

## A Time, Times, and Half a Time

Daniel 7:25 = a time, times, and half a time

Daniel 12:7 = an appointed time, appointed times, and half a time

Revelation 11:2 = 42 months

Revelation 11:3 = 1,260 days

Revelation 11:9 & 11 = three and a half days

Revelation 12:6 = 1,260 days

Revelation 12:14 = a time, times, and half a time

Revelation 13:5 = 42 months

Some of those prophecies are referring to years (times), others are referring to months, and still others to days, but they all follow the same pattern of three and a half.

(A time, times, and half a time is three and a half years. 42 months is 1,260 days based on a 30 day Hebrew month, which is also three and a half years.)

But look at the variety of topics that those verses are talking about:

Daniel talks about:

How long the holy ones of the Supreme One will be given into the hand of a certain king

How long until the end of all "these marvelous things" (Da 12:6)

Revelation talks about:

How long the holy city will be trampled (compare Lu 21:24)

How long two witnesses will prophecy

How long two corpses will be looked upon and remain dead

How long a woman will be fed

How long the wild beast is given authority to act

Does it seem reasonable to you that all seven of those events would fit into the same literal "*three and a half*" timeframe pattern? It doesn't seem reasonable to me. But there is a "*three and a half*" that is literal.

Jesus began his ministry once he became 30 years old and got baptized. (Lu 3:23) That ministry lasted for three and a half years, from his baptism to his death, from late summer of 29 A.D. to the spring of 33 A.D.. That fulfills the prophecy of Daniel 9:21-27 which tells us that at the half week point (three and a half days = three and a half years) the "*Messiah will be cut off*" (die), and his death "*will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease.*" Although the Jews that rejected Jesus continued to make gift offerings (sacrifices), it was no longer necessary since his sacrifice ended the need for it. (He 9:12; He 10:10)

Although Jesus' three and a half year ministry was a literal length of time, i propose that those numbers listed at the beginning of this article are symbolic. If those numbers in those prophecies are literal time periods, then there would have to be a matching second half of the same literal time period to match the first half, that is to say, a second half of the week. (Da 9:27) But none of those prophecies refer to a second half of fulfillment lasting the same amount of time as the first half like Daniel 9:27 does. If those numbers are literal and refer to the first half of a specific length of time, would not the second half be just as literal and last an equal amount of time?

But if those numbers are not literal then what do they symbolize?

Perhaps those numbers are merely referring to the first part, that is to say, what happens before the second part. What happens in the second part? Well, if you look at all those prophecies the time period that follows is Christ's everlasting kingship. (Da 7:27; 12:12; Re 11:15; 12:10; 20:1-4) So those prophecies are telling us what will happen before Christ becomes king.

Will the length of Christ's rule be equal to the amount of time in the first half in those prophecies? Obviously not. So how can those numbers which represent a first half mean anything other than simply what happens before the second half? For example, a person's first part (half) of their life could be their school and college years, followed by their second part (half) where they put that education to use in a career. Their second part would eventually become much longer than their first part, but there are still two distinct parts of their life: the before and the after.

Perhaps God uses numbers that represent a first half because that is His way of promising that there will be a second half. Perhaps He uses first half terminology to assure us that those difficult time periods are only temporary and will eventually end, in a sense saying: *Do not be anxious. This event must take place, but it will soon be replaced with something much better. So continue to endure.* (Mt 10:22; 24:13; Mr 13:13; Lu 21:19; He 10:36; 2Co 4:17; Re 2:10)

**(Daniel 12:7)** As soon as the dashing to pieces of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things will come to their finish.

So what will the actual lengths of time be? They will be whatever God appoints them to be.

**(Daniel 12:7)** It will be for an appointed time, appointed times, and half a time.

Note: Although most Bible translations leave out the word "*appointed*", if you look up the definition of the original Hebrew words you will find that the correct translation is "*appointed time(s)*".

They will be as long as they need to be for God's will to be accomplished.

**(Revelation 17:17)** For God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought, yes, to carry out their one thought by giving their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God will have been accomplished.

Since all those prophecies end with the beginning of Christ's earthly rule, if they were literal times then all of the ones about years would begin in the same year and all the ones about days would start on the same day. We would also be able to count down to the day of Armageddon. But nobody will know that day or hour. (Mt 24:44; Mt 25:13)

**(Matthew 24:36)** "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father.

So my advice is not to get caught up in the numbers in those prophecies. But we can look and see what is happening in the world and therefore know what season we are in. (Mt 24:32, 33; Mr 13:28, 29, 33)

**(Luke 21:29, 30)** With that he told them an illustration: "Notice the fig tree and all the other trees. <sup>30</sup> When they are budding, you see it for yourselves and know that now the summer is near.

No, Jesus Christ did not give us dates, or numbers, or lengths of time to calculate when the end would come. He gave us descriptions of what would occur before hand. And if we look with a discerning eye we can see when those prophecies are being fulfilled, giving us encouragement that his return is near. (see my article "Revelation Abbreviated")

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Perhaps a secondary reason for God using figurative time periods in the verses at the beginning of this article is to lure out and reveal false prophets. (De 18:21, 22; 1 John 4:1) (see my article "Are You Worshiping Jehovah Acceptably? - Expanded")

At Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 the days in those prophecies are converted to years ("*a day for a year, a day for a year*"). The Governing Body (GB) of Jehovah's Witnesses repeatedly point to that "prophetic rule", as they call it, when they convert the days in the "*seven times*" from Daniel chapter 4 to years in order to shore-up their claim to power since 1914.

But the GB say that the days in the "*times*" at Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7, and Revelation 12:14 are not to be converted to years, nor are the days in the other prophecies listed at the top of this article. I guess the GB only use the "prophetic rule" when it suits them, which means it's not really a "rule" then is it?

What do *you* think?

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