

Forty-Two Commentaries on Rev 2:10

Source	Quotation	Response
Aune, David E. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52: Revelation 1-5. Dallas: 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.	"Ten days" because the prophet has ten fingers.
Barclay, William. The Revelation of John, vol. 1: Chapters 1-5, rev. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976, p. 79.	(iii) 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.	When did this particular persecution come?
Beale, G. K. The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, p.	That they “will have ten days of tribulation” is an allusion to Dan. 1:12-15, where the “testing” 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).	When did it occur?
Beasley-Murray, G. R. The Book of Revelation. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, rev. ed., p. 82.	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.	In prospect this tribulation might have been indefinite, but with benefit of hindsight what does the figure refer to?
Beckwith, Isbon T. The Apocalypse of John. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001. (Pp. 454-455).	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.	When did this particular fixed time occur?
Blaney, Harvey J. S. "Revelation." The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, vol. 6. (P. 431).	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.	When was the church in Smyrna tested?
Boring, M. Eugene and Fred B. Craddock. The People's New Testament Commentary. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004. (P. 774).	Ten days: Not literal, but another reference to the shortness of the time before the final deliverance (see on 1:3).	When was the final deliverance?

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Boring, M. Eugene. Revelation. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: John Knox, 1989. (Pp. 91-92).	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.	Application?
Brighton, Louis A. Revelation. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999. (Pp. 72-73).	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").	When did they suffer?
Brown, Raymond, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, edd. The Jerome Biblical Commentary. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968. (P. 473).	The brevity of the time of tribulation is contrasted with the eternity of the reward (2 Cor 4:17).	When did this brief time occur?
Caird, G. B. A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine. New York: Harper & Row, 1966. (Pp. 35-36).	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.	When did all of this happen?
Charles, R. H. The Revelation of St. John, vol. 1. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920. (P. 58).	The round number here points to a short period: cf. Dan. i. 12, 14	Which short period?
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 years 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.	Ten days = ten years, from 303-313, under Diocletian.
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.	No speculations about the future possible.

Source	Quotation	Response
Doukhan, Jacques B. <i>Secrets of Revelation</i> . Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002. (Pp.).	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. Numerous Christians died for their beliefs. Many found themselves reduced to slavery. A number of the church's revered saints date from that epoch: Saint Sebastian, who died pierced by a hundred arrows while tied to a tree; Saint Cecil, patron of sacred music; and Saint Agnes, burned at the stake. 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. . . .	Ten days = ten years, from 303-313, under Diocletian.
Farmer, Ronald L. <i>Revelation</i> . 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.	Which complete period of time?
Franzmann, Martin H. <i>The Revelation to John: A Commentary</i> . St. Louis: Concordia, 1968. (P.).	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.	When did those limits begin and end?
Gaebelein, Frank E., gen. ed. <i>The Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> , vol. 12: Hebrews – Revelation. Grand Rapids: 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).	It may be this, or possibly that. In retrospect which did it turn out to be?
Giblin, Charles Homer. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . 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 indeter–minate 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.	So was economic oppression actually involved? What events happened that would tell us?
Gregg, Steve. <i>Revelation: Four Views, A Parallel Commentary</i> . Nashville: 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.	"History has not recorded any period of ten days that was endured by these Christians, though surviving records are very limited." This is true. No period of ten literal days, or anything close to ten literal days, is available from history as a potential fulfilment of this clause.
Harrington, Wilfrid J. <i>Revelation</i> . Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 16. Collegeville, MI: Liturgical	ten days (see Dan 1:12): Suggests a limited period, but a testing-time for all that.	"A testing-time for all that."

Source	Quotation	Response
Hemer, Colin J. The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting. Grand Rapids: 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).	Hemer is right.. "No satisfactory answer" is no satisfactory answer.
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.	How long and intense was the comparatively brief persecution that the prophet has in view in this particular case?
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.	Ten days = ten years, from 303-313, under Diocletian. "If taken prophetically."
Kealy, Seán. The Apocalypse of John. Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1987. (Pp. 86-88).	The imprisonment will only last ten days, a semitism for a brief period (Neh 4:12; Dn 1:2).	Which brief period?
Kistemaker, Simon J. New Testament Commentary. Exposition of the Book of Revelation. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. (Pp. 124-5).	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.	When did this full period of suffering occur?
Laymon, Charles M., ed. The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible. Nashville: 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.	"It may lead to martyrdom." Did it?
MacArthur, Jr., John. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Revelation 1-11. Chicago: 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. But if Gregg is wrong, and a period of ten actual days is available, which ones were they?

Source	Quotation	Response
Metzger, Bruce M. <i>Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation</i> . Nashville: Abingdon, 1993. (P. 33).	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.	Was the possibility realized? Did the ten days begin or end with Polycarp? His execution took place on only one day.
Morris, Leon. <i>The Book of Revelation. An Introduction and Commentary</i> . Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1987. (Pp. 64-65).	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.	"Yet even ten has its limit." When was that limit reached?
Mounce, Robert H. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . Grand Rapids: 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.	"A week or so." Which week? When did this particular "prolonged but limited period" occur?
Murphy, Frederick J. <i>Fallen Is Babylon: The Revelation to John</i> . Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1998. (Pp. 124-25.)	"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).	Assuming "ten days" represents a figure of speech, which "substantial amount of time" does the figure represent?
Osborne, Grant R. <i>Revelation. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i> . Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002. (Pp. 132-34).	Thus they "will experience affliction" (see 1:9 on "tribulation, affliction") but it will last only "ten days." In other 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.	"A manageable time." Which manageable time was this? And where is the ambiguity in specifying a period of ten days?
Pregent, Pierre. <i>Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John</i> . Wendy Pradels, trans. Mohr Siebeck, 2004. (Pp. 168-69.)	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.	The persecution was limited. What were its limits?
Ramsay, W. M. <i>The Letters to the Seven Churches</i> , updated. Ed. Mark W. Wilson. 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.	Having measured this period, when did it occur?

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<p>Roloff, Jürgen. The Revelation of John: A Continental Commentary. John E. Alsup, trans. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. (Pp. 48-49).</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p>"A relatively short, manageable time span." Which short, manageable time span?</p>
<p>Seiss, J. A. The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1964. (Pp.).</p>	<p>From two sources did these troubles spring: from blaspheming Jews, and from intolerant Pagans; both actuated by the devil.</p>	<p>Application?</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>What period of real suffering is John referring to?</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>	<p>"Sum of all fingers" (cf. Swete).</p>
<p>Swete, Henry Barclay. The Apocalypse of St John. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1908. (P. 32).</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>"It is unnecessary to seek for any historical fulfilment."</p>
<p>Wall, Robert W. Revelation. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MS: Hendrickson, 1991. (P. 73).</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>When did they oppose the church's witness? When did this opposition begin and end?</p>
<p>Walvoord, John F. and Roy B. Zuck, edd. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983, p. 935.</p>	<p>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).</p>	<p>Which limited period?</p>