

Appendix

Fifty-Five Commentaries on Revelation

2:10

Reference

Comment

Polycarp

<p>Metzger, Bruce M. <i>Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation</i>. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993 (p. 33).</p>	<p>Opposition to the gospel was so fierce that martyrdom appeared to be a real possibility. Indeed, one of the best known Christian martyrs of all ages was a native of Smyrna.</p>
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Literal or Unknown

<p>Collins, Oral Edmond. <i>The Final Prophecy of Jesus: An Introduction, Analysis, and Commentary on the Book of Revelation</i>. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007 (p. 72).</p>	<p>In this context of a literal epistle, the preferred interpretation is en literal days, or understanding 'ten' as a round number, a period of approximately that length.</p>
<p>Leithart, Peter J. <i>Revelation</i>, ed. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain, vol. 1, <i>The International Theological Commentary on the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments</i>. London; Oxford; New York; New Delhi; Sydney: Bloomsbury; Bloomsbury T&T Clark: An Imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018 (p. 162).</p>	<p>When the devilish Jews conspire to throw Christians into prison, the imprisonment will last only ten days, and then they will rise again to receive crowns.</p>
<p>Thomas, Robert L. <i>Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary</i>. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1992 (p. 170).</p>	<p>The ten days are literal and refer to an unknown persecution within a definite period of time during the generation to which this message was addressed.</p>

Reference to Daniel, or Short

<p>Beale, G. K. <i>The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text</i>. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999 (p.242)</p>	<p>That they “will have ten days of tribulation” is an allusion to Dan. 1:12-15, where the “testng” of Daniel and his three friends “for ten days” is repeated twice. . . . This temporary yet severe trial is but part of the inaugurated latter-day tribulation that is characteristic of Christian existence, not only in the Apocalypse (so 1:9; 2:22; see further on 3:10, but throughout the NT (note use of thlipsis [“tribulation”]), especially in Paul).</p>
<p>Brake, Andrew Scott. <i>Visions of the Lamb of God: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation</i>. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2019 (p. 40).</p>	<p>Ten days could be an allusion to Daniel 1:12-15 and the ten days of testing of Daniel and his friends. Or it could be a symbolic time period indicating a limited period of suffering.</p>
<p>Fanning, Buist M. <i>Revelation</i>, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, <i>Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020 (p. 129).</p>	<p>The reference to “ten days” is probably not literal but is perhaps an allusion to Daniel 1:12, 14–15, where the Hebrew young men were tested (LXX περιάζω) for a limited period and in that case achieved a favorable outcome.</p>

<p>Ford, J. Massyngberde. Revelation: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary, vol. 38, Anchor Yale Bible. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008, (p. 395).</p>	<p>The imprisonment is to last for ten days. This may simply imply “a short period,” but it may have an indirect reference to such texts as Dan 1:12–14 where Daniel and his companions are “tested” with a vegetarian diet for ten days and Gen 24:55 where Rebekah’s family ask that she remain with them ten days.</p>
<p>Morris, Leon. The Book of Revelation. An Introduction and Commentary. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1987 (pp. 64-65).</p>	<p>Ten days (the time of Daniel's testing, Dn. 1:12-15) may well point to the completion of their suffering: 'It is only for a limited time that you will have to endure, even though endurance will be tested to the limit' (Niles). It certainly points to something more than three and a half days, which is John's usual expression for a trial of limited duration. Yet even ten has its limit.</p>
<p>Murphy, Frederick J. Fallen Is Babylon: The Revelation to John. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1998 (pp. 124-25).</p>	<p>"Ten days" is not to be taken literally. It recalls the ten days during which Daniel and his companions were allowed to live the Jewish way of life to see if it hindered them in their service to the Babylonian court (Dan 1:12-13). Ten days is a substantial amount of time, but it is not lengthy. . . . The time of testing is limited, recalling the synoptic apocalyptic discourse where Christ says concerning the final afflictions, "If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days" (Mark 13:20).</p>
<p>Osborne, Grant R. Revelation: Verse by Verse, Osborne New Testament Commentaries. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016 (p. 73).</p>	<p>The “ten days” is not meant literally but alludes to the 10-day testing of Daniel in Daniel 1:12–14. It refers to a limited period in which the saints will triumph through endurance. It will be a terrible time of severe suffering, but God will get them through it.</p>
<p>Phillips, Rochard D. Revelation: Reformed Expository Commentary. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2017 (p. 105).</p>	<p>It is likely that 'ten days' is a symbolic number indicating a limited and relatively brief period of suffering. . . . The duration of 'ten days' may also be intended to link back to the book of Daniel, . . .</p>
<p>Smalley, Stephen S. The Revelation to John. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005 (p. 66).</p>	<p>The number 'ten' is possibly a reflection of Dan. 1.14 (Daniel and his companions, on a special diet, are 'tested for ten days'); cf. Gen. 24.55; Num. 14.22; Job 19.3. However, it is more likely that the numeral is chosen because it represents a period which includes real suffering, but is itself restricted; and the limit is known to God (cf. 2 Cor. 4.17-18).</p>
<p>Stefanovic, Ranko. Revelation of Jesus Christ. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews, 2002 (p. 118).</p>	<p>"Ten days." Most scholars hold that "ten days" was the normal ancient expression for a relatively short period of time (cf. Gen. 24:55; 1 Sam 25:38; Dan 1:12-15; Acts 25:6). David Aune maintains that is probably related to the fact that the sum of all fingers is ten. These "ten days" represent a period of testing the faithfulness and endurance of the community in Smyrna, like the ten days of testing for Daniel and his friends in Babylon (Dan. 1:12-15).</p>

Figurative or Unclear

<p>Barclay, William. <i>The Revelation of John</i>, vol. 1: Chapters 1-5, rev. ed. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1976 (pp. 79, iii)</p>	<p>There is imprisonment. John forecasts an imprisonment of ten days. That is not to be taken literally. Ten days was an expression for a short time which was soon to come to an end. . . . First, this is exactly the way in which persecution came. To be a Christian was against the law, but persecution was not continuous. The Christians might be left in peace for a long time, but at any moment a governor might acquire a fit of administrative energy or the mob might set up a shout to find the Christians – and the storm burst. The terror of being a Christian was the uncertainty.</p>
<p>Beasley-Murray, G. R. <i>The Book of Revelation</i>. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978, rev. ed. (p. 82).</p>	<p>This tribulation will last for ten days, i.e., an indefinite but short time (cf. Gen. 24:55, Dan. 1:12ff.), yet long enough to entail the ultimate sacrifice for some.</p>
<p>Beckwith, Isbon T. <i>The Apocalypse of John</i>. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001, originally 1919 (pp. 454-455).</p>	<p>hexete . . . deka, ye shall have tribulation ten days: in the circumstances known to the writer the imprisonment appears inevitable (mellei ballein), but it is to continue for a fixed time of not great length.</p>
<p>Blaney, Harvey J. S. "Revelation." <i>The Wesleyan Bible Commentary</i>, vol. 6. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1966 (p. 431).</p>	<p>Ten days doubtless refers to more than a certain restricted span of time. The term assures the church that the persecution will cover an extended period of time – long enough to make the test a real one – long enough, according to the estimates of the Jews and pagans, to cause the average man to break under the strain.</p>
<p>Boring, M. Eugene. <i>Revelation. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching</i>. Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1989 (pp. 91-92).</p>	<p>John sees the conflict between the church and the synagogue, and between the church and the established, respected cultural religions, as the this-worldly reality of a deeper conflict being waged in the transcendent sphere.</p>
<p>Boring, M. Eugene and Fred B. Craddock. <i>The People's New Testament Commentary</i>. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004 (p. 774).</p>	<p>Ten days: Not literal, but another reference to the shortness of the time before the final deliverance (see on 1:3).</p>
<p>Brighton, Louis A. <i>Revelation</i>. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999 (pp. 72-73).</p>	<p>He is aware that his people will suffer, even intensely ("ten days," 2:10). But they are not to be afraid, for the time of their suffering is set by God ("ten days").</p>
<p>Brown, Raymond, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, edd. <i>The Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968 (p. 473).</p>	<p>The brevity of the time of tribulation is contrasted with the eternity of the reward (2 Cor 4:17).</p>
<p>Caird, G. B. <i>A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine</i>. New York: Harper & Row, 1966 (pPp. 35-36).</p>	<p>John expects that before long Satan will for a short limited period (ten days) intensify his campaign against the church and, presumably using the same agents, will lay before the authorities information leading to criminal charges against some Christians.</p>

Reference	Comment
Charles, R. H. The Revelation of St. John, vol. 1. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920 (p. 58). 12	The round number here points to a short period: cf. Dan. i. 12, 14.
Farmer, Ronald L. Revelation. St. Louis, MI: Chalice, 2005 (p. 45).	Christ called on the church in Smyrna to be steadfast amid affliction. A realist, John expected their situation to worsen: they "are about to" be severely tested. Some would even be thrown into prison to await trial. Yes, for "ten days" (a symbol that denotes a complete period of time) they would experience great affliction.
Franzmann, Martin H. The Revelation to John: A Commentary. St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1968 (p. 45).	Also, she is not being merely abandoned to the freaks of satanic malice; her Lord has set limits ("ten days") to her tribulation. In the power of the Lord's word she can find strength to "be faithful unto death"; His blessing on those who endure persecution for His sake (Matt. 5:10-12) will follow her into imprisonment and dying.
Gaebelein, Frank E., gen. ed. The Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 12: Hebrews – Revelation. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981 (pp. 438-39).	The "ten days" may be ten actual days. Or it may be a Semitism for an indeterminate but comparatively short period of time (cf. Neh 4:12; Dan 1:12).
Giblin, Charles Homer. The Book of Revelation. Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 1991 (p. 55).	The ten-day tribulation (cf. Gen 24:55; Dan 1:12) which John has in mind stands for an indeterminate but relatively short period. Some aspects of the persecution must have included imprisonment and, for some, even death (v. 10). On the other hand, its general aspect (as the clarification of "tribulation" by the word "poverty" shows, v. 9) may have been economic repression.
Graves, David. The Seven Messages of Revelation and Vassal Treaties: Literary Genre, Structure, and Function. Gorgias Dissertations: Biblical Studies 41. Piscataway, NJ: Georias Press, 2009 (p. 256).	In support of the short-term theory of ten days, Krodell states that the Roman never used incarceration for an extended periodas punishment.
Gregg, Steve. Revelation: Four Views, A Parallel Commentary. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997 (p. 67).	In the case of the Smyrnians, the duration of testing is limited to ten days (v. 10). History has not recorded any period of ten days that was endured by these Christians, though surviving records are very limited. Those who tend toward a literal interpretation often consider the ten days to refer to ten actual waves of persecution, or to the ten emperors who allegedly persecuted the churches throughout the first three centuries. Other interpreters think that the "ten days" is in contrast to the much longer time designations in the book, and simply suggest that the tribulation for this church will be of relatively short duration.
Harrington, Wilfrid J. Revelation. Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 16. Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 1993 (59).	Suggests a limited period, but a testing-time for all that.
Heil, John Paul. The Book of Revelation: Worship for Life in the Spirit of Prophecy. Eugene, OR: Cascade Publishers, 2014 (p. 39).	This tribulation they will havefrom imprinment will be for a significant but limited periodof ten days (2:10c).

Hemer, Colin J. *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989 (pp. 68- 70).

Swete argues that it was part of Satan's purpose to prolong the suffering of the church to 'ten days', whereas many commentators interpret this period as denoting a short or limited time. The 'ten days' have in fact lent themselves to much debate. The echo of Dan. 1 seems to me insufficient as an explanation. John constantly appeals to a background which his readers knew. It is important to ask what this phrase was intended to convey to them. It is not clear that we have a satisfactory answer. . . . The 'ten days' should probably be seen as a limited, intermediate period of suffering, expected to terminate in judgment and death, but this for the Christian was victory and life, assured by the precedent of Christ's resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15.20).

Hughes, Philip Edgcumbe. *The Book of the Revelation: A Commentary*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1990 (pp. 41-42).

The ten days here symbolize a limited and comparatively brief duration of persecution. However long and intense affliction may seem to be, it shrinks into insignificance when viewed in the light of eternity.

Kealy, Seán. *The Apocalypse of John*. Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1987 (pp. 86-88). 25

The imprisonment will only last ten days, a semitism for a brief period (Neh 4:12; Dn 1:2).

Craig R. Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, ed. John J. Collins, vol. 38A, Anchor Yale Bible. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014 (p. 277).

"Ten days" seems to be a round number to indicate a limited period (Gen 24:55; Num 11:19).

Laymon, Charles M., ed. *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1971 (p. 951).

The seer predicts that the church is about to suffer a brief but still more violent affliction and anticipates that it may lead to martyrdom for many.

MacArthur, Jr., John. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Revelation 1-11*. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1999 (pp. 77-78).

Though some see the ten days as symbolically representing everything from ten periods of persecution under the Romans, to an undetermined period of time, to a time of ten years, there is no 'exegetical reason to interpret them as anything other than ten actual days. Satan's major assault on that local church would be intense, but brief. "No exegetical reason." If no period of "ten actual days" is available from history (see Gregg), that provides a very good exegetical reason to avoid making an application along these lines.

Mounce, Robert H. *The Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977 (pp. 93-94).

Believers at Smyrna (or at least some of them) are to have tribulation ten days (or "within ten days," Robertson, p. 302). Opinions vary about the time intended. Most view the ten days as a round number indicating a short period of time (Charles, I, p. 58; Kiddle remarks, "As we should say, 'a week or so,'" p. 28), but others hold it to be a prolonged but definitely limited period (Summers defines it as "a number symbolizing extreme, complete tribulation," p. 113). The latter interpretation is more in keeping with the seriousness of the impending crisis.

Osborne, Grant R. Revelation. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002 (pp. 132-134).	Thus they "will experience affliction" (see 1:9 on "tribulation, affliction") but it will last only "ten days." In others words, God will ensure them a manageable time, similar to the promise of 1 Cor. 10:13, . . . Due to ambiguity caused by the limitation of the "tribulation" to hemeron deka (hemeron deka, for ten days), several theories have been proposed: . . . The main aspect is the limited yet quite severe duration of time symbolized in "for ten days."God is in control and will make certain the period is not too great, but it will be a terrible time nevertheless.
Prigent, Pierre. Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John. Wendy Pradels, trans. Mohr Siebeck, 2004 (pp. 168-169f).	This number is surprising. It is generally explained as an assertion that the persecution was limited by God. Ten would thus be a round number that is fitting for this intention.
Ramsay, W. M. The Letters to the Seven Churches, updated. Ed. Mark W. Wilson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994 (pp. 199-200).	The "ten days" means simply a period which can be measured, that is, which comes to an end. The persecution will rage for a time, but it will not be permanent. The church will live through it and survive it, and has therefore no reason to be afraid of it.
Roloff, Jürgen. The Revelation of John: A Continental Commentary. John E. Alsup, trans. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993 (pp. 48-49).	A relatively short, manageable time span is meant by ten days, an allusion to the ten-day test of faith of the young Israelites in the Babylonian court (Dan. 1:12, 14).
Seiss, J. A. The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1964 (p.70).	From two sources did these troubles spring: from blaspheming Jews, and from intolerant Pagans; both actuated by the devil.
Thomas, John Christopher & Frank D. Maccia. The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary: Revelation. Grand Rapds, MI: Eerdman, 2016 (p. 97).	Mention of the church being tested for ten days may well remind the hearers of Dan 1:12, 14,
Tonstad, Sigve K. Revelation, ed. Mikeal C. Parsons, Charles H. Talbert, and Bruce W. Longenecker, Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2019 (p. 75).	The "ten days" of affliction are meant to show that the ability of the opposing side to inflict harm is limited.
Wall, Robert W. Revelation. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MS: Hendrickson, 1991 (p. 73).	The agents of the Evil One in this case are Jews who lay claim to God's Israel but who belong to a synagogue of Satan which actively opposes the church's witness in Smyrna.
Walvoord, John F. and Roy B. Zuck, edd. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983 (p. 935).	Some have taken these words "for 10 days" as a symbolic representation of the entire persecution of the church; others think it refers to 10 persecutions under Roman rulers. The most probable meaning is that it anticipated a limited period of time for suffering (cf. Walvoord, Revelation, p. 61-2). Scott finds precedence in Scripture that 10 days means a limited period of time (Walter Scott, Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, p. 69).

No Historical Fulfillment

Cory, Catherine A. The book of Revelation (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005). Reviewed by Pieter G. R. de Villiers, Review of Biblical Literature (p. 1).

The commentary follows a conventional approach in its pursuit of these aims. It interprets Revelation historically by reading it in terms of a first-century author, context, and place. . . All these works share the common feature that they cannot be used to speculate about the future. Revelation thus has a threefold function: to console amidst persecution, to interpret history in terms of God's justice and sovereignty, and to persuade readers to remain faithful.

Kistemaker, Simon J. New Testament Commentary. Exposition of the Book of Revelation. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001 (pp. 124-125).

In Revelation, the number ten conveys the meaning of fullness in the decimal system. It is a symbolical number to express the completeness of the period of suffering, which is neither long nor short but full, for its termination is sure.

Swete, Henry Barclay. The Apocalypse of St John. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1908 (p. 32).

Deka has perhaps been suggested by Dan. i. 14 epeirasen autous deka hemeras; cf. Gen. xxiv. 55, Num. xi. 19, xiv. 22, Job xix. 3. Beatus thinks of the 'ten persecutions,' but it is unnecessary to seek for any historical fulfilment.

Ten "Days" < Ten Fingers

Aune, David E. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52: Revelation 1-5. Dallas, TX: Word, 1997 (p. 166).

The phrase "ten days" is used for an undefined but relatively short period of time, perhaps because it is the sum of the fingers of both hands (Gen 24:55; Num 11:19; Neh 5:18; Jer 42:7; Dan 1:12-15); m. 'Abot 5:1-6 contains a list of ten things of various kinds. Ten can also function as a number signifying completeness; see Brongers, "Zehnzahl," 30-45.

Prophetic Time

Clarke, Adam. Commentary, vol. 2. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1810 (pp. 977-78).

Ten days] As the days in this book are what is commonly called prophetic days, each answering to a year, the ten days of tribulation may denote ten years of persecution; and this was precisely the duration of the persecution under Diocletian, during which all the Asiatic Churches were grievously afflicted.

Doukhan, Jacques B. Secrets of Revelation. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002 (p. 32).

The persecution reached alarming proportions under the reign of Diocletian, the historical era of martyrdom. In an edict (303 C.E.) the emperor ordered the Christian communities dissolved, their churches demolished, and their books burned. . . . The last wave of persecutions lasted until 311. In 313 the emperor Constantine released an edict that established Christianity as an official religion. Interestingly, the time of persecution lasted a total of 10 years, as predicted by the letter (one day equals one year, according to prophetic calculations). But the language is also symbolic. . . .

Joretg, Toby. Revelation. Brushton, NY: Aspect Books, 2001 (p. 35).

Persecution and suffering were forecasted by God and continued for many years. The last and most severe persecution lasted for 10 years, from A.D. 303 till A.D. 313. This would be a possible explanation for "ten days" of persecution if taken prophetically.