiness, reserved for all who endure to the end. (*NNT*, Rev. 22:5)

With verse seven of chapter twenty two an epilogue begins. The promises, blessings, and imprecations are treated in a descriptive fashion. There then follows the two tables. After the final entry on the final table the commentary poignantly ends: O God, whatsoever stands or falls, stands or falls by thy judgments[[.] Defend thy own truth! Have mercy on me and my readers! To thee be glory for ever! (*NNT*, Rev. the final entry.)

1. *NNT*, Rev. two tables, untitled and appended to the end. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Jo. Bengelius, *Bengelius's Introduction to His "Exposition of the Apocalypse:" with His Preface to that Work, and the Greatest Part of the Conclusion of It: And also His "Marginal Notes" on the Text, which Are a Summary of the Whole Exposition*, Trans. John Robertson (London: J. Ryall and R. Withy, 1757) Conclusion, Part I.I-II. These two tables which Bengel in the *Introduction* entitled "an Essay of a Chronological Table of the Apocalypse" and "Sketch According to History."

   They also appear in his *Gnomon*, Rev. 20:11 where they are found under the single title: "*Tabula Capitum Apocalypticorum Chronologica*."

   At the beginning of the Revelation in the *Gnomon*, Bengel also supplies an extensive outline or "*Synopsin*" of the entire book which Wesley unfortunately for his readers omitted (Joh. Alberti Bengelii, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti, in quo ex Nativa Verborum VI simplicitas, profunditas, concinnitas, salubritas sensuum coelestium indicatur* [Stuttgartiae: J. F. Steinkopf, 1860]). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. See also Martha B. Pierce, "The Eschatology of John Wesley" (BA Thesis, Drew University, 1960), 32-46; for a less extensive but useful summary. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Emil Schurer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus (175 B.C. - A.D. 135)*, Vol 1, Rev. and trans Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar (Edinurgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1973), 552. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)