Some questions each need to harmonize or at least be familiar with regarding Revelation 11:1-13 and related scriptures in the Revelation.

1. Vss. 1 and 2 have the 42 months (1,260 years), that relate to the true Churches’ experiences from 539 AD through 1799 AD. This is consistent with other scriptural references to the 1,260 years.
2. Vs. 3 refers to Two Witnesses prophesy in sackcloth for 1,260 years. This is the Old and New Testaments being in Latin (a “dead” language). Br. Russell offers the same period of time – 539 AD through 1799 AD, but he also offers several related periods of time generally being about 300 AD through about 1560 AD. That is, from the time Church Councils started to make Church decisions and the laying aside of the Bible for individuals study until the Great Reformation and the outpouring of Bibles in the language of the people which resulted in the Reformation.
3. The Latin Vulgate was written (by Jerome), from 382 AD – 405 AD. The Papacy published their first English Bible from 1582 – 1609. Note the 1,200 year span of time (382 – 1582). Although they still preferred their own newly revised Latin Bible.
4. From 1500 through 1593 the Bible, often in various forms and editions, were published in the following languages: Spanish, Hebrew, Greek, Dutch, German, English, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Swiss, Italian, French, Icelandic, Hungarian, Polish, Flemish, Crespin, Croatian, Welch, Anglo-Saxon, Slavonic, Cyrillic and Czech. This is 23 different languages / dialects, that were of the common people. In 1554 *The Inquisitorial Index of Valladolid,* Spain, listed 103 editions of the Bible condemned because of errors and heresies to suppression, correction or cancellation.

It seems unmistakable that the Two Witnesses were not confined to “sackcloth” or a dead language.

1. In vss. 7 – 11 we need to consider a number of symbols to help us decide if the 1,260 years of the Two Witnesses prophesying in sackcloth is from 539 AD to 1799 AD period or sometime about 300 AD to sometime about 1500 AD.
2. “When they have finished their testimony” – that is after the 1,260 period is over. Perhaps from sometime in 1799 or starting in 1800, or from sometime in the 1,500’s. More on this later.
3. It is “the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them.” The first part of this phrase is also in Rev. 17:8. Also note that in Rev. 17:12 – 14, this same beast apparently makes war against the Lamb and those with him.

The interpretation of this beast should be one and the same. If one thinks this beast is the Papacy, then it should be the Papacy making war against the Bible in Rev. 11 at the end of the 1,260 year period. If one thinks this beast is a Republican (People’s ) government, then it would be making war at the end of the 1,260 year period.

1. Being in the “bottomless pit”, suggests that this beast, at some point in time, existed and then was constrained or cease to be in some form of existence but then reappears, for a time and then is destroyed.

One way to understand this is if you think this beast is Papacy, then either it had been in existence before the 1500’s in sense and then was not, or that this expression in chapter 11 is just a frame of reference to a future event of the Papacy not being in control of the Roman Empire for a time and then it gains control again for a short period of time.

If one thinks that this beast is the People’s government, then it was in existence at the French Revolution (1789 – 1799), but goes out of existence until a future date, and then reappears in power for a short time.

If one thinks this beast is different from the 10 Horned Beast (Papacy), or the Two Horned Beast (Church of England), and in fact is not a religious government, then that introduces another interpretation of the “beast” symbol, using “beast” to represent a purely civil government which is usually represented as a “dragon”.

1. “Their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city…” Either the street of the great city is symbolic of spiritual Babylon – Christendom and in particular the Roman Empire under the influence of Papacy during the 1500’s , or it is “the tenth part of the city” during the French Revolution, as expressed in Rev. 11:13.
2. For 3 ½ days, that is years, their bodies are not allowed to be buried, that is the Bible is publicly humiliated for a 3 ½ year period after the 1,260 years are complete. Following are two options and undoubtedly there are other thoughts on this.
3. This period of time is from sometime in 1799 or 1800 and continues three and half years till an early British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804.

Note that the “war” is after the 1,260 years is over. That this is the same as the 3 ½ years of lying dead in the street.

1. This period of time is from the first purchased for public burning of the English New Testament by Papacy on Nov. 23, 1526 until the last purchased for public burning of the English New Testament by Papacy on May 24, 1530, exactly 3 years and 182 days, or three and half years. This period of time was corroborated by historical records, suggested by Br. Frank Shallieu.
2. “They that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry… because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.”

Those that dwell on the earth is usually interpreted to mean those under religious restraint, i.e. so called Christians. Again there are at least two possibilities:

1. That this represents nominal Christians after the French Revolution is over (after 1799), that are rejoicing in the humiliation of the Bible.
2. That this represents nominal Christians, Roman Catholics, that are rejoicing at the humiliation of the Bible by being publicly burned.
3. A related point is that in vs. 13, there is a great earthquake and the tenth part of the city fell. This is usually interpreted to be the French Revolution, which took place between 1789 and 1799. This has to be harmonized with the “earth rejoicing” over the humiliation of the Bible. The “earth” Class would not fit well if it is referring to atheists.
4. Vss. 11, 12. After the 3 ½ years, the Bible stands upon it’s feet, that is like being resurrected! And then it ascends to heaven.

Again, at least two possibilities:

1. In 1804 the great Bible Societies started and the Bible was made available to even the poorest of people from that time forward.
2. Almost immediately after the English New Testaments were publicly burned, the King of England rejected Catholocism and shortly after that authorized a English Bible for every Church. Thereafter the Bible continued to be “raised up”, until in 1804 the great Bible Societies exalted them to heaven (as related before).

What is the difference between these two views? The matter of how long the exaltation was. Both views have the Bible come alive immediately after the 3 ½ years, but the second view has a gradual process of the Bible being raised up.