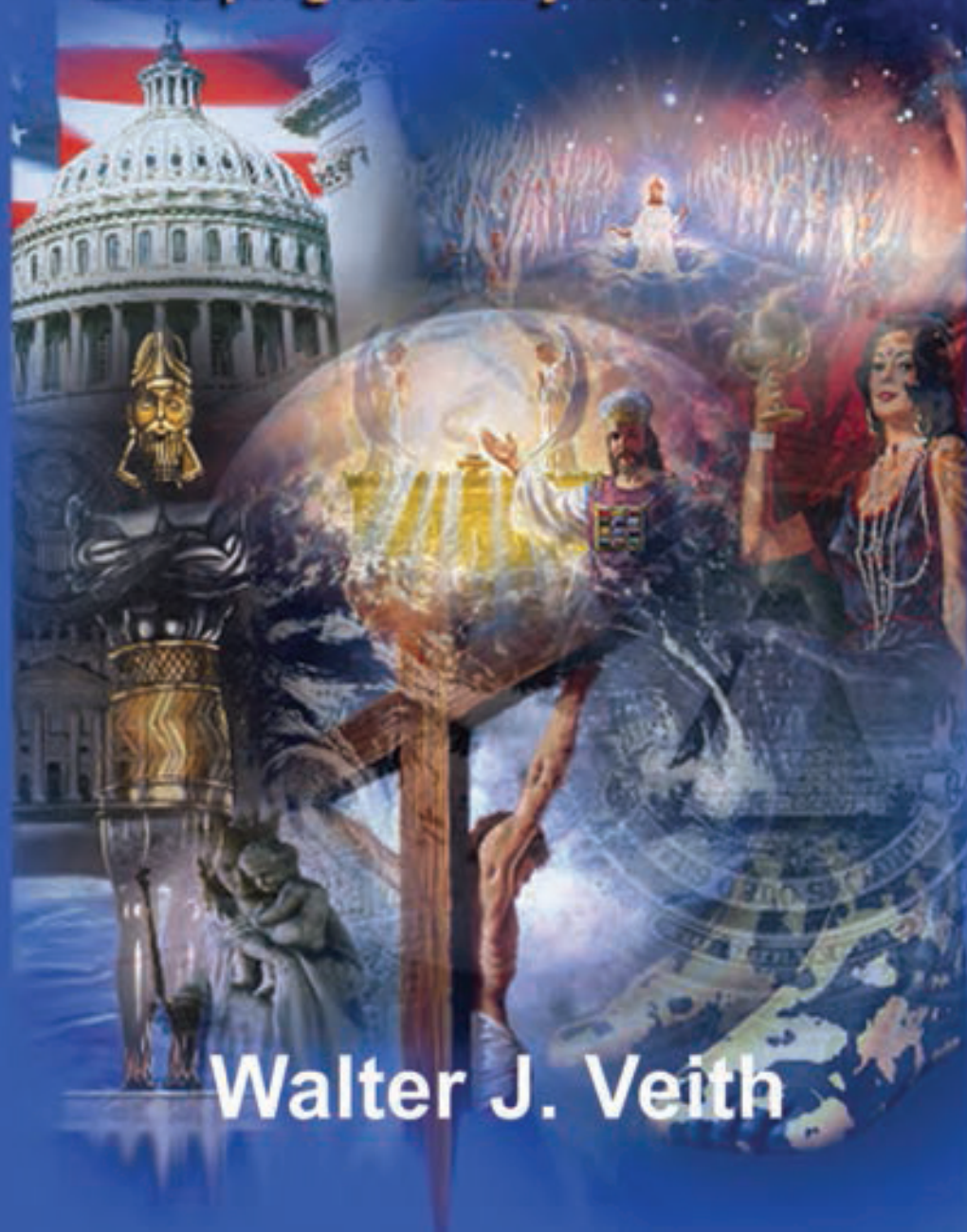


Truth Matters

Escaping the Labyrinth of Error



Truth Matters

by Walter J. Veith

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PREFACE

Never before has faith in the Word of God been so undermined as in recent years. Paradoxically, the closing stages of the last millennium have also been characterized by millennial fever, experiential religion, and the rise of numerous new religious ideologies. These trends are continuing as the new millennium opens before us. Indeed, the plain teachings of the Scriptures are eclipsed by the many paranormal revelations and teachings of our age. Eastern mysticism and New Age thinking have eroded the ancient pillars of truth and new ideologies have replaced the eternal landmarks. Truth no longer matters; harmony and cooperation is what counts.

We are living in an age of compromise. In the interest of peace and harmony, truth has often been sacrificed. It is argued that all religions are equal and that in spite of differences in doctrine and approach, they ultimately all lead to God. This thinking has led to greater cooperation between religions, and within Christianity itself, the ecumenical old hatchets are being buried! Roman Catholics, Orthodox religions, and Protestants are beginning to see eye to eye.

This book is not intended to be a recipe book for salvation. There are no ingredients to be mixed and consumed in order to attain salvation. Salvation is found only in Him who *"...is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."* (Heb 7:25) This book is not intended to augment the Scriptures, but is written to support its claims.

The authenticity of the Bible is examined in the light of the fulfilment of prophecies and the great archaeological discoveries of our age. Moreover, the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation pertaining to our time are discussed in the light of current world events.

The unfolding of prophetic events as foretold in the Scriptures lends credence to its claims as truly being the Word of God. It compels us to make a decision and invites us to accept God's rescue plan of salvation. I believe that God's truth will ultimately triumph. He is absolutely trustworthy, and the road He invites us to travel is well worth travelling.

Walter J. Veith

EDITOR'S PREFACE

After reading through Dr. Veith's completed work, I can truly say it has been a great honour and pleasure to work with his manuscript. I know of no other book which gives such clear, concise explanations for the many questions being raised in our world. Dr. Veith's well-researched information as contained in the Word of God is vital if we want to make sense of the myriad of voices clamoring for our attention on this planet. I believe that without it, the clarity of our vision will be dimmed, and our ability to make sound decisions pertaining to our lives will be compromised.

As ideological winds and fads sweep our earth, our minds are becoming filled with "spiritual garbage" and we are finding solace in whatever suits our particular tastes and fancies, rather than searching for truth as for hidden treasure. But how can one even define truth without a measuring rod that remains steadfast and sure? This book is an attempt to uncover the measuring rod and treasure chest of truth - the Bible - containing the gems therein that can lift heavy burdens of sorrow and guilt, restore peace where there is only worry and fear, and open eyes that have long been shrouded with confusion and uncertainty. In our world today, truth must matter. It is most costly, increasingly rare, and exceedingly precious. Without it, everything else is a lie, and nothing is worth living.

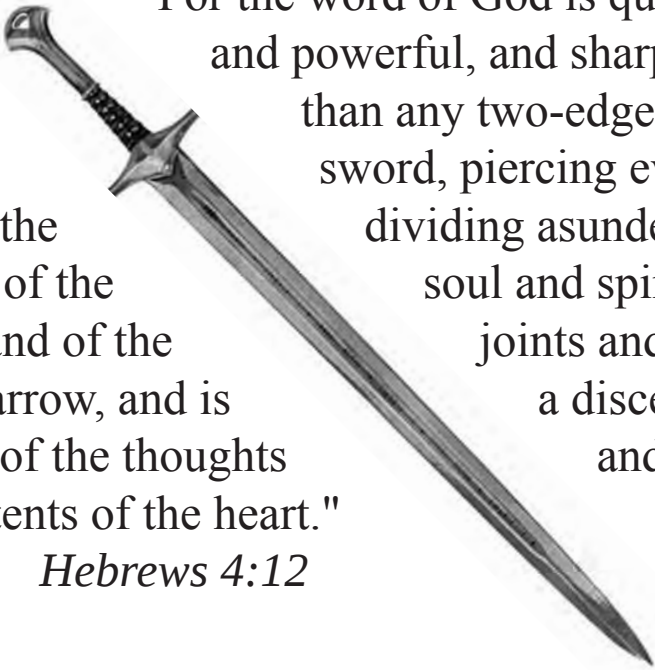
This book also serves as a companion to Dr. Veith's powerful eye-opening video series covering all the topics in this book and much more in a multi-media presentation (more information in back of book). A special thanks to all proofreaders, assistants, and designers for their help in preparing this monumental work.

Now, to you, dear reader, may you find peace and hope in the pages of this book, and may you be challenged to study the truths of the Bible for yourself, allowing the precious gems of truth found therein to matter to you!

Wendy Goubey Penner

"For the word of God is quick,
and powerful, and sharper
than any two-edged
sword, piercing even
dividing asunder
soul and spirit,
joints and
marrow, and is
a discern-
er of the thoughts
and
intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12



**Christ -
the Source of Truth**

1

JESUS - JUST ANOTHER MAN?

Introduction

Was Jesus an imposter or was He the Messiah, the Son of God? This is the vital question we all need to answer for ourselves, for it could make the difference between life and death. One thing is sure, Jesus has created more controversy than any other founder of the religious systems of the world. He also made some astounding claims that would make Him the sole source of salvation to fallen man, thus creating tension between the various religious systems which cannot be readily resolved without compromise. Either He was right, or He was not; compromise seems impossible. If He was right, then this controversy will escalate to its final conclusion culminating in the glorious return of Christ to this earth to reclaim His dominion and to judge the living and the dead. If He was wrong, then the Messiah, according to the various belief systems, has not yet come, or he has come a number of times in the form of world teachers, or he will not come at all.

Buddhism and Hinduism teach that the Christ, the world teacher, has experienced numerous reincarnations at different stages of human progression. The Muslims teach that Jesus Christ was a prophet, but

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that he was not the Son of God. However, they also teach that He was “born of a virgin, worked miracles, was the Messiah, lived a sinless life, went up to heaven, and is coming again before the end of the world.”¹ The Jews, excluding the Messianic Jews, reject Jesus outright. To them He is an imposter.

Christians themselves are divided in their attitudes toward Jesus. Some see Him as God, Saviour, Lord and Messiah, while others refuse to accept His divinity, choosing to see Him as a special created being. Who is right? Let us consider the evidence.

Did He Ever Exist?

The first question we need to consider is whether Christ was actually a historical figure. If He was not, we would be wasting our time debating a myth or a legend. The most prominent sources confirming His historicity are two-fold:

A. The Christian Sources

1. The 27 different New Testament documents.
2. The writings of the Church Fathers (Polycarp, Eusebius, Irenaeus, Origen, etc.). It is also noteworthy that Christians throughout the ages were prepared to suffer persecution and even death for His name's sake, and the entire human history has been divided into a pre- and post- Christ era, which has been entrenched in our calendar for centuries.

B. The Non-Biblical Sources

1. Tacitus, the Roman historian writing in about 115 AD, speaks about Nero's persecution of Christians in the year 64 AD:

But all the endeavours of men, all the emperor's largesse and the propitiations of the gods, did not

suffice to allay the scandal or banish the belief that the fire had been ordered. And so, to get rid of this rumour, Nero set as the culprits and punished with the utmost refinery of cruelty, a class hated for their abominations, who are commonly called Christians. Christus, from whom their name is derived, was executed at the hands of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. Checked for the moment, this pernicious superstition again broke out, not only in Judea, the source of the evil, but even in Rome, that receptacle for everything that is sordid and degrading from every quarter of the globe, which there finds a following.²

2. Suetonius, the Roman historian, refers to 'Chrestus' (which is probably a confusion of 'Christus', i.e. Christ) in his *Life of Claudius* (the emperor from 41 to 54), which was written about 120 AD. He is probably referring to quarrels between Jews and Christians about Jesus.

Since the Jews were continually making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome.

3. The Talmud is a collection of Jewish traditions which dates from the third century.

On the eve of Passover, they hanged Yeshu of Nazareth, and the herald went before him for forty days, saying, 'Yeshu of Nazareth is going forth to be stoned in that he hath practiced sorcery and beguiled and led astray Israel. Let everyone knowing aught in his defense come and plead for him.' But they found naught in his defense and hanged him on the eve of Passover.

Was He the Messiah?

His Claims

The High Priest asked Him,... ‘Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed ?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.’ Mark 14:61-62

The Claims of Others

He [Andrew] first found his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated, the Christ). John 1:41 NKJV

The Old Testament Messianic Prophecies

According to the authorities, there are more than 300 references to the Messiah in the Old Testament, and these were written over a 1500-year period. Some sceptics object to the use of these prophecies as support for Christ’s Messiahship, claiming that they were written at or after the time of Jesus. Here something important must be borne in mind. Conservative scholars estimate that the last Old Testament book was written around 450 B.C. But those claiming a later date cannot possibly push that date closer than about 250 B.C. - the reason for this being the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was completed during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C). This is an historical fact and it places a span of at least 250 years between the Old Testament predictions and their fulfilment in Christ.

In his interesting book *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell lists 60 Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament. It would be impossible to discuss all sixty in depth during this brief synopsis, but we can single out a few for closer examination:

1. The Virgin Birth

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

And Joseph... kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son: and he called His name Jesus.

Matthew 1:18, 24-25 NASB

2. Bethlehem

But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Micah 5:2

...Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea... Matthew 2:1

3. Ministry of Miracles

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped... Isaiah 35:5-6

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages ...healing every sickness and every disease among the people. Matthew 9:35

4. Into Jerusalem On a Donkey

...Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey ... Zechariah 9:9 NASB

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And they brought it to Jesus, and they threw their garments on the colt, and put Jesus on it
Luke 19:35 NASB

It is estimated that 29 of the prophecies concerning the Messiah were written by a variety of different men over at least five centuries - and fulfilled in one 24-hour period of his life.

5. Betrayed By a Friend

Even my close friend, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.
Psalm 41:9 NASB

... Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.
Matthew 10:4 NASB

6. 30 Pieces of Silver AND 7. Potter's Field

So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord.
Zechariah 11:13 NASB

And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; ... and they ... with the money bought the Potter's Field.... Matthew 27:5-7 NASB

8. Attitude Under Accusation

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open his mouth; ... Isaiah 53:7 NASB

And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer.
Matthew 27:12 NASB

9. He Was Physically Abused

But He was pierced through for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities ... and by His scourging we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 NASB

Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified. Matthew 27:26 NASB

10. Hands and Feet Pierced

...They pierced my hands and my feet. Psalm 22:16 NASB

... they crucified Him... Luke 23:33 NASB

11. Crucified With Thieves

...He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors,... Isaiah 53:12 NASB

At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left. Matthew 27:38 NASB

12. Garments Parted and Lots Cast

They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. Psalm 22:18 NASB

The soldiers ... took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier, and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. They said ... 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be ... ' John 19:23-24 NASB

13. Offered Vinegar

They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Psalm 69:21 NASB

*...they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.
Matthew 27:34 NASB*

14. No Bones Broken

*He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.
Psalm 34:20 NASB*

*... but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.
John 19:33 NASB*

15. Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb

And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. Isaiah 53:9

*... there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph... And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb ...
Matthew 27:57-60 NASB*

Some have suggested that these prophecies were accidentally or coincidentally fulfilled by Jesus. According to the science of probability, the chance of any *one* human being up until the present fulfilling a selection of just eight of these prophecies (including the one on crucifixion) is one in a hundred thousand million million.

The Seventy Week Prophecy

Of the many prophecies concerning the Messiah, there is one prophecy that puts the issue beyond doubt, and that is the prophecy in Daniel 8 and 9 that predicts the time of the anointing of the Messiah.

The seventy week prophecy of Daniel 9 is the most astounding messianic prophecy in Scripture. So accurately does it predict the time of and the events surrounding the coming of the Messiah, that Jewish scholars have, over the centuries, attempted to limit its relevance, and have even ventured to place a curse on any individual who should attempt to number the days of the prophecy. The seventy week prophecy was given to Daniel as an explanation and expansion of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8, and the two prophecies are thus linked to each other. For the purpose of this discussion, we will limit ourselves to the messianic time prophecy and not consider the whole of the prophecy of Daniel 8. Briefly, Daniel 8 deals with the suppression by earthly powers of God's people and truth pertaining to salvation. The sanctuary mentioned in this prophecy is a reference to the earthly sanctuary and the services conducted therein, which in turn served as a model to illustrate the plan of salvation. The cleansing of the sanctuary formed part of the annual services of the Israelites and finds a greater application in the final cleansing of the record of sin (see *An Advocate for Our Time*). Let us consider the time prophecies of the seventy week period and sanctuary.

For two thousand three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Daniel 8:14 NKJV

Here we have a specific time prophecy, and it is thus essential that we understand the principles pertaining to the unravelling of prophetic time. As with all prophecy, the soundest principle would be to allow Scripture to be its own expositor.

Prophecies are couched in symbolic language, and the symbols used need to be unravelled before the meaning of the words can be understood. Prophetic time is also used as a symbol, which needs to be interpreted in the light of Scripture. The key is to be found in two texts:

According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, even forty days, for each day for a year ... even forty years... Numbers 14:34

...I have appointed thee each day for a year.
Ezekiel 4:6

The day-year principle has been applied by scholars throughout the ages. Medieval Catholic scholars paralleled the Jewish Year-Day reckoning. In 1190, Joachim of Floris, Calabria, Italy applied the year-day principle to prophetic time. In the thirteenth century, Joachimite scholars in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany similarly applied the year-day principle to the 2300 days. In 1440, the Roman Catholic theologian, Nicholas Crebs of Cusa, said the following about the 2300 days:

*... resolving a day into a year according to the unfolding made to Ezekiel.*³

The soundness of the day-year principle as an exegetic tool is best demonstrated in its application. Whenever it is applied, the meaning of the prophecies falls into place, and apparent anomalies are resolved. This will become clearer as we delve deeper into prophecy in the following chapters.

Applying the principle to the 70-week prophecy will show that only Jesus of Nazareth could be the long-awaited Messiah.

The Prophecy Unravelled

Daniel did not understand the vision pertaining to the 2300 days.

I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up and did the King's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it. Daniel 8: 27

After studying the words of Jeremiah the prophet, Daniel was given insight into the vision:

Whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning being caused to fly swiftly, touched me ... and he informed me ... I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding ... for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.
Daniel 9:21-23

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people...
Daniel 9:24

Thy people were God's chosen people - Israel of old. Seventy weeks resolved into days would be $70 \text{ weeks} \times 7 = 490 \text{ days}$. Applying the day-year principle, 490 days become 490 years. The word *determined* means *allotted, decreed, or cut off*. The Latin Vulgate uses the word *abbreviore*, - *to cut short*. Hence the "70 weeks of years" (as it reads in RSV) or 490 years were to be cut off from a longer time period i.e. the 2300 day-years. John Tillinghast, who died in 1655, was the first to assert the 70 weeks of years were to be a lesser epoch within the larger period of the 2300 years.

Four hundred ninety years were appointed the Jewish nation to:
1. finish the transgression
2. make an end of sins
3. make reconciliation for iniquity
4. bring in everlasting righteousness
5. seal up vision and prophecy
6. anoint the Most Holy. Daniel 9:24 NKJV

These six issues are messianic issues, which could only be fulfilled in and through the Messiah. Who else could make reconciliation for iniquity or bring in everlasting righteousness?

Johan P. Petri, who died in 1792 and was a reformed pastor of Seckbach, Germany, began the 70 weeks and 2300 days synchronously. A look at the following diagram shows the 70 weeks cut off from the 2300 days.

Unto 2300 Days (years), Then Shall The Sanctuary Be Cleansed, *Daniel 8:14*

70 Weeks, Or 490 Years, Cut Off

Figure 1.1

The Beginning of the 70 Weeks and 2300 Days

After the angel states the 70 weeks, he gives a breakdown of the 70 weeks as follows:

- a) 7 weeks of years for rebuilding of Jerusalem (verse 25)
- b) 62 weeks of years to the Messiah (verses 25, 26)
- c) 1 week of years to the close of the period (verse 27)

Total ... 70 “weeks ... determined upon thy people.”

These are the entire 70 weeks of the prophecy. But when did they begin? Daniel gives the answer very clearly:

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks. Daniel 9:25

“From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” is when the prophecy of the 2300 days begins.

The final commandment effecting the restoration of Jerusalem went forth under King Artaxerxes Longimanus in the year 457 B.C.⁴ Excerpts from Ezra chapter 7 clarify the point. The king declared:

I make a decree that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Ezra 7:7, 12, 13

With the commencement date 457 B.C. before us, it is possible to determine the succeeding dates and events. Seven weeks were allotted for the restoration of Jerusalem.

$$7 \text{ weeks} \times 7 \text{ days per week} = 49 \text{ days or years}$$

True to the prophecy, Jerusalem was rebuilt 49 years after 457 B.C. which was 408 B.C.

“Unto Messiah the Prince”

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks. Daniel 9:25

1 score	=	20
3 score	=	60
3 score & 2 weeks	=	62 weeks
62 weeks x 7 days per week	=	434 days or years
7 weeks	=	49 days or years
434 years + 49 years	=	483 years to Messiah from 457 B.C.

Seven weeks (49 days) for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and another three score and two weeks (62 weeks or 434 days) brings us to Messiah the Prince. Beginning in 457 B.C., and applying the day for a year principle, we must determine the date after the passing of 483 years (49 + 434), which would bring us to 27 A.D., allowing for the conversion from B.C. to A.D. being one extra year. This year is the most historic year in Christendom, and Luke in Luke 3:1-3 clearly pinpoints the events of that year. These verses refer to the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (which is known to be 27 A.D.) in which the following persons held office: Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip, Lysanias, Annas, and Caiaphas, and at which time John the Baptist was baptizing. Figure 1.2 portrays the calculations:

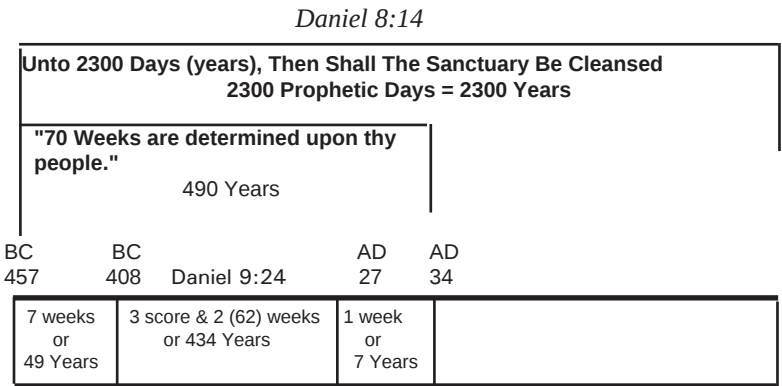


Figure 1.2

The 69 weeks (483 years) bring us “unto Messiah the Prince”. According to John 1:41, Messiah means “the Christ” and this in turn means the “Anointed One”. According to the Scriptures, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit on the occasion of His baptism.

...it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened. Luke 3:21-23

The baptism of Christ for His ministry marked the event in the prophecy “unto Messiah the Prince”. When Christ proclaimed, “*The time is fulfilled*” (Mark 1:15), He referred to this part of the prophecy.⁵

How incredibly accurate! Precisely on time, Jesus is anointed and begins His ministry:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. Luke 4:17

The Last Prophetic Seventieth Week

If 27 A.D. marks the end of the 69 weeks, then 34 A.D. would mark the end of the 70 weeks allotted to Israel. When we resolve the weeks into years, we arrive at the same date. For instance, 483 years ended in 27 A.D., so likewise 490 years would end seven years later, namely 34 A.D. (See Figure 1.2).

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease... Daniel 9:27

The personal pronoun “He” refers to the Messiah already mentioned in Daniel 9:25-26. He, that is the Messiah, the Christ, will confirm the covenant made with Israel for one prophetic week, being 7 years. (1 week = 7 days or years) But the verse says, in addition, that oblation (offering) is to cease.

The middle of the prophetic seven years would be 3½ years after 27 A.D. when Christ was baptized as already seen. This would bring us to 31 A.D. We have to look for an epochal event in 31 A.D. All Christendom recognizes 31 A.D. as the year when Christ was crucified. (See Figure 1.3 next page)

Some modern prophetic interpretations confuse the issue pertaining to the 70th week, and even destroy the unity of the 70-week prophecy, by transporting this week into the future, and applying its content to the antichrist, who (according to this interpretation), would arrive at the end of the Christian dispensation some time in the future. Daniel 9:26-27 has a chiastic structure, and if this is taken into account, then the apparent confusion pertaining to its literary style is eliminated.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself....

This portion of verse 26 sets the stage for the events pertaining to the seventieth week. After the 62 weeks (7 + 62 = 69th week), thus after the 69th week or in the seventieth week the Messiah would be cut off or put to death, but not for Himself (for us).

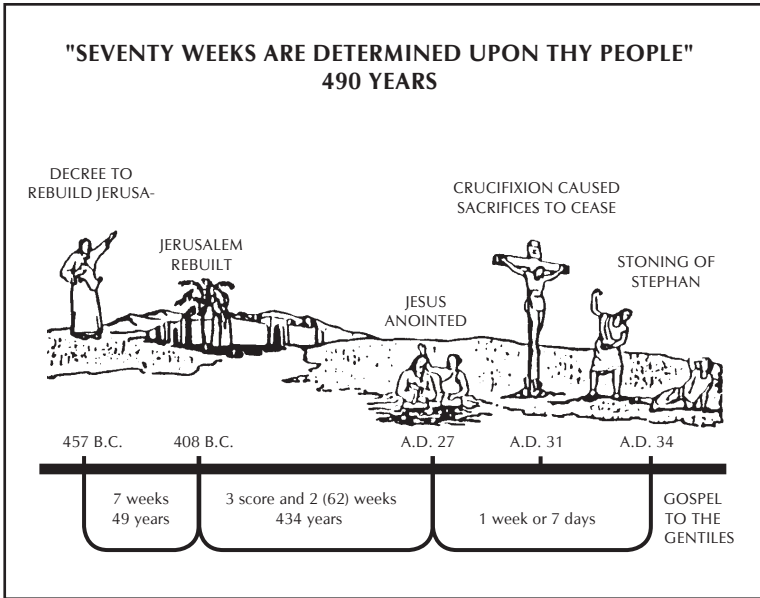


Figure 1.3

And after threescore and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week, He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Daniel 9:26-27

The chiasm is as follows:

- a. Messiah destroyed
- b. sanctuary destroyed
- b¹. sacrifice terminated
- a¹. ruler destroyed

Verse 27 has an additional chiasm: "He...week.... week....He", again emphasizing the role of the Messiah. In summary, it can thus be said that the destruction of the Messiah will bring an end to the sacrificial system (reaching its fulfilment in Him). He (the Messiah), would also confirm His covenant with God's people by His sacrificial death in the middle of the week (3½ years after A.D. 27), the precise time of Christ's death.

The verses also bring out the conflict between Christ and Satan who by means of his agents will combat Christianity till the end of time. The promise is, however, that the final victory belongs to Christ, and that the desolator will receive his due punishment at the end of time.

He shall cause the sacrifice ... to cease.

By Christ's death on the cross He caused, or brought about, the cessation of the sacrificial system which pointed forward to Him. Paul states this more clearly,

...For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
1 Corinthians 5:7

Since the Passover pointed to Christ, it was now fulfilled in His death. Paul says in fact, the whole system of sacrifices was blotted out:

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. Colossians 2:14

When the loud cry, "It is finished," came from the lips of Christ, the priests were officiating in the temple. It was the hour of the evening sacrifice, and as the Passover lamb representing Christ was about to be slain,

...the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake and the rocks rent. Matthew 27:51

The sacrificial system had ended with the crucifixion of Christ. The curtain separating the two apartments of the temple was torn in

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two *from top to bottom*, indicating divine action. The sacrifices were finished; Christ had caused the sacrifice to cease.

A host of reformers including John Wycliffe, Martin Luther and even the scientist Isaac Newton connect the seventieth week with the Messiah. The balance of the 7-year period ended in 34 A.D. with the stoning of Stephen (See Acts 7:59 - 8:4). This date, 34 A.D., marked the end of the 70 weeks, or 490 years apportioned to Israel,

*...to finish the transgression ... to make reconciliation
for iniquity. Daniel 9:24*

From then, the gospel was to go to the Gentiles (or the world) by individual ambassadors from every nation; and Paul, the very one who consented to the stoning of Stephen, became the apostle to the Gentile world. Israel ceased to be the depository of God’s truth. Going back to our opening verse, Daniel 8:14, “Unto 2300 days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” we note the close of the 2300-year period from 457 B.C. would be 1844 A.D. (See figure 1.4) The cleansing of the sanctuary will be dealt with in the chapter *A Stone to Rest Your Head*.

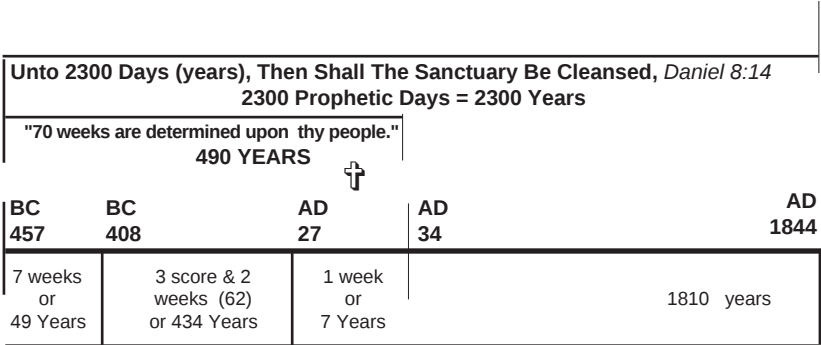


Figure 1.4

Is Jesus God?

If Jesus is God, then all other claims to equality or even supremacy fade into insignificance. This question, more than any other, needs to be clarified in order to clearly discern the validity of His claims:

But Jesus answered them, 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.' Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him; because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was his Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 5: 17-18 NKJV

'I and My Father are one.' Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him, but Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone me?'... 'For a good work we do not stone you, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, make Yourself God'.

John 10:30-33 NKJV

Jesus did not break the Sabbath; He merely did not conform to the human standards and rules erected by the Jews to safeguard themselves from transgressing the law of God. These human regulations placed a heavy burden on all who wanted to live right with God and became a yoke of oppression that no one could bear. Jesus did, however, claim that He and the Father were one. Moreover, nowhere in the New Testament do we find Jesus rebuking those that worshipped Him or directly addressed Him as God.

And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshipped Him, saying, 'Truly You are the Son of God'.

Matthew 14:32-33 NKJV

Thomas answered Him and said, 'My Lord and my God!' John 20:28 NKJV

Worship is exclusively due to God, and not even angels, let alone humans, have any right to claim worship from a fellow created being. Two examples in the Scriptures neatly emphasize this point.

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1. When John was shown the New Jerusalem in vision, he fell at the feet of his angel-guide to worship him, but the angel reprimanded him:

Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. Revelation 22:9

2. When the apostle Peter visited the home of Cornelius, Cornelius was so overwhelmed that he fell at Peter's feet to worship him, but the apostle said:

And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. Acts 10:25-26

There are some religious groups that deny the humanity of Christ, and others that deny His divinity. The Scriptures, however, clearly confirm both His humanity and His divinity. Christ, in Scripture, is the Creator of all things. He is the Saviour and Re-creator and He is Lord of all. The name Jesus literally means "Jahwe" (Jehovah = "the existing One"), the Saviour. As Creator, He can also lay claim to ownership. In Psalm 33 we read:

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Psalm 33:6-9

The New Testament confirms that this creator is none other than Jesus Christ:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the

beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
John 1:1-3.

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.
Colossians 1:16

Jesus Christ is Lord. The Greek word for Lord is *Kurios*, and is used in the sense of: ‘*he to whom a person or thing belongs*’, and this owner is God.

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Philippians 2:11

Jesus emphatically claimed to be God, that He was the self-existent one who preceded all things.

*Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am**.* John 8:58 Emphasis supplied

The Greek word "*eimi*" used here for “I am” means “to be, to exist,” and clearly emphasizes the fact that Jesus is God.

For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Colossians 2:9

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Hebrews 1:8

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The accurate prophecies given in the Bible, pertaining to the attributes of the Messiah, are all fulfilled in Jesus. No other individual can claim His messiahship or wrest His kingship from Him. He is the Prince of Peace, the Lamb that was slain, in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). Jesus said:

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
Matthew 28:18

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.
John 10:9

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:14-18

The Bible clearly teaches that salvation is to be found only in Jesus Christ. In Acts we read:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12

The stage is set, the claims of Jesus are clear, yet in spite of this the world is watering down these truths to accommodate all in a final confederacy aligned against the Word. This great conflict will culminate in the climax of history, in the return of Christ when the kingdom shall

be given into His hand.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

1 Corinthians 15:24

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2

AN ADVOCATE FOR OUR TIME

The New Testament teaches that Jesus Christ died for our sins so that we may inherit eternal life through Him.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:15

What Scriptures was Paul referring to when he said that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures? Of course he was referring to the Old Testament, which predicted that Jesus would die for the sins of mankind. Isaiah spells out the affliction and suffering that the Messiah would have to go through to atone for our sins:

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our

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sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:3-6

What is sin, and why did it cost the life of the Son of God? The Bible has only one definition of sin, and we find this in 1 John 3:4:

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Sin is the transgression of the law of God. Moreover, sin carries a penalty. That penalty is death, but in Christ, the penalty is paid and we can have eternal life.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23

Sin separates us from God. Being separated from God means being separated from the source of life because God is the author and maintainer of life.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

Since all mankind has transgressed the law of God, all mankind is in need of salvation.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

If salvation is a gift, then it follows that salvation is by grace and that my own works cannot save me.

2 - An Advocate for Our Time

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. Romans 11:6

Wonderful news - we are saved by the grace of God through faith in the Son of God. Does this free us from obedience to God's law or belittle God's law?

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Romans 3:31

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Romans 6:14-16

Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Romans 7:12

Simply then, sin (the transgression of God's law) leads to death (and here we are not talking about physical death but eternal death), and grace leads to life (eternal life). But grace does not remove the obligation to keep God's law, but rather establishes the law. The law cannot save me, but it can warn me by telling me what sin is.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Romans 3:20

It is by grace that we are saved, delivered from sin, justified, restored, and sanctified. Grace sets right the relationship with God, but the law tells us

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what sin is so that we may avoid it by the grace of God. A true conversion will fill the heart with gratitude and the restored person will once again want to live in harmony with the law of God. Jesus said:

If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14:15

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. John 15:10

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5:3

In John 8, we read the account of Mary Magdalene when she was caught in adultery and brought before Jesus. She stood before Him condemned to death by the law.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? John 8:3-5

The Law could not save her, but Jesus could. Not one of the accusers was without sin and all fell short of the glory of God. Having convicted them of their own sinfulness, they left one by one and left the trembling, guilty, repentant Mary behind. Jesus turned to her and said:

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. John 8:10-11

The condemned sinner was forgiven and placed under grace: “Neither

do I condemn thee,” but then she was obligated to henceforth keep the law “go, and sin no more.” To be saved by grace does therefore not relieve anyone from the duty of obedience to God’s law. Grace takes away the condemnation of the law, but it does not do away with the law.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1

Have you ever wondered what people did about their sins before the Son of God was crucified on Calvary? Salvation centres in the cross of Christ. Our sins are atoned for by Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary. But how were sins atoned for in Old Testament times? Was their salvation based on a different system in that they were under the law and we are under grace? This is what dispensationalists believe, but, as we have seen, all are obligated to keep the law of God. Therefore salvation for those living before Christ must also have been by grace. In fact, grace existed from the beginning.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Genesis 6:8

In 2 Peter 2:5, Noah is called a preacher of righteousness, and righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ. The New Testament makes it quite clear that all salvation is through Christ Jesus. Hence, Christ is the Saviour also of those that lived before the crucifixion, and the death of the promised Messiah was prefigured by the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. The Gospel was thus presented in the form of typology, an enactment in types and shadows of the plan of salvation. The sacrificial lamb of the Jewish system represented the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. It represented the promise of the coming Messiah who would abolish the record of our sins through His sacrifice and grant the repentant sinner eternal life in Him and through Him.

The innocent paying the price for the guilty is foreshadowed in the sacrificial system of the Jewish sanctuary. The blood shed by the lamb represents the blood of Christ that would be shed. Paul writes, *“Without shedding of blood is no remission.”* Hebrews 9:22

The Bible teaches salvation through Christ from the time of the fall to the time of the second coming of Christ. Adam and Eve were saved

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by the blood of the lamb. When sin stripped the holy pair of their robes of righteousness and left them naked, God Himself covered their nakedness with skins, representing the robe of righteousness, which is available from Christ to every sinner. Where did the skins come from? They must have come from the first sacrificial animals that were slain to represent the lamb of God that would be slain for them. Since God Himself clothed them with these pelts, representing the promise of righteousness restored, he must have explained to them this way to salvation - the Messiah who would come to pay the price for sin so that they could regain eternal life.

And for Adam and his wife the Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them. Genesis 3:21

The difference between relying on one's own merits for salvation and relying on the merits of the Messiah who was to come was demonstrated in the account of Cain and Abel. Both of them erected a sacrificial altar. Cain brought an offering only of farm produce, the fruit of his labour, which did not receive the approval of God, because by bringing only this sacrifice Cain showed that he would rely only on his own merits and not on the prescribed lamb for salvation. However, "without shedding of blood is no remission," and salvation lies outside oneself in Christ. Abel's offering, on the other hand, included the blood offering. (Genesis 4:4)

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. Genesis 4:4

The sacrifice of Abel was accepted, because his offerings pointed to the coming Redeemer. Abel thus understood that salvation was only to be obtained through faith in the blood of the Lamb and his testimony stands to this day.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. Hebrews 11:4

Abraham offered the sacrificial lamb, and so did all the patriarchs. Throughout all history, the only means of salvation was through the blood of the lamb and never through works. When Abraham was instructed to offer his son, Isaac, it was an enactment of the plan of salvation - a miniature theatre describing to the world God's method of dealing with sin. At the point of sacrificing Isaac, God supplied the sacrificial animal Himself, predicting in type that God would give His own Son, just as Abraham had been prepared to give his own son.

Abraham's willingness to obey God displays a faith that could move mountains. He knew God had promised that salvation would come through His and Isaac's seed. God had promised Abraham that his seed would be called in Isaac (Genesis 21:12). He trusted God and knew that even if he should offer Isaac, God would have to raise him from the dead to fulfill His promise (Hebrews 11:17-19). Abraham knew that God would never lie. In Genesis 22:5, Abraham says to his companions:

Stay here with the donkey, the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you. NKJV
(Emphasis supplied)

Do we have such an unshakeable faith in the Word of God? No wonder the Bible says in Galatians 3:8 that the gospel was preached unto Abraham. No wonder Christ referred to Abraham's faith when He said:

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day [by faith he saw the day of Christ's sacrifice as the Lamb of God]: and he saw it and was glad. John 8:56

It was on Mount Moriah that Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his beloved son. It was on Mount Moriah that Solomon built the temple and where the altar of burnt offering stood. And it was at the northern edge of Mount Moriah, at the place called Golgotha, where the Son of God laid down His life.

Abraham was saved by faith in the Son of God, but this did not free him of the obligation to keep God's law.

Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my

charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.
Genesis 26:5

The temple, and before that the sanctuary, served as the greatest lesson book of the plan of salvation ever given to man. The lessons embodied in its symbols and ceremonies are to lead us into a greater understanding of the mystery of salvation. There in types and shadows we learn of the role of Christ, His earthly mission as the Lamb of God, His role as high priest and advocate for the people of God, as well as His role as judge and King. In the sanctuary are unfolded the great truths of justification by faith, sanctification, and glorification. In the sanctuary we learn more about Jesus, His character, His heavenly system of government, and His hopes and objectives for the people of God. What a pity that some would discard the Old Testament as being of no value to us today, teaching that it belonged to the old dispensation without relevance to those living after the cross. Yet the New Testament states that:

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Romans 15:4

Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
1 Corinthians 10:11

If we neglect the Old Testament, we forego the blessings and the warnings which we might have had, had we heeded the words of Paul. Jesus Himself testified that the Old Testament testified about Him.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. John 5:39

Jesus did not come to do away with the writings of the Old Testament, He came to fulfill them. The first five books of the Bible, the Torah, were written by Moses and were a testimony to the plan of salvation. The prophetic books were written to remind God's people of these

truths and to unfold to them more fully their duty toward God. The Psalms form a miniature Bible by themselves. They contain a record of the history of God's people. They are prophetic and contain songs of praise to God. The New Testament is the fulfilment in verity of all that the Old Testament embodies. Jesus said:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matthew 5:17-18

The Pentateuch, or first five books of Moses, all reveal an aspect of the Messiah, just as the four Gospels reveal different aspects of Christ:

Genesis - Book of origins, the fall and promise of redemption

Christ the Creator and Promised Redeemer

Exodus - Christ our sanctuary

Leviticus - Christ our sacrifice

Numbers - Christ our guide

Deuteronomy - Christ our reward

Matthew - Christ the King

Mark - Christ the servant

Luke - Christ the man

John - Christ the divine

The Sanctuary

On Mount Sinai, Moses received the law of God as well as precise instructions on the sacrificial system, which was to form the basis of the religious ceremonies of the Israelites. Both sets of instructions were called **the law**, but they were different in that the law of Ten Commandments defined what sin was, and the Ceremonial Law contained the solution to the sin problem. The law of Ten Commandments was written by God, and the ceremonial law was written by Moses in a book called the book of the law.

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The Law of Ten Commandments

And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God. Exodus 31:18

And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. Exodus 32:16

When Moses returned from his communion with God on Sinai, he found that the Israelites had made for themselves a golden calf and he broke the table of stone. God then commanded him to fashion new ones and God Himself would write the Ten Commandments once more onto the tables of stone. Moreover, these tables of stone were to be placed within the ark which Moses had to construct.

At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. Deuteronomy 10:1-2

When Moses broke the first tables, it symbolised the law of God that had been broken by God's people when they served the golden calf. The law did not change and, as a result, God wrote the law again onto the new tables of stone which Moses had to fashion, symbolising that we have to be co-workers together with God in upholding His law. Only in His strength can we uphold the law, but we must cooperate with God in this regard.

The Ceremonial Law

This law of types and ceremonies was written by Moses in a book, the book of the law, and had to be placed beside the ark.

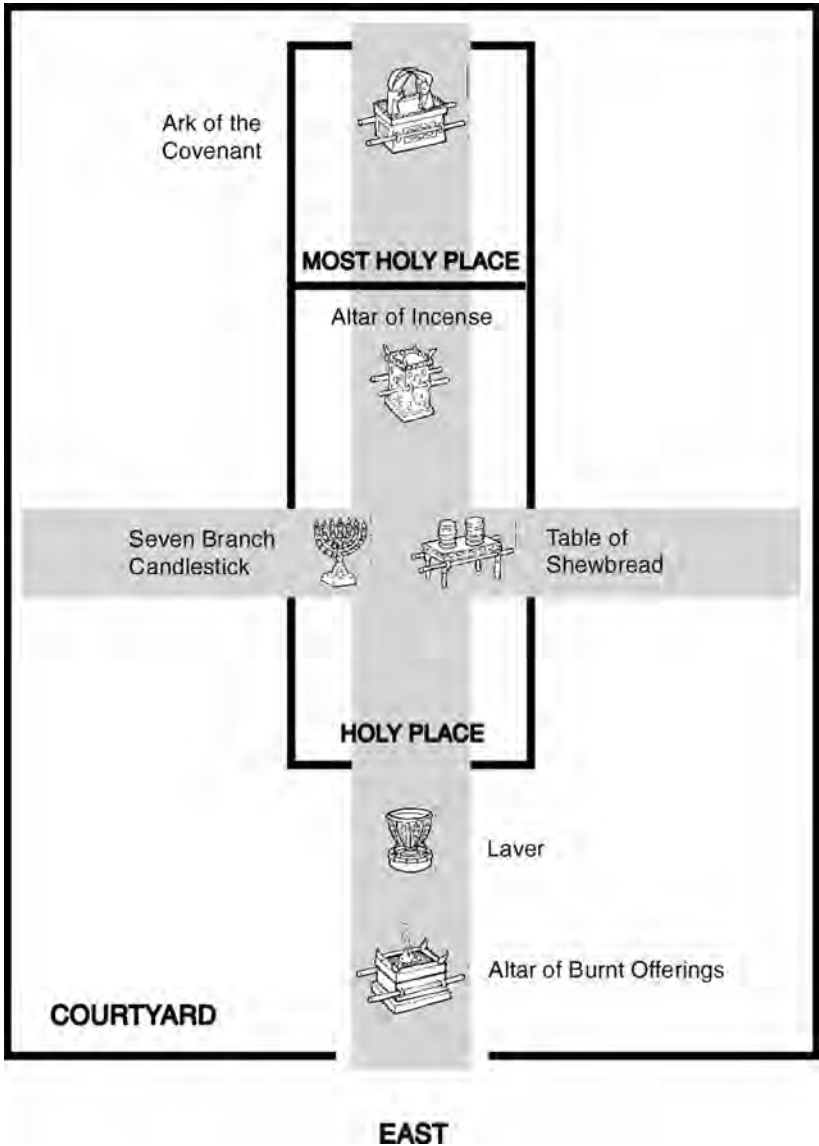


Figure 2.1 - The two apartments and courtyard of the sanctuary showing the cross-shaped alignment of the articles of furniture.

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*And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the **side** of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there **for a witness against thee**. Deuteronomy 31:24-26 Emphasis supplied.*

These two sets of laws, the one moral and the other ceremonial, were thus entirely different and served different purposes (see Figure 2.3).

Christ came to fulfill the obligations of the ceremonial law by becoming the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. He fulfilled the obligation of the law of Ten Commandments by His perfect obedience to its precepts. After the cross, the law of ceremonies was discontinued because it foreshadowed the cross, but the law of Ten Commandments did not change, nor was it done away with when Christ died. The same law is still to be found in the New Testament. (see Figure 2.2)

The Sanctuary Service

How did the ceremonial law prefigure the ministry of Christ? The sanctuary provides the answers. Moses had to construct the tabernacle exactly according to the pattern shown him on the mount.

Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8

... as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. Hebrews 8:5

The earthly sanctuary, and the entire ministry associated with it, reflects the ministry of Christ in our behalf. It is also a copy or miniature enactment of the much greater ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, of

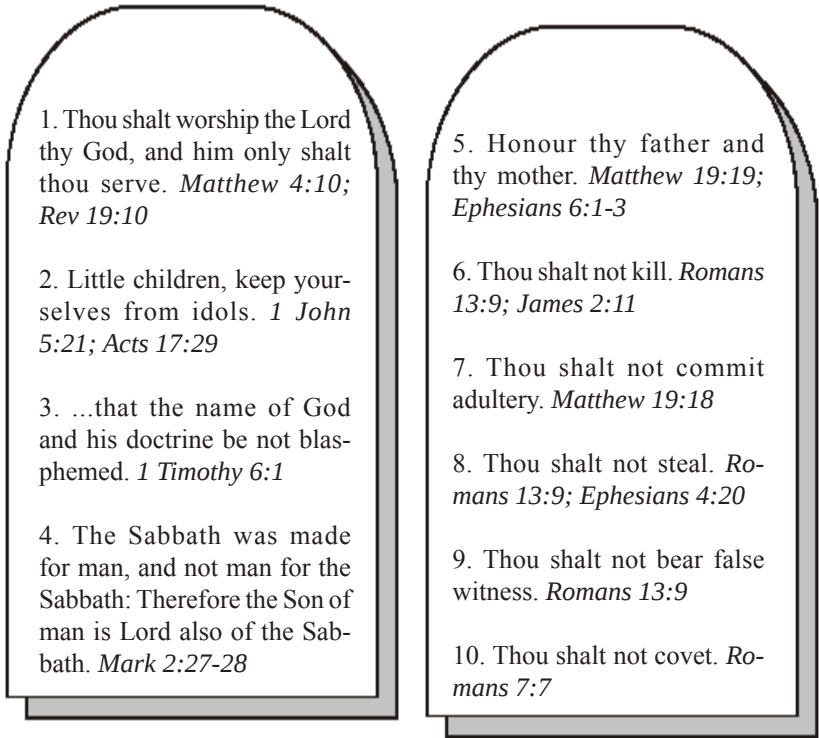


Figure 2.2

which the earthly sanctuary was merely “*a figure for the time then present.*” (Hebrews 9:9). The earthly was a copy of the heavenly.

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle. Hebrews 8:5

Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary that was not built by man after His resurrection and ascension into heaven.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Hebrews 9:24

CONTRAST OF MORAL AND CEREMONIAL LAWS

MORAL LAW

CEREMONIAL LAW

Called Royal Law of Liberty
James 2:8,12

Called Law... contained in ordinances
Eph 2:15; Heb 9:10

Spoken by God Himself
Deut 4:12; 5:22

Given to Moses to speak to the people
Lev 1:1-3; Exod 24:3

Written by God's finger on stone
Exodus 31:18; 32:16

Written by Moses in "book of the law"
Deut 31:9,24

Placed in the Ark
1 Kings 8:9; Deut 10:1-5; Heb 9:4; Ex 40:20

Placed beside the Ark *Deut 31:24-26*

Existed before sin
1 John 3:4,8; Rom 4:15; 5:13

Given after man sinned *Hebrews 5:1; 8:4*

Purpose was to reveal sin
Gives the knowledge of sin
Romans 3:20; 7:7

Purpose was to reveal the remedy for sin,
Was given because of sin
Gal 3:19, Lev 6:1, 6-7; John 1:29

Eternal, established by the gospel
Ps 111:7,8; Matt 5:18; Rom 3:31

Abolished at cross, Temporary *Col 2:14-17*

Not grievous *1 John 5:3*

Contrary to us *Col 2:14-17*

Judges all men *James 2:10-12*

Judges no man *Col 2:14-17*

Spiritual *Romans 7:14*

Carnal *Hebrews 9:10*

Complete, "Perfect", "Holy,
Just and Good"
Deut 5:22, Psalm 19:7, Rom 7:12

Subject to change, "made nothing perfect"
Hebrews 7:12, 18-19

Figure 2.3

2 - An Advocate for Our Time

The price for sin was paid for at the cross. Justice was satisfied, but the ministry of Christ did not end there. Sin still exists and sinners still have recourse to God through Christ. We serve a *risen* Saviour, who is our High Priest, our Advocate, our Judge and our King, who is interceding in our behalf in the sanctuary above.

We have such an high priest ...in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Hebrews 8:1-2

In Old Testament times, the defence of the accused was a duty so sacred that the judge refused to delegate the work to an attorney. He himself served as the defender of the accused. The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* explains: “attorneys at law are unknown in Jewish law.” Their legal code required judges to “lean always to the side of the defendant and give him the advantage of every possible doubt.” What a system! God Himself defends and judges the accused. But who is the accuser? Revelation 12:10 speaks of the devil as the accuser who accuses us before God day and night. The devil also keeps a record of sin, and his accusations are painfully correct. How do we then overcome these accusations?

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. Revelation 12:11 NIV

When we accept the fact that Jesus died in our stead, God finds the evidence He needs to pronounce us innocent. Where does the advocate then come in? In certain situations, the Hebrew judge appointed an advocate to assist him in defending the accused. The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* states that the husband could represent his wife and help the judge defend her if the verdict involved his personal rights. Here we have a glorious parallel with the heavenly judgment. Christ the Bridegroom purchased His people, His bride, with His own blood. He serves as our court-appointed advocate to help the Father defend us against the accusations of Satan and He also defends His own right to grant us salvation and to ultimately take us up to heaven. Our eternal salvation does not depend on how hopeless we are, but on how sufficient Christ is in saving sinners.

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My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1 NIV

When probation closes, Christ will cease His intercessory ministry, put on His kingly robes and return to earth as King of kings to meet His bride. In Daniel chapter 7, there is described the great judgment scene to take place just prior to Christ's second coming, where He will receive kingship. In order for Jesus to qualify as King, He first had to become a priest. And before Jesus could become a priest, He had to become the Lamb, slain for the sins of the world:

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all people, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. Daniel 7:13-14 NIV

The main theme of the book of Daniel is Jesus Christ, the Crucified Lamb, the Risen High Priest and the Coming King. The good news is that the judgment will turn out in favour of all those who come to Christ with a repentant heart, seeking forgiveness of their sins and a renewed heart that lives in harmony with God.

...the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. Daniel 7:22 NIV

The Construction of the Earthly Sanctuary

Hebrews 4:2,6 tells us that the gospel was preached to Israel but that

they did not benefit because of unbelief. The gospel was preached to them in type in the form of the sanctuary service. No wonder the Psalmist wrote:

Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Psalms 77:13

The tabernacle itself was “pitched in the midst of the people” (Num. 1:51-53), just as Jesus is “in the midst of his people” (John 1:14).

The sanctuary consisted of an outer wall made of white linen, with one entrance (the gate) leading into the outer court, which represents the earth. In the book of Revelation, we read that white linen stands for the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19:8). As all righteousness is imputed righteousness, the white linen thus ultimately stands for the righteousness of Christ. On entering the outer court, the first item encountered is the altar of burnt offering, where the sacrificial lamb was offered and burnt. It stands for the cross of Calvary. Then there was the laver, which was filled with water for ceremonial washing. It represents the washing of rebirth.

The inner sanctuary had two apartments - the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Leading into the Holy Place was the door, and separating the Holy from the Most Holy was the veil (Exodus 26:31). The furniture in the Holy Place consisted of the seven-branched candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the golden altar of incense. In the second apartment, the Most Holy Place, there was only one article of furniture, called the Ark of the Covenant. It was a beautiful box overlaid with pure gold. At each end was a golden angel or covering cherub. In this ark chest was the most sacred document that God has ever given to men - the Ten Commandments. All the furnishings of the sanctuary were arranged in the shape of the cross representing the way in which Jesus would die.

The Court

The court represents the earth. It is here that Christ was slain for the sins of the world. When we enter through the gate we enter through Christ who is the door to salvation. We are immediately confronted with the altar of burnt offering where the sacrificial lamb was slain, and this represents Calvary. The pillars in the sanctuary represent the redeemed

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(Revelation 3:10), and the silver bases were made from the redemption money (half a shekel), which was the same for the rich and the poor (Exodus 30:11-16). In Matthew 17:24-27, we read that Christ paid this redemption money for two. Thus, in type, it is He who paid the price for us. The white linen surrounding the outer court represents the righteousness of Christ that covers us when we enter the gate to be justified by Him.

The Altar of Burnt Offering

The altar of burnt offering represents Christ's sacrificial death and was made of acacia wood (which represents the humanity of Christ as our humanity is called wood, hay or stubble) overlaid with brass (representing victory through suffering). The grate on which the offering was burnt was one and a half cubits high, which is the same height as the mercy seat covering the ark of the covenant. God's justice is as high as His mercy. The altar had four horns to which the sacrificial lamb was tied, representing being tied to His strength.

The Laver

The laver represents the washing of rebirth, and it was constructed entirely from the brass mirrors of the women. Parting with the mirror represents the renunciation of the world and one's personal vanity in exchange for the righteousness of Christ. God's law is also the mirror (James 1:23,25) in which we see the reflection of His righteousness. The laver tells us that Christ does not only forgive our sins (the altar of burnt offering), but that He also cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

The Holy and the Most Holy Place

Leading into the Holy Place was the door, and into the Most Holy, the veil. The gate, the door, and the veil represent entering into the three aspects of Christ's ministry. All three doorways consisted of luxurious tapestries made of white (purity - Revelation 19:8), scarlet

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(sacrifice - Revelation 19:13), purple (royalty - John 19:2,3) and blue (obedience - Numbers 15:37-40) thread representing the character and royalty of Christ. The coverings of the Holy and the Most Holy Place also consisted, from outside to inside, of badger skin (Christ's humanity veiling His glory), ram skins dyed red (Christ's sacrifice), white woven goat's hair (His purity) and the inner covering or royal covering made of the same fabrics as the curtains of the gate, the door, and the veil. These coverings thus represent Christ as the lowly saviour, the sacrificial saviour, the sinless saviour and the exalted saviour. He came to redeem the world (the number four represents the world), and thus there were four pillars for the veil, four coverings, four colors, and four ingredients in the shewbread.

Each and every detail was significant. The 48 boards and 60 pillars (multiples of 144 000) used in the construction stood on sockets of silver (made from redemption money):

*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
which is Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:11*

The five bars holding the structure together (five factors holding the church body in the unity of the Spirit) represent:

*Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the
bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit,
even as ye are called in **one hope** of your calling; **One
Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God** and Father of
all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
Ephesians 4:3-6*

The furnishings in the Holy place - the candlestick, the altar of incense and the table of shewbread - are all a figure of Christ. The candlestick provided the only light for the sanctuary and the oil used to keep it burning was a symbol of the working of the Holy Spirit (1 Sam. 10:1,6; 16:13). Jesus says:

...I am the light of the world. John 8:12

The table of shewbread represented Jesus, the bread of life:

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. John 6:51

The altar of incense upon which was kept burning a perpetual fire of sweet-smelling incense represented intercessory prayer. Its perfume pervaded into the sanctuary and typified the intercessory work of Christ before the Father. The ministry in the Holy Place thus represents the ministry of sanctification whereas that of the outer court represented justification.

In the Most Holy stood the Ark of the Covenant, in which was the law of God written with the finger of God. The entire sanctuary service was based on the fact that man had transgressed the sacred law of God, and because he had broken the law he stood under the penalty of death. Only through the atonement and intercession of Christ could man be reconciled to God. In Christ, the mercy of God was made manifest. So, above the law, as a covering for the Ark of the Covenant, was the mercy seat made of pure gold. The name of the mercy seat in Hebrew was KAPPORETH, meaning to wipe out, and HILASTERION in Greek, meaning reconciliation. The mercy seat is a symbol of Christ, shielding us from the consequences of a broken law. Above this mercy seat and at each end of the ark, stood cherubim covered with gold. Their faces looked downward in reverence for God, His throne of mercy, and His eternal law. Above the mercy seat was the light of God's presence, called the Shekinah. The law decreed the death of the sinner, but above the law was the mercy seat, overshadowed by the presence of God. Mercy and pardon were granted when the priest sprinkled blood on the curtain before the ark, which divided the sanctuary into two apartments. All this revealed to man, in dramatic symbols, God's plan of salvation.

The Sacrificial System

There were numerous offerings that were required of the Israelites such as free will offerings, sin offerings and purification offerings.

Moreover, not all the offerings were sacrificial animals but included harvest offerings and grain offerings. For the purpose of this discussion, we shall only consider the sacrificial offerings.

Firstly, there were the daily offerings of a lamb offered mornings and evenings. This represented Christ at the beginning of His ministry when He entered the court of earth to become the sacrifice for sin. Secondly, there was the offering of the ram of consecration (Exodus 29:22), and this mature male sheep represented Christ at the close of His earthly ministry. Service in the sanctuary could not commence until this ram had been sacrificed and the sanctuary and the priest had been anointed (Exodus 40:9-15,29). In the same way, service in the heavenly sanctuary could not begin until Christ had died on the cross.

The daily priestly ministry was conducted at the altar of burnt offering and in the first chamber or Holy Place.

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. Hebrews 9:6

The High Priest also represents Jesus who intercedes on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary.

... we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. Hebrews 4:14

... We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Hebrews 8:1-2

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Hebrews 9:11-12

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Leviticus chapter 4 describes what a sinner was required to do if he sinned.

And if any one ... sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord ... then he shall bring his offering... And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering...and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. Leviticus 4:27-31

The carrying out of the ritual of confession over the head of the animal had no efficacy in itself. The sinner had to look forward by faith to the coming of Christ as atonement for his sins, and to feel truly sorry for his sins, turning away from them. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* states:

The laying of hands upon the victim's head is an ordinary rite by which the substitution and the transfer of sins are affected. In every sacrifice there is the idea of substitution; the victim takes the place of the human sinner. Jewish Encyclopedia.

Having spilled the innocent blood of the victim, he was reminded of the innocence of the coming Christ. The lamb also had to be a lamb without blemish, just as Christ was without fault, and the shedding of the innocent blood was to be a constant reminder of the price of sin.

... he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

Having shed the blood of the animal, some of it was carried by the High Priest into the Holy Place (first apartment) and some of it was placed on the horns of the altar of incense with the finger and sometimes it was

sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. Thus, in type or symbol, the sin was transferred from the penitent to the sanctuary. The penitent then went his way justified and forgiven of his sin, but through the transfer of the blood, the record of the forgiven sin was recorded in the sanctuary.

What happens to this record of sin? In Daniel chapter 8 we find some good news. God is going to destroy the record of our confessed sins. Not a trace of them will be found in the hereafter. God's forgiveness is so complete that no one will spend eternity as forgiven sinners. In fact, the forgiven transgressor will be treated as though he or she had never sinned.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Psalms 103:12

Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. Isaiah 65:17 NIV

Christ Our High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary

Not only was Christ the sacrificial offering Himself, but He was also the High Priest who offered Himself as an offering. The book of Hebrews makes this abundantly clear:

We have such an high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man.... But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises. Hebrews 8:1-2,6

These verses show that Christ has entered into heaven itself, into the true heavenly sanctuary or tabernacle, to act on our behalf as mediator and High Priest. Moreover, there is but one mediator, and that is Jesus:

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For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5

And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father - Jesus Christ the Righteous. I John 2:1

Ulrich Zwingli (1481 - 1531) testified of his faith:

Christ, the eternal High Priest, is the only Mediator between man and God. Yes, Christ, the one and only mediator, distributing the benefits of His sacrifice to all who believe on Him.

The Book of Revelation draws aside the curtain, and we see Christ in Heaven as our Mediator - our High Priest:

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Revelation 1:12-13

And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. Revelation 8:3-4

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. Revelation 11:19

The book of Revelation reveals the Son of God in Heaven in High Priestly garb, ministering among the candlesticks. We see the altar of incense and the intercessory prayers for the saints ascending before God. We note the Holy Ark of the testament in the Heavenly Temple. What a wonderful thought to know Christ is there in heaven ministering and pleading His blood sufficient for our salvation. Writing of his love and adoration for the Saviour of men, Martin Luther said:

In His life, Christ is an example, showing us how to live; in His death, He is a sacrifice, satisfying for our sins; in His resurrection, a conqueror; in His ascension, a king; in His intercession, a High Priest.¹

The earthly High Priest who served in the sanctuary could not serve as lamb as well, but Jesus could. We can learn much about the function of our heavenly High Priest by studying the earthly pattern. The robes of the priest consisted of the seamless pure white linen undergarment, which represent the matchless righteousness of Christ, and the ephod of the priest identified him with the gate, the door, the veil, and the inner covering of the sanctuary, all of which represented Christ. The breastplate of judgment had the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on precious stones and was bound with gold to the High Priest. Christ binds His people together and ties them to Himself with threads of gold. What a thought! We serve a compassionate Saviour who holds us close to His heart while interceding on our behalf.

The Day of Atonement

The highlight of the sanctuary service was the annual feast of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23: 27-29, 16:4-22). The Day of Atonement was a most solemn festival that enacted the cleansing of the sanctuary from the record of Israel's sins. After the cleansing of the sanctuary, no record of forgiven sins was left, and thus the erstwhile sinner stood before God as though he had never sinned. This earthly cleansing of the sanctuary stood for the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, which would remove the record

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of all the sins committed by God's people throughout the ages. Let us first look at the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary.

And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. Leviticus 16:16

Once a year, the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies, but not before first having made atonement for his own sins and those of the priesthood. On this day, two goats were brought before the High Priest and lots were cast. One of the goats was then sacrificed, (the 'Lord's goat'), and on entering the Most Holy, the priest was to burn incense, and the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled before the ark and applied to the mercy seat.

...He is to put the incense on the fire before the Lord, and the smoke of the incense will conceal the atonement cover above the Testimony, so that he will not die. Leviticus 16:13 NIV

[The blood]...He shall sprinkle...on the atonement cover...Leviticus 16:15 NIV

Why? Because God's law had been transgressed. Symbolically, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat wiped out the record of sin through grace. Christ's closing ministry in the heavenly sanctuary can only be understood in the light of the great Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary. This is a message of profound hope, which tells us that the record of all our sins will soon be completely blotted out.

It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. Hebrews 9:23 NIV

The earthly record was cleansed by the blood of the Lord's goat, but the heavenly record was cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

In this way he will make atonement for the Most Holy because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been. He is to do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which is among them in the midst of their uncleanness. Leviticus 16:16 NIV

On the way out of the sanctuary, the High Priest applied the blood to the golden altar and the altar of burnt offering, thus atoning for the entire sanctuary. In type, all the recorded sins of Israel were cleansed from the sanctuary. Hands were then laid upon the other goat, the scapegoat. This goat was then led into the desert and set free. In type, the record of sin was transferred to the scapegoat that was called Azazel or the devil. Azazel thus represents Satan, who initially was responsible for sin.

Note that the scapegoat was not put to death. Satan is thus not the sin bearer as in the sense of atoning for sin, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22). It merely represents the transference of the guilt to the responsible party. Jesus is the only one who bore our sins and made atonement for them through the shedding of His blood, but Christ was not responsible for our sin. It is also important to note that only the record of confessed sins is placed on the head of Azazel; therefore, it is essential that our sins go before us to the sanctuary. Unconfessed sins are not atoned for and sinners that knowingly refuse the gift of salvation also have to bear the guilt of their own sin.

We must keep in mind that the cleansing that took place on this day is a type of the antitypical cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, which was to begin at the end of the 2300 day prophecy, which we discussed in the previous chapter.

And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.
Daniel 8:14

This prophecy had its beginning with the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, given by Artaxerxes Longimanus in 457 B.C. If we add the

2300 days of years, then that brings us to 1844. The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary thus began in 1844, which means that Jesus entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary on that date to start the ministry of the antitypical Day of Atonement. As Christ's ministry in the heavenly could not have commenced before Calvary, because without His blood this ministry could not begin, it follows that He must have started His ministry in the Holy Place (the first chamber) after His ascension. The only time reference in the Bible as to the commencement of the next phase of His ministry, the cleansing of the sanctuary or the pre-advent judgment, is that recorded in Daniel 8. This leads us to 1844, the end of the 2300 day prophecy (for a more detailed discussion on the events surrounding this date, see the chapter *A Stone to Rest Your Head*).

The Jews associated the Day of Atonement with the Day of Judgment, and the ritual enacted by the High Priest represented the cleansing of the sanctuary - the wiping out of the record of sin and the final salvation of Israel. This pointed forward to the time of the pre-advent judgment that was to take place in heaven prior to the return of Christ to this earth to redeem His people. Prior to the return of Christ, there has to be a judgment in heaven, or else how would He be able to separate the wicked from the just and claim those that are His if no such judgment had taken place? A Jew that did not take part in the ceremony of the Day of Atonement was to be cut off from his people. It was a day of affliction (heart searching), a day of judgment, and it was vital to be included in this ceremony.

Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And you shall do no work on that same day: for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. NKJV Anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. Leviticus 23:27-29 NIV

The word "cut off" implies the seriousness of the Day of Atonement as a day of judgment. Verse 30 says: *"I will destroy from among his people anyone who does any work on that day."* They had to keep the day,

as they would keep the Sabbath. Farrar in his book, *The Early Days of Christianity*, p. 238 writes:

So awful was the Day of Atonement that we are told in a Jewish book of ritual that the very angels run to and fro in fear and trembling, saying: 'Lo, the Day of Judgment has come.'

Since God only handles confessed sins in the sanctuary, what type of lives ought we to live who are living in the time of the anti-typical Day of Atonement? We need to develop the habit of communing with God; we need to ask God for humble spirits that will be willing to confess wrongs and that will yearn for clean hearts and minds. The judgment is good news - there is nothing to fear if our sins have gone before us to the sanctuary.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 NIV

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:18 NIV

The standard of judgment will then as now remain the same. It will be the law of God.

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. James 2:12

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

The Annual Feasts Point to Jesus

In the ceremonial law, the annual Jewish feasts all represented important events in the ministry of Christ. The Passover (Nisan 14) represented the crucifixion. The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15) represented the body of Christ, and was a symbol of Christ in the grave. The Feast of Firstfruits (Nisan 16) represented the resurrection. The Feast of Weeks (Sivan 6) represented Pentecost. Note that the first three feasts represented the three days of Christ's death to His resurrection, and pointed to the ministry of the first coming of Christ.

The subsequent Jewish feasts pointed to the second coming of Christ. They were the Feast of Trumpets (Tishri 1) which pointed to the Second Advent Movement and the announcement of judgment. Trumpets are used as a symbol of judgement. (Revelation 14: 6-7; Joel 2:1) The Feast of Atonement (Tishri 10) then represented the pre-advent judgment. And the Feast of Tabernacles (Tishri 15) represented homegoing at the Second Advent. (See Figure 2.4)

The Passover, the ***Feast of Unleavened Bread*** and the ***Feast of Firstfruits*** were celebrated on three consecutive days representing Christ's death and resurrection.

*In the fourteenth day of the first month (Abib) at even
is the Lord's Passover. Leviticus 23:5*

Paul sums it all up by saying:

*...For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
1 Corinthians 5:7*

Christ's sacrifice fulfilled the Passover feast, and Christ became our Passover.

Passover

Lamb without blemish *Exodus 12:5*
Neither shall ye break a bone *Exodus 12:46*

Christ

Christ without spot *Hebrews 9:14*
No bones broken *John 19:33,36*

Jesus when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake and the rocks rent. Matthew 27:50-51

The curtain which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place was torn by an Unseen Hand from top to bottom, representing God's demonstration of the ending of the Jewish ceremonial system. Atonement for sins was no longer available through the sacrificial system. Type had met anti-type, shadow had met substance in the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

...Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:29

John the Revelator referred to Christ as:

*...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
Revelation 13:8*

Wasn't the Law Nailed to the Cross?

Paul writes:

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Colossians 2:14

There was only one law that was *against us*, in the sense that it showed us that our transgression required the sacrifice of the Son of God in order to satisfy the demands of justice, and that law was the ceremonial law. By His own sacrifice, He fulfilled the ceremonial law and blotted it out. His sacrifice fulfilled the type, and henceforth no further sacrifice is needed.

Take this Book of the Law, and put it in beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there

as a witness against you. Deuteronomy 31:26 NKJV

The law that was against us was thus not the moral law, which was not placed in the side of the ark, but in the ark. Also, the moral law was not a law of bondage, but a law of liberty (James 2:8-12). Christ, through His death, opened the door to sinners to escape the condemnation of the moral law, which was death, but He did not take away the moral law (See Figures 2.2 and 2.3 previously):

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23 NKJV

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1

If the Passover represents the sacrificial death of Christ, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread represents the body of Christ in the grave and the Feast of Firstfruits represents His glorious resurrection. When Christ died and rose from the grave, the Bible tells us that graves were opened and that some of old were raised from the dead together with Him.

And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Matthew 27:52-53

These resurrected ones were the firstfruits of the much greater harvest of souls to rise at the close of time.

The **Feast of Weeks** represented Pentecost. Penta equals fifty, and this event commemorated the giving of the law of Ten Commandments fifty days after the Passover. They had received the testimony of how to live as the people of God. After the death of Christ, the true Passover, the disciples of Christ were empowered by the Holy Spirit to preach the embodiment of the law, Christ Jesus, to the world.

The **Feast of Trumpets**, the **Day of Atonement** and the **Feast**

of Tabernacles were Jewish feasts that pointed to the events associated with the Second Coming of Christ. The Feast of Trumpets pointed to the announcement of the pre-advent judgment, which of necessity would have to take place before the end of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8. For the fulfilment of this feast, we would have to study the events which took place in this regard just prior to 1844 (this will be discussed in the chapter *A Stone to Rest Your Head*). The Day of Atonement, as we have seen, represents the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary or the pre-advent judgement (for further details on this very important event, see the chapter *The Long Awaited Millennium*). The Feast of Tabernacles was a joyful feast, “a day of great gladness”, where the Israelites built booths of olive branches, pine branches, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of thick trees (Nehemiah 8:15), and celebrated the harvest that had been gathered. The harvest represents the final harvest of the redeemed and the feast thus represented the joy of meeting associated with the Second Coming and the harvest of souls. (See Figure 2.4 at end of the chapter for a complete reference to the feasts of the sanctuary system)

The sanctuary service is the Gospel in type and the New Testament is the gospel in verity. If we study the sanctuary, we will be led into a greater understanding of the ministry of Christ. The Bible warns that:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 2 John 1:7

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Galatians 1:8-9

These are strong words, and it is therefore vital that we understand the ministry of Christ. Anyone that breaks down this ministry, changes the ministry or even replaces the ministry with any other means of salvation is denying that Jesus is the fulfilment of all the types. That is the same as denying that

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Jesus came in the flesh. Indeed, the Bible warns that the antichrist would come and replace the ministry of Jesus with another system, so we need to be informed so that we will not be deceived. Moreover, we are warned that the deception will be so staggering that, if possible, even the elect will be deceived. (Matthew 24:24) It is sad that modern Christianity seems rooted only at the cross, ignoring the further ministry of Christ, and making to no avail the work of sanctification. The Bible clearly states:

*Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification
without which no one will see the Lord.*

Hebrews 12:14 NASB

Who is the enemy that will try to make of no effect the ministry of Jesus? Who is it that will preach another Gospel so subtle in its approach that even the elect will be deceived? Deception is devastating, and in order to succeed, the enemy must disguise it well. Throughout the ages, the prophets of God have warned against the encroaching enemy of righteousness. In fact, the Bible has much to say on this issue and, just because it is uncomfortable or politically incorrect to address these issues in our day, is no excuse for ignoring the last messages of warning. We need to study the prophecies:

*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto
ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth
in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star
arise in your hearts. 2 Peter 1:19*

In the chapters that follow, we shall attempt to do just that and to unravel the mystery surrounding the antichrist and His mission to destroy the ministry of Jesus.

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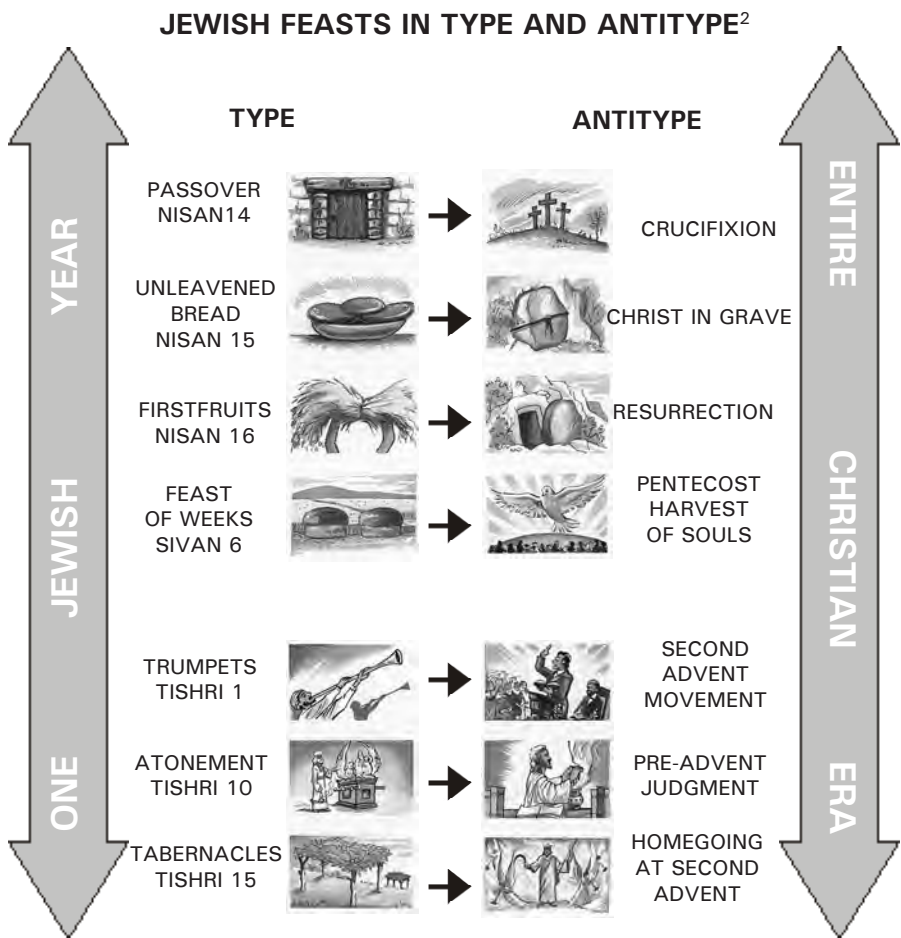


Figure 2.4 - Jewish Feasts in type and antitype - one Jewish year representing the entire Christian era.

The Controversy Over Truth

3

THE MISTS OF TIME

Identifying the Final Role Players

In Daniel chapter 2, we find a short synoptic prophecy of the events that would unfold from the time of Daniel to the close of history. This prophecy provides us with a number of keys that will enable us to unlock the more complex prophecies pertaining to the great controversy between the forces of light and the forces of evil. Subsequent prophecies in the book of Daniel expand on this basic prophecy, and the book of Revelation can only be understood in the light of the prophecies of Daniel. We need to understand the symbolism employed by Daniel, as the same symbols are employed in Revelation. The definitions for the symbols are largely found in the prophecies of Daniel, and the two books thus form a unit. No wonder that Jesus recommended the books of Daniel and Revelation for our study to understand end-time events:

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand.)

Matthew 24:15

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words

of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. Revelation 1:3

The Prophecy of Daniel 2

Over 2500 years ago, the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar II, had an amazing dream, and when he awoke the next morning, he had forgotten the content of the dream, yet was aware of its importance. None of his counsellors could tell him the dream, even less its meaning, and he determined to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. According to Scripture, Daniel and his friends, who had also been educated in the Babylonian mysteries, and therefore belonged to the group of the wise men of Babylon, would also have been destroyed by this royal decree. Upon hearing this, Daniel approached the king to intervene on behalf of all the wise men. Upon fervent prayer, God revealed not only the dream, but also its meaning to Daniel, and he could approach the king and exclaim:

There is a ‘God in Heaven’ that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days . . . thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to us hereafter.
Daniel 2:28-29

This dream obviously has bearing for us, because it not only concerns the time of Nebuchadnezzar, but also that of the latter days.

Thou, O King, sawest, and behold a great image...This great image’s

(I) head was of fine gold

(II) his breast and his arms of silver

(III) his belly and his thighs of brass

(IV) his legs of iron

(V) his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Daniel 2:32-33 (Emphasis supplied)

As Nebuchadnezzar recognizes his dream, Daniel continues,

Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces...And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.
Daniel 2:34-35

The prophet describes the successive kingdoms that would arise upon the earth culminating in the final destruction of all earthly kingdoms by the stone that was cut out without human hands. The kingdoms described were all closely associated with God's people and the tension between these pagan earthly powers and the people of God serves as a typology for the much greater conflict that will rage between these forces, on a worldwide scale, at the end of time. The kingdoms described in sequence are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

I. HEAD OF GOLD - BABYLON 605 -539 B.C.

Having related the dream, the prophet Daniel gives the interpretation.

...Thou art this head of gold. Verse 38

Nebuchadnezzar was Babylon personified. Gold was a fitting symbol of Babylon. The historian Herodotus describes the golden image of Marduk seated upon a golden throne before a golden table and a golden altar. Pliny describes robes of the priests interlaced with gold. Neo-Babylon was a golden kingdom from the year 605 B.C. to 539 B.C.

And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron. Daniel 2:39-40

II. BREAST AND ARMS OF SILVER - MEDO-PERSIA 539 - 331 B.C.

From an astronomical tablet in the Berlin Museum, we have the thirty-seventh regal year of Nebuchadnezzar II to the exact day. Archaeologists have been able to pinpoint exactly the fall of Babylon to Medo-Persia which was October 29, 539 B.C.

*After thee, the head of gold, shall arise another
kingdom inferior to thee,...*

The fact that Daniel predicted that the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar would come to an end must have come as a tremendous shock to the monarch. The fall of Babylon is described in chapter 5 of the book of Daniel.

*Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and
Persians. Daniel 5:28*

The kingdom of Medo-Persia was a dual kingdom, but Cyrus of Persia welded the elements of the two kingdoms together. The two arms of the image were thus a fitting symbol for this power. Medo-Persia was represented by silver, just as silver was used for personal adornment by Persian warriors, and was also the metal of their monetary system. The prophecy, however, predicted that this empire would also fall and be replaced by another kingdom.

III. BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRASS -- GREECE 331 - 168 B.C.

*Another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule
over all the earth.*

Daniel 8:20-21 shows Medo-Persia succeeded by a third kingdom of brass or bronze - Greece. However, this was more properly the Macedo-

nian or Hellenistic empire of Alexander the Great and his successors. In three main battles, Alexander swept across the Old World, defeating Persia at the battles of Granicus 334 B.C., Issus 333 B.C., and Arbela 331 B.C. Josephus, Jewish historian of the first century, described this prophecy of Daniel chapter 2 in these words:

But their empire will be destroyed by another king from the west, clad in bronze.¹

Bronze was used as body armour and battle-axes. Spear tips by the soldiers of Greece were also made of bronze. This kingdom would, however, also be replaced by a fourth kingdom.

IV. LEGS OF IRON - ROME 168 B.C. - 476 A.D.

Upon Alexander's death at the height of his career, his general divided the empire amongst themselves, and this divided empire then fell prey to the Romans. Since the traditional founding of Rome about 753 B.C., she had emerged as a world conqueror. Rome defeated the Greeks at the Battle of Pydna in 168 B.C., and thus arose the fourth kingdom as strong as iron. The historian Gibbon made this comment about Rome:

The arms of the Republic Rome, sometimes vanquished in battle; always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the Ocean; and the images of gold, of silver, or brass that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarch of Rome.²

The great iron monarchy of Rome was not destined to continue forever. From 351 A.D., barbarian tribes made incursions upon the Roman empire until the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus (the Diminutive Augustus), was dethroned in 476 A.D. Then began the divided age.

V. FEET - PART OF IRON, PART OF CLAY: DIVIDED KINGDOMS ~ EUROPE TO THE END OF TIME

Daniel describes the divided kingdom of Rome as follows:

And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of potters' clay, and part of iron, 'the kingdom shall be divided'; but there shall be in it of the 'strength of the iron'; forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay . . . So the kingdom shall be 'partly strong and partly broken'. Daniel 2:41-42

After the collapse of Rome in 476 A.D., the empire was divided into ten divisions. These were the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Alamani, Anglo-Saxons, Heruli, Lombardi, and Burgundians. Our modern states of France, England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and others have, through the centuries, shifted their boundaries and organized themselves into national states and languages.

Daniel noted that the divided kingdoms would be partly strong and partly weak. This is indeed what history teaches us about the states of Europe, of which Germany is a prime example. There were numerous attempts to unite a divided Europe, and great statesmen have tried and failed. Louis XIV, Charles the Great, Napoleon, Bismarck, Kaiser Wilhelm, Adolf Hitler, and even the modern European Community are prime examples.

Besides military force, the nations of Europe have endeavoured to become one through political alliances and marriages between the various kingdoms.

And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. Daniel 2:43

The Revised Standard Version says, "So they will mix with one another in marriage." Dr. Moffatt says, "they shall intermarry."

For political expediency, and in order to strengthen their ties, various members of royalty in Europe have intermarried. Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castille uniting these two territories into Spain. Napoleon, for political unity, divorced Josephine to marry Marie Louise of Austria. Owing to the many marriages, it is no wonder that Queen Victoria was called the Grandmother of Europe. Yet, with all these marriages for unity, they never succeeded. There will be, and there have been, temporary unions politically, economically and otherwise in Europe, but the unions themselves have not welded the nations into one. The Bible predicts that ethnic conflict will remain to the close of time.

In 1799, Napoleon set out to give Europe one ruler, one code, one court of appeal, one coinage. Someone protested to Napoleon that Providence would not permit him to rule the world. He is reported to have said,

*Providence is on the side of the heaviest artillery.*³

Heavy June rains came and Napoleon's heaviest artillery could not move. His fine cavalry fell in a sunken road and Wellington defeated him at Waterloo in 1815.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever. Daniel 2:44

We are waiting for the greatest event in the history of mankind - the overthrow of all the political forces of this planet, and the formation of a kingdom that will never fade or be destroyed. The intervention into the affairs of man by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is now imminent. This brief prophecy of earthly kingdoms is painfully accurate and lays the groundwork for the detailed prophecies to follow. Who are the principal role players in the final conflict? How will the whole world be swept into this conflict, and what are the deceptions that the people of God will have to face? Are we prepared for the greatest spectacle in the history of the universe, when every hidden thing will be revealed, and the Lord will save those that have waited for Him? Will

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we be amongst those who say “Rocks fall on us!”, or will we belong to the group that says “This is our God. We have waited for Him, and He will save us!”?

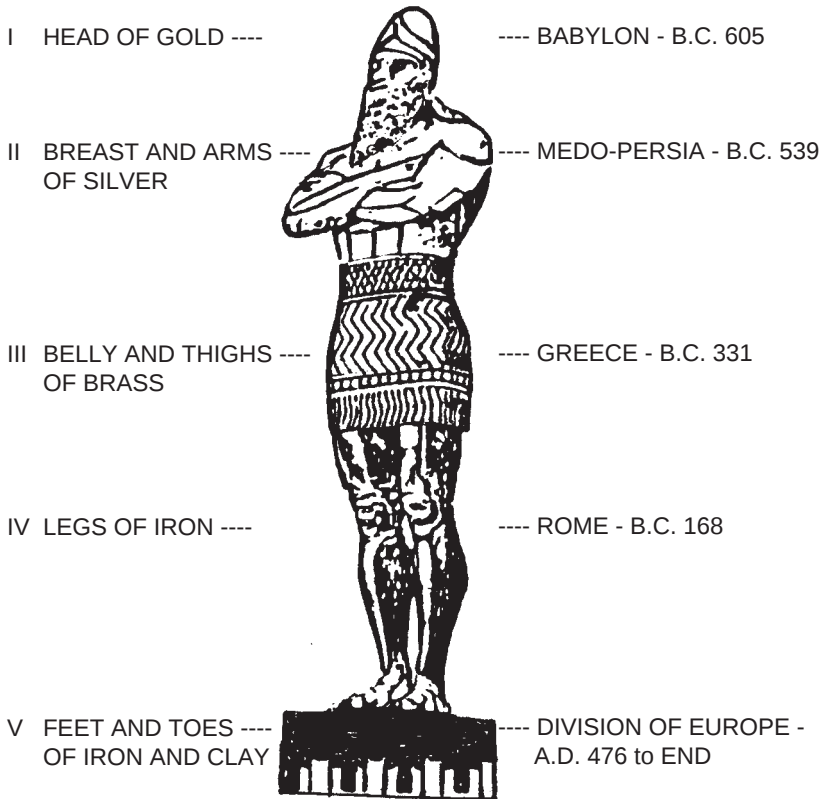
Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Matthew 24:42 NKJV

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¹ Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* Book 10: 64-65, as quoted in *The Great Histories: Josephus* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1965).

² Edward Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* Volume 4 (London: 1838): 161.

³ Gordon A. Craig, *Europe Since 1815* (Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1980) 258.



THE TRANSITION OF POWER FROM ONE KINGDOM TO ANOTHER WAS GRADUAL. THE DATES ARE MERELY SIGN-POSTS ALONG THE PATH OF HISTORY.

4

THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK THE ANTICHRIST REVEALED

In Daniel chapter 2 we read of the destiny of history. In prophetic vision, Daniel looks down the stream of time and sees four mighty world empires appear one after the other on the world scene. The fourth empire represents Rome, and the prophet sees that in the final stages of earth's history this empire will be divided (a mixture of iron and clay) and will be associated with ten components represented by the ten toes of the image. In the time of these kingdoms, the God of heaven, represented by the stone cut out without human hands, will destroy the image and the everlasting kingdom of God will take the place of the fallen idolatrous nations. The prophecy provides a broad sweep of historic events and is breathtakingly accurate, but does not provide much detail pertaining to the final events before the close of history. The prophecy of Daniel chapter 7, however, colors in the rough outline provided in the first prophecy. It parallels that of Daniel chapter 2 using different symbols and provides such an accurate description of the principle apostate power at the end of time that the conscientious student is left without a doubt as to the identity of this mighty system that dares to defy the armies of the living God.

Daniel chapter two is chiastically linked to Daniel chapter 7 by the use of the numerals one through four. Similarly, Daniel chapters three and six are linked, as both have persecution as a type of the end-time persecution as theme. Daniel chapters four and five are also linked as both deal with the fall of great dictators, also serving as a type for the great events to take place at the end of time. Nebuchadnezzar falls and is humbled by his insanity when he becomes like an animal and eats grass and the other, Belshazzar, falls and is destroyed by the interposition of God.

In Daniel chapter 2, it was the king of Babylon himself who was given the vision, but God revealed its meaning to His prophet Daniel so that the King could become acquainted with the true creator God. Moreover, the vision concerns the progression of earthly political powers through time culminating in God's kingdom. The vision of Daniel 7 is, however, a vision given by God to His prophet. It is rich in symbolism, and besides reiterating the message of the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms, it emphasizes the battle between truth and error as well as identifying the "Man of Sin". The prophetic principle of expansion can be applied in this case. The prophecy of Daniel 7 repeats the prophecies of Daniel 2, but then goes on to expand this prophecy and to highlight the final events pertaining to the rise and fall of the antichrist. The rich Biblical symbolism used in this prophecy is the key to its unravelling, and it is essential that we understand the meaning of the symbols employed in this prophecy. Using the principle that the Bible must be its own interpreter, the following brief dictionary of prophetic symbols will enable us to unravel this great prophecy.

wind = war

(Isaiah 21:1-2; Zechariah 7:14; Jeremiah 25:32;49:36-37)

beast = king or kingdom (Daniel 7:17)

horn = king or ruler (Daniel 8:21)

waters (sea) = nations/peoples (Revelation 17:15)

The Four Beasts of Daniel 7

In Daniel's dream, he sees the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. By applying the Biblical definitions of these symbols,

we can see that war and strife will be raging among the nations.

And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. Daniel 7:3 NKJV

The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. Daniel 7:4 NKJV

The lion is used in the Bible as a symbol of authority and power. The symbol is applied to Christ when He is referred to as the “lion of the tribe of Judah”, but it is also the symbol for Babylon, the destroyer of nations and the seat of the apostate religion, which would seek to entice God’s people into idolatry. Prophesying about the coming destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon, the prophet Jeremiah applies the symbol of the lion to this mighty power.

The lion has come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of nations is on his way; he has gone forth from his place to make your land desolate. Your cities will be laid waste, without inhabitant. Jeremiah 4:7 NKJV

The lion has eagle's wings, a reference to a further symbol of Babylon. Archaeology has revealed that a lion with eagle's wings was a symbol often employed in Babylonian designs and sculptures. Moreover, the eagle was a universal symbol for the sun god, and this lion power is thus powered by this pagan deity. The symbol of the man that stood on two feet is a reference to the union of the human element with this power in defiance of God. Since the religion of Babylon forms the basis of all pagan religions, Babylon becomes a fitting symbol for the end-time confederacy of religious powers aligned against God and His people. This confederacy will control events at the end of time and is portrayed in Daniel chapter 2 as the feet of iron and clay. In the closing stages of earth history, a power resembling Babylon will once again control events on earth and we will come across the lion symbol associated with the antichrist later again in the book of Revelation. The next kingdom to

take the stage of history would be that of the Medes and the Persians:

And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!' Daniel 7:5 NIV

The power to succeed Babylon is here portrayed as a bear. The bear was raised up on one of its sides, a reference to the initial inequality of the two powers of the Medo-Persian alliance that was to overthrow the Babylonian empire. The three ribs probably refer to the three principle thrusts to control the Babylonian empire: the thrust into Lydia, Egypt, and Babylon itself that was conquered by the armies of Cyrus the Great. The richness of the Biblical typology portrayed in this great historic event serves as a lesson book for the great events that are to unfold at the end of time. Babylon, the ruler of nations, the head of gold, the seat of religious and political power had ruled the nations. It had destroyed Jerusalem and had taken captive the people of God. The time had come for this power to be destroyed and Cyrus is the one chosen by God to accomplish this great feat. Long before his birth, the prophet Isaiah called Cyrus the Lord's anointed and prophesied:

This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armour, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut. Isaiah 45:1 NIV

The same prophet, prophesying about the Messiah wrote:

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners. Isaiah 61:1 NIV

Cyrus serves as a type of Christ. He would end the rule of Babylon and he would set the captives free. The decree issued by Cyrus was that

the Israelites were to be freed, that they could return to their homeland without cost. In the same way, Christ will overthrow Spiritual Babylon at the end of time. He will set the captives free, take them to their heavenly Canaan, and their redemption will be without cost.

The Medo-Persians added to the religious rites and ceremonies of the Babylonians and the cult of Mithraism with its seven levels of initiation formed a cornerstone of the system of sun worship. The structure of the cult was hierarchical. Members went through a series of seven grades, each of which had a special symbol and were associated with a planet. From lowest to highest, the grades were *Corax* (raven, under Mercury), *Nymphus* (male bride, under Venus), *Miles* (the soldier, under Mars), *Leo* (the lion, under Jupiter), *Perses* (the Persian, under Luna, the moon), *Heliodromus* (the Sun's courier, under Sol, the sun), and finally *Pater* (father, under Saturn). When an initiate reached the highest grade, *Pater* or father, he could become the head of a congregation. Two aspects of mithraic initiation are also noteworthy. First, it was possible for a mithraic initiate to be a member of more than one cult, and second, women were not permitted to become members.

After the Medes and the Persians, a third power would arise to take control. History tells us that the Greeks succeeded the Medo-Persian Empire.

After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. Daniel 7:6 NIV

In Daniel chapter 8, we read in a further prophecy about the succession and activities of these earthly kingdoms that “Grecia” would subdue the Medo-Persian Empire and that it also would eventually be divided into four subkingdoms before succumbing to the Roman Empire. Because of the subdivision into four, the leopard beast in Daniel 7 has four heads and four wings. The symbol of the leopard is a fitting symbol for the Kingdom of “Grecia” in view of the swiftness of its conquest. The “Grecia” referred to in Daniel 8 should not be confused with the Greece of the classical period which preceded the fall of Persia, but it refers to the semi- Greek Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great who subdued revolts in the city states of Greece and Thrace and was thus the “first king”

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of Greece. Alexander declared himself successor to the Pharaohs, and his troops afforded him the position of deity in worshipping him as a god. It was one of the principle aims of Alexander to spread the Greek culture and philosophy throughout his realm. The religion of Greece added many refinements, rites, and ceremonies to the earthly systems of worship. The Bacchus cult, the mythologies of the battles of the gods and the worship of female deities became entrenched in the very fibre of society.

Finally, the Bible predicted a fourth kingdom that would rule over the earth:

After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. Daniel 7:7 NIV

The fourth beast defies description. It is terrifying, frightening, and very powerful. It would be the kingdom which would fill up the cup of iniquity. Although Rome would become divided, the iron would remain even to the time of the destruction by the stone.

The four nations, which arise one after the other, thus parallel the components of the image of Daniel 2.

Head of gold	BABYLON	Winged lion (Dan 7:4)
Breasts & arms of silver	MEDO-PERSIA	Bear and ribs (Dan 7:5)
Belly & thighs of brass	GREECE	Leopard (Dan 7:6)
Legs of iron	ROME	Terrible beast (Dan 7:7)

Figure 4.1 - Note the parallel symbols of Daniel 2 and Daniel 7

In the time span of the final power, Rome, the final confrontation between those loyal to God and those in league with the adversary will culminate in the battle of Armageddon. It now remains for us to unravel why Rome should be the final power to rule the earth, and why Rome

should be the one to reach the level of God's forbearance with sin. What is it about Rome that calls for utter destruction and what refinements of the counterfeit religious systems should call for the wrath of God to be "poured out without mixture" (Revelation 14:10) - that is judgment not mingled with mercy.

Although the Beasts and the metals follow each other sequentially, the entire image (including the head of gold, the arms of silver, and the thigh of bronze) is destroyed when the stone strikes the feet. The Medo-Persians conquered Babylon, but the Babylonian system of worship was not destroyed, merely refined. Similarly, when Greece conquered the Medo-Persian Empire, the names of the gods changed but the system of worship remained essentially the same, and the same deities were worshipped in Rome under a different garb. The final apostate power to control world events would thus incorporate aspects and refinements of all the religious systems of history. They would be so clothed and disguised to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

Following the sequence of Daniel 2, the terrible beast of Daniel 7 thus represents Rome, and although divided into ten, it is still Rome that rules till the end of time. The metal does not change, it is just separated by clay and the feet have ten toes that are the equivalent of the ten horns of Daniel 7. The ten horns, according to the prophecy, are ten kingdoms that shall arise from this kingdom.

The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. Daniel 7:24 NKJV

The ten kingdoms, which arose from Rome after its decline, are the same ones represented by the ten toes of the image described in Daniel 2, and therefore represent the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Alamani, Anglo-Saxons, Heruli, Lombardi, and Burgundians. (See Figure 4.2) While Daniel was considering the ten horns, another little horn came up among them.

...there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were

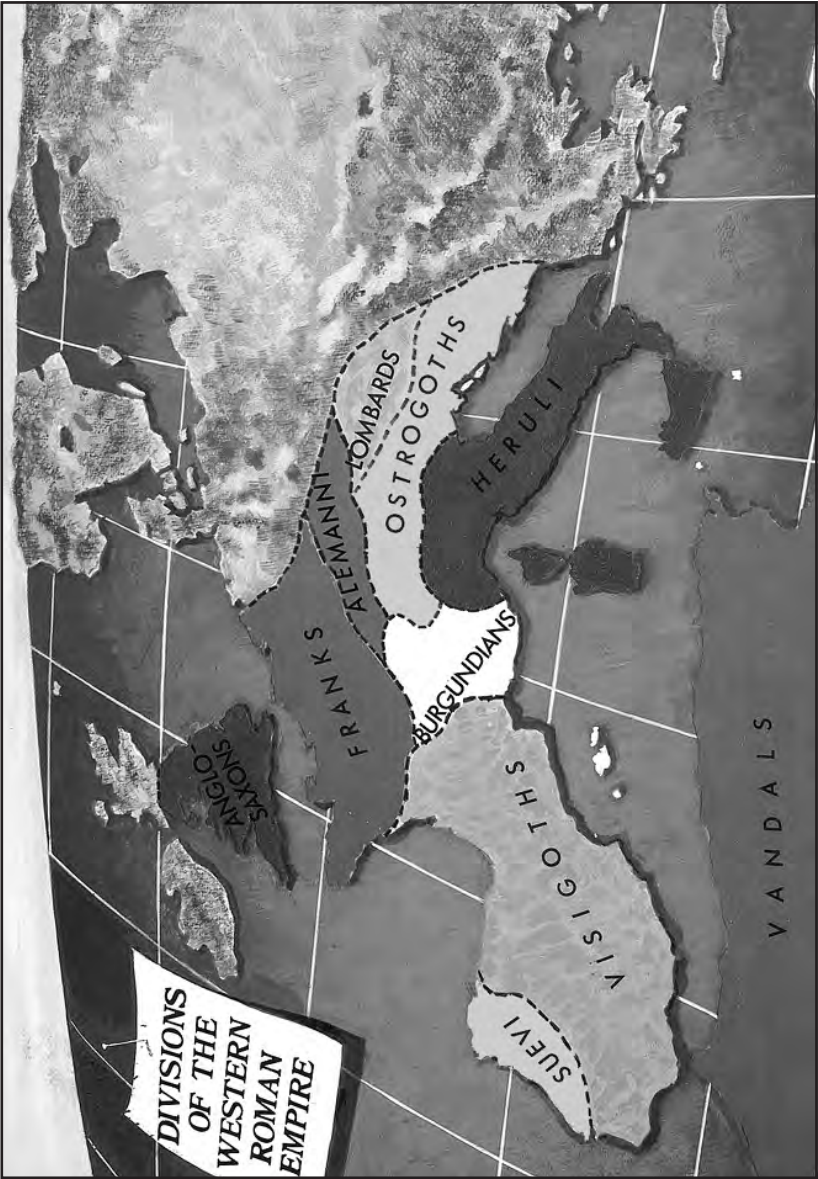


Figure 4.2 - Division of the Western Roman Empire¹

*eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking
pompous words. Daniel 7: 8 NKJV*

In this verse, we again have the reference to a man just as we had the reference to a man associated with the lion that had eagle wings representing Babylon. It was Babylon that deceived the ancient world with its system of worship (representing the type), and the little horn power would have the same elements as Babylon but on a universal scale (representing the great antitype). It was the power that would blaspheme God, speak pompous words, and deceive the nations at the end of time. The NIV study Bible identifies this power as the antichrist and the footnote in the Douay Version (Roman Catholic Bible) on verse 8 says:

This is commonly understood of Antichrist.

The little horn power, as we shall see, grows to become greater than all the others and should be seen rather as a horn growing from littleness to great stature. Since the little horn power represents the antichrist, it is essential that we correctly identify this power. Our method should be that of Scripture interpreting Scripture. It is also important to note that ‘anti’ has two meanings in the Greek. It can mean ‘against’ or it can mean ‘in the place of’, and in 75% of cases where it is used, it refers to ‘in the place of’, rather than ‘against’. There are very precise identifying features of the horn power, and every single one must apply in order to make an accurate identification possible.

The Antichrist Identified

1. It arose out of the fourth beast.

The description of the little horn power is in connection with the fourth beast. This is very important, since there are many who adopt a preteristic view of the antichrist and would like to associate the antichrist with Antiochus Epiphanes IV, a Greek king who persecuted the Jews and desecrated the temple. This would, however, not fit the prophecy, as the antichrist is to arise out of the fourth beast, which is Rome.

2. It came up “among” the ten horns. Verse 8

I considered the ten horns and, behold, there came up among them another little horn. Daniel 7:8

Note that the little horn arises among the ten, which implies that the ten were already there when it arose and all ten were still in existence when it made its appearance.

3. It came up “after” the ten horns had been established.

*And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them....
Daniel 7:24 (Emphasis supplied)*

The rise of the little horn power must be sought after the subdivision of Rome into ten powers, which means it must have been after 476 A.D. that this power, that had been growing from littleness, became firmly established in order to qualify as a ‘horn’, which is a king or a kingdom.

4. It was to “uproot three horns”. Verse 8

...Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots....

Three of the ten kingdoms were to be destroyed by the instigation of the little horn power. Since it made its appearance after the subdivision of Rome into ten different states, (after 476 A.D.), but before the destruction of three of them (because it arises among all ten), we now have a very definite time frame for the rise of the Antichrist power. The Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths were eliminated by the year 538 A.D., and so this power was to arise between 476 A.D. and 538 A.D.

5. It was to be greater than its fellows.

...Whose look was more stout than its fellows....
Daniel 7:20

The power depicted by the little horn was greater than that of the other states. This implies a position of political superiority. Although it grew from littleness, it was to become greater than all the other powers.

6. It was to be “different” from all the others.

...And he shall be diverse from the first.... Daniel 7:24

As a horn is a king or a kingdom, the little horn must represent a king or a kingdom different from all the previous horns, which were secular kingdoms. The precise manner in which the horn was different can be deduced from the sum total of all its attributes, which we shall deal with later.

7. It was to have “Eyes like the eyes of a man and speaking great words against God”. Daniel 7: 8,25

*...behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man,
and a mouth speaking great things....And he shall speak
great words against the Most High. Daniel 7:8,25*

We have already discussed the reference to the man and its connotation with Babylon. The little horn power is man rising up against God and speaking great words against God. It refers to a system that defies God directly and sets itself up in opposition to God. In ancient Babylon, the king of Babylon was referred to as the head of gold. All power was vested in the king. His word was law, and he was considered a god. Similarly, in the great antitype, all power will once again be vested in one man who, as the spokesman for the system, will utter blasphemies and claim a status not due to mortal man. The Bible identifies blasphemy in the New Testament. We read in the Gospel accounts that the Jews twice wanted to stone Jesus for blasphemy.

*‘..Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you.’
And at once some of the scribes said within themselves,
‘This Man blasphemeth!’* Matthew 9:2-3 NKJV

*‘Son, your sins are forgiven you.’ ... ‘Why does this Man
speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but
God alone?’* Mark 2:5-7

*‘...For a good work we do not stone You, but for blas-
phemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself
God.’* John 10:33 NASB

Unlike Jesus, who is the Son of God and therefore *can* forgive sins, the little horn power is a power that *claims* to be able to forgive sins, and then has the effrontery to claim the position of God. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, reiterates this point with regard to the antichrist.

*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is
called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God
sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he
is God.* 2 Thessalonians 2:4

8. It was to “make war on God’s saints.”

*...the same horn was making war against the saints,
and prevailing against them.* Daniel 7:21 NKJV

The little horn power was thus to be a persecuting power that would war and have success against God’s people.

9. It would “think to change times and laws”

And shall think to change times and law. Daniel 7:25

Which times and laws would God be particularly concerned about? Surely this must refer to laws that God Himself has established

and times which God Himself has set. The law that stands out throughout the Bible is the Ten Commandment Law. Changing the times and the laws must therefore refer to the attempt to tamper with God's law itself and tampering with times set by God.

10. The saints were to be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. Daniel 7:25 NKJV

In order to understand this time prophecy, it is necessary to understand the Biblical meaning of prophetic time. We shall deal with prophecy shortly, but at this stage, we can say that this power will have power over and persecute God's people for a specific time period.

11. It shall devour the whole earth

Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. Daniel 7:23

This prophecy is made in reference to Rome. But Pagan Rome did not fulfill this prophecy to the letter. As seen in the sixth identifying feature, the little horn power was that component arising out of the Roman Empire which was to be different from all the others, and it is this *different* power which was eventually to devour the whole earth. The prophecy predicts that the little horn would obtain power over all the kings of the world, referring to all the political entities existing at the end of time.

12. It shall reign until the Ancient of Days comes

...until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Daniel 7:22

This is one of the most profound prophecies concerning the antichrist. The antichrist was to arise before 538 A.D. (the final date for the up-

rooting of three of the ten initial kingdoms arising out of the Roman Empire), and was to prevail until the Ancient of Days came - a reference to the second coming of Christ. No individual could therefore fulfill this prophecy, and only a power could achieve such longevity. Since it is identified as a horn, or a king or kingdom according to the Biblical definition, we must be dealing with a kingdom and its rulers that has been around for more than a millennium and a half.

13. Its dominion will be taken away

But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Daniel 7:26

The good news is that God will triumph. When Christ returns, this power will be destroyed and God will set up His kingdom which will never be destroyed and in which there will no longer be any persecution. There will be no more sickness and God will dry away all tears.

Sad and shocking as it may seem, there is only one power that qualifies for all the identifying points. Before going into the details, it is essential that we realize that the Bible is not here dealing with individuals, but with a system that for more than a millennium and a half has claimed the power to control conscience. Moreover, for a set time, it had power to enforce its decrees and to persecute all who chose to obey God and His Word rather than man. Christ died for all mankind and all have access to the grace of God through Him. The Bible is here dealing with a power that is misusing its position, and is placing itself in God's place, presuming to take the very place of God. Individuals are responsible to God for the light they live up to. In condemning the system, God is not condemning the individuals within the system who are living up to light they have and long to have a relationship with Him. Sadly, there is only one system that qualifies in terms of all the identifying features listed in Daniel chapter 7, and this is the Papacy. Before rejecting the outcome, I would recommend that each person prayerfully study the Scriptures, asking guidance from God, and then, like Paul, ask the question:

*And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, **what wilt thou have me to do?** And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. Acts 9:6*

The Antichrist Revealed

1. It arose out of the fourth beast.

Papal Rome arose out of the ashes of Pagan Rome. The Historian C.C. Eckhardt says:

When the Roman empire had disintegrated and its place had been taken by a number of rude, barbarous kingdoms, the Roman Catholic Church not only became independent of the state in religious affairs but dominated secular affairs as well.¹

Every single historian agrees that papal Rome emerged out of the ruins of the ancient pagan Roman Empire. Thomas Hobbes, English historian, says:

If a man consider the original of this great ecclesiastical dominion, he will easily perceive that the Papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.²

2. It arose “among” the ten horns.

The antichrist was to come up among the ten horns, growing from a small power to one which would eventually become greater than all the other powers. This is indeed true of the papacy. After the initial fusing of Christianity with the pagan religions of the time, the bishop of Rome increased in power whilst the emperors of the Roman Empire supported him.

Constantine was the first emperor to embrace Christianity, but he only cloaked himself with a veneer of Christianity. In the year 533 A.D., the emperor Justinian decreed that the bishop of Rome was the spiritual leader of the Christian world.

To qualify as a horn, this power must have the attributes of a kingdom, which indeed applies to the Vatican, which to this day is an independent state. Also, it arose amongst the powers of fallen Rome. The Europe that we know today is the remnant of the horns of Rome.

3. It came up “after” the ten horns had been established.

The Roman Catholic church grew in power after Constantine accepted Christianity, but it did not control secular affairs until the Justinian decrees went into effect. The power of the bishop of Rome steadily increased and papal authority in secular affairs arose after the division of Rome in 476 A.D. by the Barbarians. *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, April 1911, says:

Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the Western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule them; ... and thus ...commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes. So, meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the sceptre to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages.

A further quote from *The Papal Monarchy*, states the following:

The Pax Romana has ceased. It is universal confusion. But wherever a bishop holds court, religion protects all that is left of the ancient order. A new Rome ascends slowly above the horizon. It is the heir of religion, the emperor is no more... but the Pontifex Maximus abides...He is now the vicar of Christ, offering the old civilization to the tribes of the north. He converts them to his creed, and

they serve him as their father and judge supreme. This is the papal monarchy, which in its power and its decline overshadows the history of Europe for a thousand years.³

4. It was to “uproot” three of the horns.

Only the papacy answers this description of three of the Roman divisions being uprooted. This is known in the history books as the Arian controversy, because three kingdoms, which did not accept the papal mandates regarding Christ’s divinity, were literally uprooted and mercilessly destroyed. Although the doctrine of the divinity of Christ was correct, the method of dealing with it was not in the Spirit of Christ. The Heruli were completely scattered in 493 A.D., the Vandals in 534 A.D., and the Ostrogoths in 538 A.D. These conquests strengthened the hand of the papacy and helped to get her established by the year 538 A.D., in which year the bishop of Rome ascended the papal throne under the protection of the Roman general Vigilius. The date for the establishment of papal Rome as an independent power can thus be pinned at 538 A.D.

5. It was to become greater than its fellows.

...Whose look was more stout than its fellows. Daniel 7:20

“*More stout than its fellows*” refers to the greater power which the papacy wielded in the affairs of Europe more than any of the other powers. From 800 A.D. when Charlemagne received his crown from the Pope, the papacy was to assume power over kings and nations. The “Humiliation of Canossa” is depicted in St. Peter’s, Rome, when in 1077, Henry IV, King of Germany, stood for three days, a penitent in the snow, before being permitted an audience with Pope Gregory VII. Likewise, King John of England in 1213 stood naked on a cold marble floor waiting for admission to the Pope’s presence in order to apologize to him. Note the testimony of a Catholic functionary:

The Vicar of the Incarnate Son of God, Anointed High Priest and Supreme Temporal Ruler, (the Pope) sat in

his tribunal impartially to judge between nation and nation, between people and prince, between sovereign and subject.⁴

Luther wrote:

It is a horrible thing to behold the man who styles himself Christ's vicegerent, displaying a magnificence that no emperor can equal . . . He is, say they, the Lord of the World; but Christ Himself has said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Can the dominions of a vicar extend beyond those of his Superior?⁵

The papacy has always considered its right to interfere in the affairs of states. Countries were divided by papal decrees, and kings enthroned or dethroned by papal decrees.

6. It was “different” from the others.

The papacy was different from the pagan kingdoms before it because it was not only a political power, but a religio-political power as well. With regard to the political aspect of the papacy, it is a recognized state. Its seat is the Vatican, complete with a traditional guard and its own postal service. The Vatican is the smallest state in the world, occupying a mere 100 acres, but it has one of the strongest diplomatic corps in the world. Papal representatives sit in the capitals of the world and, in turn, these countries have their representatives in the Vatican. The Pope is not only head of the Church, but also temporal sovereign of the papal state - the Vatican.

7. It was to have “Eyes like the eyes of a man and speaking great words against God”. Daniel 7: 8,25

...behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great thingsAnd he shall speak great words against the Most High. Daniel 7:8,25

Does the papacy have any such distinction in her ecclesiastical-political machinery? Yes, she does. One of the Roman Pontiff's titles is the Latin "Episcopus Episcoporum" meaning "Overseer of Overseers". When referring to the little horn power, it is significant that it is likened unto a 'man'. This same symbol was also applied to Babylon (lion):

...like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. Daniel 7:4

Papal power is seated in one man, a system that is termed ultramontan-ism. At the council of Trent, ultramontan-ism was entrenched in its present form, whereby the decrees of a pope become as the very decrees of God. The doctrine of papal infallibility further expanded this concept and gave to the popes a position hitherto only ascribed to God. In Revelation chapter 13, the same system described here in Daniel is again brought into prophetic view and in addition to some of the identifying points mentioned in Daniel chapter seven, the number 666 is ascribed to it, which "is the number of a man." In the chapter *The Beasts of Revelation 13*, this subject will be dealt with in greater detail. John Calvin said about the papacy:

His kingdom will consist of speaking great words, or blasphemies, against the Most High.⁶

It is a blaspheming power. No other power on earth has dared to make such claims as the papacy. The Roman Catholic Council of Trent declared:

We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold primacy over the whole world.⁷

Another daring claim comes from the lips of Pope Leo XIII:

We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.⁸

The *Catholic National*, July 1895 states:

The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ, Himself, hidden under the veil of flesh.

Truth Matters

A further few examples of the blasphemous statements regarding their position on earth are as follows:

*The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God ... He is likewise, the divine monarch and supreme emperor, and king of kings ... So that if it were possible that angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the Pope.*⁹

Cardinal Bellarmine says,

*All names which in the Scriptures are applied to Christ, by virtue of which it is established that he is over the church, all the same names are applied to the Pope.*¹⁰

Although the Bible is so clear on the blasphemy of claiming to forgive men their sins, the Catholic Encyclopedia makes this statement on papal authority:

This judicial authority will even include the power to pardon sin.¹¹

In the *Catechism of the Catholic Religion*, the question is given:

QUESTION: Does the priest truly forgive the sins, or does he only declare that they are remitted?

ANSWER: The priest does really and truly forgive the sins in virtue of the power given him by Jesus Christ.¹²

In *Dignity and Duty of the Priest*, it states:

The priest has the power of the keys or the power of delivering sinners from hell, of making them worthy of paradise, and of changing them from slaves of Satan into children of God. And God himself is obligated to abide

by the judgment of his priest, and either not to pardon or to pardon...When Michael comes to a dying Christian who invokes his aid, the holy archangel can chase away the devils, but he cannot free his client from the chains till a priest comes to absolve him.¹³

Not only does the papacy claim to hold the position of God, but it usurps the position of God and takes His divine prerogative to forgive mankind's sins. These are blasphemies of the highest order.

8. It was to “make war on God’s saints”.

It is a fact of history that the great wars of Europe were fought on religious grounds. The Protestants of Europe were relentlessly persecuted by Rome. Europe was plunged into the ‘Thirty-year war’ and the ‘Hundred-year war’ with the sole purpose of destroying the Protestant Reformation. The Waldenses, the Albigensers, and the Huguenots were all relentlessly persecuted, and the Inquisition ordered the cruelest of punishments to be executed by the princes of Europe upon all those who refused to bow to the supremacy of Rome. In 1200 A.D., Pope Innocent III ordered the king of France to exterminate the Albigensers because they refused to accept the papal teachings and regarded the Bible as the ultimate Word of God. Historians D’Augbigné and Wylie say that more than a million of these innocent people were massacred in one single campaign. John Calvin, in a letter to Emperor Charles V, wrote:

I deny him to be the vicar of Christ, who, in furiously persecuting the gospel, demonstrates by his conduct that he is Antichrist.¹⁴

The noted Catholic, Thomas Aquinas, said that convicted heretics should be put to death just as surely as other criminals, because they were counterfeits. In a Catholic magazine we read:

*You cannot excite any piety in our souls by whining accounts of Catholic atrocities . . . We have never written a line in extenuation or palliation of the Inquisition. We never thought it needed a defence.*¹⁵

The church historian, Philip Schaff, comments:

*So far as we know, the popes never uttered a word in protest against the inhuman measures which were being practised by the Spanish Tribunals.*¹⁶

The historian Lecky says,

*The Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind.*¹⁷

9. It would “think to change times and laws”.

Has the papacy made an attempt to change the law of God and to interfere in the set times? The answer is indeed ‘yes’. Any Catholic catechism will show that the law of God has been changed by the papacy. A comparison with the Bible will show that the Ten Commandments have been tampered with. The second commandment, which refers to images and idols, is absent in the Catholic catechism. And to make up for the loss of one commandment, the tenth is divided into two. The fourth commandment concerning the Sabbath day (the only commandment dealing with time) becomes the third commandment in the Catholic catechism, and the day of worship is shifted by papal decree from the seventh to the first day of the week (Saturday to Sunday). The great papistical debater, Dr. Eck, who, on encountering Luther in 1553, said:

*There is no mention of the cessation of the Sabbath and the institution of Sunday in the gospels or in Paul’s writings - or in all the Bible; therefore, this has taken place by the apostolic Church instituting it without scripture.*¹⁸

Catholic World says:

The church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. There is in truth something royal, something kingly about the sun, making it a fitting emblem of Jesus, the Sun of justice. Hence the church in these countries would seem to have said, 'keep the old pagan name, it shall remain consecrated, sanctified.' And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus.¹⁹

The Catholic Mirror, Sept. 23, 1893 says:

The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church, as a spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.

Father Enright, Sentinel, June 1893 says:

The Bible says 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day'. The Catholic church says 'No! By my divine power, I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep holy the first day of the week, and lo, the entire civilised world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church.

Catechismus Romanus, 1867, Chap. 3 quotes Pope Pius in 1566:

It pleased the church of God that the religious celebration of the Sabbath day should be transferred to the Lord's day (Sunday)'.

Papal Rome thus tampered with the law of God and changed the ordinances, although the Bible declares of God: "For I am the Lord, I change not..." Malachi 3:6

10. The saints were to be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time.

... and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. Daniel 7:25

A time is a year, and the period described as time, times and half a time (or dividing of time) is thus a three and a half year period. Some modern Bible translations render the text “three and a half years.” For further confirmation of this time period, we can turn to Revelation 12:14, which uses the same expression: “time, times and half a time.” However, in other verses the same event is described in different language and this parallelism gives us greater clarity as to the precise time period involved. In Revelation 12:6, the same time period is given as: “A thousand, two hundred and three score days.” This is 1260 prophetic days or three and a half prophetic years. In Bible prophecy, a day represents a year and in Numbers 14:34 it states:

After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years. (See also Ezekiel 4:6)

“Each day for a year.” Then, 1260 days becomes 1260 years. The word that is being used here for time, is the Aramaic word **IDDAN** which means a prophetic year consisting of 360 days; therefore, “time, times, and dividing of time” refers to three and a half prophetic years consisting of 1260 prophetic days. This is highlighted in the parallelism of the prophecy in Revelation where the three and a half year period is equated with 1260 prophetic days, or 1260 literal years. In summary:

A TIME (ONE YEAR)	= 360 DAYS (<i>Jewish year</i>)
AND TIMES	= 720 DAYS
(RSV says “TWO TIMES”)	
& THE DIVIDING OF TIME	= 180 DAYS
	= 1260 DAYS/Years

The papacy would be supreme in its persecution of the saints for 1260 years. The legally recognized supremacy of the Pope began in 538 A.D. when the Emperor Justinian elevated the Bishop of Rome to the position of Head of all Churches. This is known as the Edict of Justinian. Adding 1260 years to 538 A.D. brings us to 1798, which is the year the Pope was deposed when the French General Berthier, under Napoleon, led him into captivity. Napoleon apparently tried to crush the Papacy and about eighteen months later the Pope died in exile in Valence, France. This act ended papal power in terms of enforcing papal decrees.

In our modern world, it will come as a shock to many that the Bible identifies the papal system as the antichrist. It has placed itself in the place of Jesus Christ on earth, and claims to be able to mediate between man and God. The great reformers were all united in their recognition of papal Rome as the antichrist power, and the Reformation was the result of this recognition. By separating from Rome, the Bible was made available again to mankind, and many a reformer was willing to die rather than to deny its sacred pages. But the Bible also predicts that this same power will continue to reign until the end and will again enforce its decree contrary to the dictates of God.

11. It shall devour the whole earth

Papal Rome was to receive the same supremacy it enjoyed in the Middle Ages over the nations of Europe on an international scale at the end of time. This amazing prophecy is being fulfilled to the letter, and in the corridors of diplomacy and through the resolutions adopted by the world governing bodies, papal standards and decrees will once again be accepted as laws of nations. The leaders of the world have granted Rome the recognition she desires and have hailed her as the “moral superpower.” They have credited Rome with bringing communism to an end and religious bodies are accepting papal supremacy in religious affairs. The issues involved are stupendous, and we will be dealing with them in greater detail in later chapters.

12. It shall reign until the Ancient of Days comes

Papal supremacy in the Middle Ages was temporarily suppressed in 1798 when Napoleon invaded Rome, and the Pope was taken captive and exiled. Rome lost its sovereignty, but regained it again in 1929, when Mussolini returned the papal states to the Papacy. The Bible predicts that the little horn power would again reach the supremacy that it enjoyed in the Middle Ages. The fulfilment of this prophecy will be discussed in the chapter *The Two Beasts of Revelation 13*.

The fact that the little horn power was to exist until the Ancient of Days comes makes it impossible for the commonly accepted view that Antiochus Epiphanes, a king from the Selucid Dynasty of Greece who desecrated the temple at Jerusalem, could have been the antichrist. This commonly accepted view of preterists is further made impossible in that Jesus, Paul, and John all speak of the antichrist as a future power. Only the Papacy spans the time frame outlined in Daniel 7.

13. Its dominion will be taken away

But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Daniel 7:26

The stone will strike the feet of the image (something that looks like the real thing but is only a mirage) and all the kingdoms with their earthly pomp and pretended ecclesiastical powers will shatter at the coming of the Lord of hosts. Deception will cease and Jesus declares:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Matthew 24:35

Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. For the mystery of

iniquity doeth already work;...And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4,7-8

Paul says that there would “come a falling away first” of the Church. This means that the Church would fall into apostasy before “that day,” referring to the second coming of Christ. The “man of sin” “opposes” God and usurps the position of God. He sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. This is the antichrist, one in the place of the true Christ.

Paul said that the “mystery of iniquity” was already working in his day, and would grow to full revelation before the second coming of the Lord. The historian, Philip Schaff, comments on the apostasy of the Church:

No church . . . in Christendom ever sank so low as the Latin Church in the tenth century.²⁰

Who sits in the temple of God showing that he is God? The great French reformer, John Calvin, identified the Antichrist. In 1536, he wrote:

Daniel and Paul had predicted that Antichrist would sit in the temple of God...We affirm him to be the Pope... Some persons think us too severe and censorious when we call the Roman pontiff “Antichrist”, but those who are of this opinion do not consider that they bring the same charge of presumption against Paul himself, after whom we speak.²¹

Martin Luther also identified the Antichrist from his studies of Paul’s epistle to the Thessalonians, and the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation. In 1520, Luther wrote to his good friend Spalatin:

I am practically cornered, and can hardly doubt any more, that the Pope is really the Antichrist... because everything so exactly corresponds to the way of his life,

*actions, words and commandments.*²²

Calvin and Luther were not the only church leaders to discover the antichrist. A host of reformers such as Thomas Cranmer, John Wycliffe, John Huss, Jerome, Savonarola, John Knox and John Melancthon, all identified the antichrist as the Papacy. Luther freely admitted,

*We are not the first who interpret the Papacy as the kingdom of Antichrist ... He (John Purvey in 1390 A.D.) rightly and truly pronounces the Pope 'Antichrist' as he is, . . . a witness indeed, foreordained by God to confirm our doctrine.*²³

The identity of the antichrist was clearly known by the reformers. They even hewed it into stone over the Ratshaus at Nürnberg, so that future generations should not forget. The same papal power will reveal itself again in the closing stages of this earth's history, and if we are not to be swept away by the subtle workings of this power, we need to be grounded in Scripture, and believe in "one Lord, one King, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, Jesus Christ our Saviour."

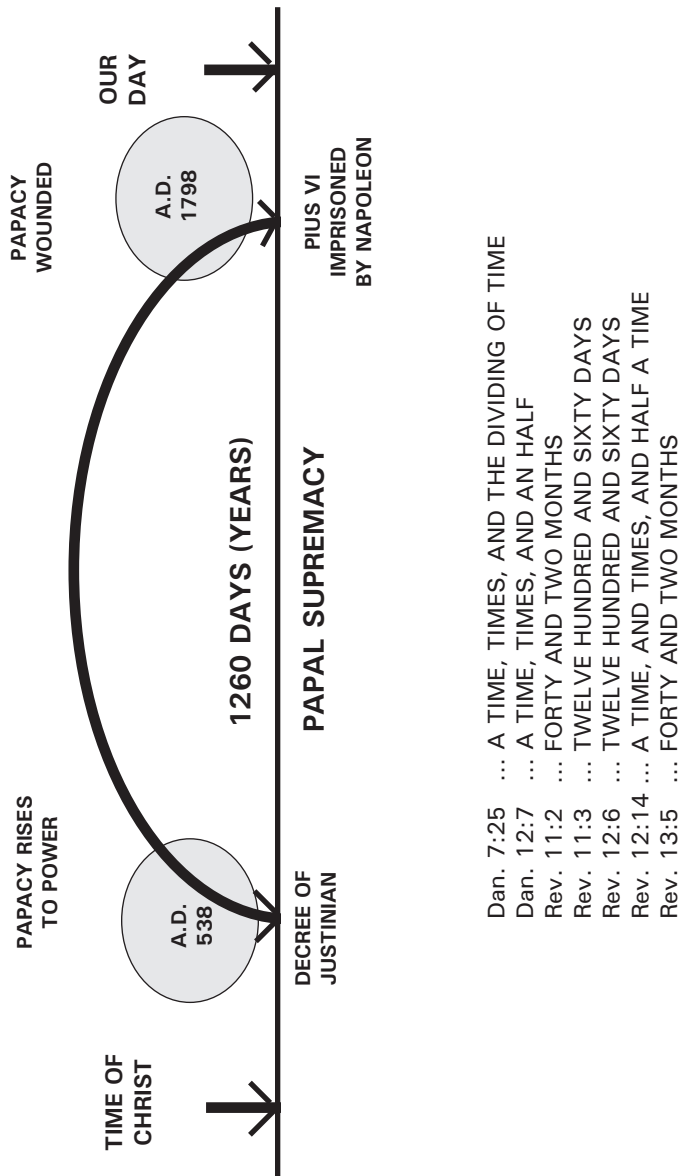


Figure 4.3 - Timeline showing the 1260 days (years) of Papal Supremacy



Figures 4.4 & 4.5- Nuremberg, Germany, in 1524 was the first city to accept the principles of the Reformation. So the world would never forget why they chose 'Sola Scriptura' and 'Sola Gracia', they hewed these sculptures above the doors of the Ratshaus (City Hall). Shown here are (above on left) the winged lion next to Nebuchadnezzar, identifying this kingdom as Babylon and (above on right) the bear with three ribs in its mouth next to Cyrus, identifying this kingdom as Medo Persia. (Below on left) the leopard with four heads can clearly be seen next to Alexander the Great, identifying this kingdom as Greece, and (below on right) the terrible ten-horned beast next to Julius Caesar, identifying this kingdom as Rome. On one of the ten horns can be seen the papal crown, identifying the papacy as the little horn power. Even in 1524, the truth of the antichrist was known by those who sought it.



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5

THE CRIME OF ALL AGES

In Leviticus 26, God admonishes Israel to walk in His ways and then He proceeds to list the blessings that would flow from obedience and the calamities that would plague them should they decide to turn their back on Him. In the great conflict between good and evil, there are only two sides - those aligned under the pagan standard of Satan and those aligned under the blood stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. Paganism is Satan's answer to the Gospel. It is pleasing to the senses, tangible, and because it is a system of salvation by works, it appeals to the fallen nature of man. To see, to feel, to touch, to do, to experience elation, these are things that are real to the human psyche, and because of this, paganism is so alluring and dangerous. The introduction to God's list of blessings and curses, recorded in Leviticus, is very revealing:

Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. Leviticus 26:1-2

First there is the warning against idolatry, then the admonishment to keep the Lord's sabbaths and reverence His sanctuary. Idolatry is directly opposed to these ordinances of God. The Sabbath of the Ten Commandments and the sabbaths of the ceremonial law distinguished the people of God from all other nations and bound them to God as His covenant people. God called the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments a sign between them and Him forever, for He was the One that sanctified them. (Exodus 31:17) The sanctuary pointed the way to salvation by the blood of the lamb and not salvation by works. The sanctuary teaches us that salvation lies outside ourselves. It is a gift of God, and only through Jesus Christ can it be obtained. What a humbling thought to the unrenewed mind.

The Ten Commandments are a transcript of God's character. The first four commandments pertain to our relationship with God and the last six commandments pertain to our relationship with our fellow man. Taken individually, there is an inescapable logic to each of these commandments. It is obvious why we should not kill, why we should not lie to each other or steal from each other. And coveting that which belongs to one's neighbour has caused much misery in the history of mankind.

The Sabbath commandment is different. There is no implicit logic in this commandment. There is no specific reason why one should keep the seventh-day Sabbath, other than that God specifically commanded it. More than any other commandment, the Sabbath is thus a test of faith. The Sabbath commandment contains elements not contained in any of the other commandments. It states the name of the Lawgiver (Lord or YHWH), His territory (heaven and earth), and His title (Creator). These three components comprise what is known as a seal, and lend authority to the law. The Ten Commandments gain their validity only from the royal seal of the Creator God embodied in the Sabbath commandment.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work: thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the

Lord (name) made (Creator) the heavens and the earth (jurisdiction), the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. Exodus 20: 8-11

In ancient times, kings were required to ratify decrees or commands with the royal seal. (Daniel 6:8, 1 Kings 21:8) Without a royal seal, no law would be valid. Moreover, even with a royal seal, a law is only valid in the area of the king's jurisdiction. (Canadian law would not be applicable in Switzerland. Decrees issued by a president of any country would likewise not be applicable in another country.) So in a sense, it can be said that without a seal, no law would be valid anywhere. Likewise the Ten Commandments.

In order to understand the significance of the Sabbath, we have to turn to its very origins. The Sabbath was established at creation (Genesis 2:1-3). It is thus not a Jewish institution, but an institution deriving its origin from the very cradle of man. In the Sabbath commandment, the Sabbath serves as a reminder of God's creative act. And in Deuteronomy 5:15, the Sabbath serves as a sign of God's redemptive act:

Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. NKJV

All human beings are slaves to sin, and God in Jesus Christ brought us out of sin with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. The Sabbath thus serves as a constant reminder of God's redemptive act. The Bible teaches us that Christ Himself is the Creator. (Ephesians 3:9, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2) The Sabbath was a test of obedience (Exodus 16:4-5) and a memorial that would stand forever (Exodus 31:16-17).

The significance of the Sabbath as a test cannot be overestimated. God could have chosen any memorial to His creative act, but He chose a memorial set in time. Time cannot be eradicated or eliminated in the same way that a physical memorial, such as a city or holy place,

could be eradicated.

If Christ Himself, the Creator, instituted the Sabbath for man (Mark 2:27), then one could well ask why would He change it? Jesus, in fact, kept the Sabbath day faithfully. He even used the Sabbath day to announce His mission on earth (Luke 4: 16,18-19, John 9:14, Matthew 12: 8,12, Luke 13:14-17). In Isaiah 42:21, the prophet predicts that the Messiah would come to magnify the law, not to change it or declare it null and void. And in Matthew 24:20, Jesus eludes to the Sabbath in connection with future generations. The disciples of Jesus likewise kept the Sabbath day. (Acts 13:14,42; 16:13; 17:1-2; 18: 3-4,11) Christians, determined to prove that the Sabbath has been transferred from Saturday to Sunday, use eight texts in the Bible to support this viewpoint. These are:

First text:

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. Matthew 28:1

This was written after the resurrection, and inspiration makes no mention of a change of the Sabbath day.

The New English Bible (NEB) renders the verse:

The Sabbath had passed, and it was about daybreak on Sunday when Mary of Magdala and the other Mary came to look at the grave.

Where the Authorized Version or King James Version says “*First day of the week*”, the NEB says “*Sunday*”.

A historical record of the fact that the two Marys came to look at the grave at about daybreak on Sunday is Matthew’s one and only witness. Two days are mentioned. One is given a sacred title, “in the end of the Sabbath,” and the other numerical value, “first day of the week.” Note also the first day did not begin until “the end of the Sabbath.” Since both Sabbath and Sunday (first day of the week) occur here, why did not Matthew link the transference from Saturday the Sabbath

to Sunday the first day of the week as a holy ordinance?

Sunday sanctity is missing here, and it is not explained in either the verses before or after the verse in question. In fact, Mary did not attend to Jesus on the Sabbath day, because she rested in accordance with the commandment.

Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils, and they rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment. Luke 23:56 NKJV

Second text:

And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary the Mother of James, and Salome had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. Mark 16:1-2

Mark's record was, according to some scholars, approximately ten years after the resurrection. Mark refers to the same event as was described by Matthew, and he agrees with Matthew that the Sabbath was passed. Again, we have Biblical evidence that the Sabbath and the "first day" are two distinct and separate days. Certainly Mark places no sacredness on the first day in this reference. These close followers of Jesus had come on Sunday to engage in labour - the customary "embalming" of the body of the crucified Christ. They knew no sacredness attached to the day and were prepared to toil at a very unpleasant task.

Third text:

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene out of whom He had cast seven devils. Mark 16:9

This verse declares that Christ "was risen early the first day of the week", but there is not a word indicating that Sunday should henceforth be the

new Christian Sabbath.

Fourth text:

And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also which came with Him from Galilee followed after, and beheld the sepulchre and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

Luke 23:54,56, Luke 24:1

Christ was crucified on Good Friday in the afternoon before sunset and “that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.”

Friday was called the “Preparation”, implying preparation for the Sabbath. The Sabbath drew on at sunset. (Leviticus 23:32) The Sabbath was observed from Friday evening until Saturday evening. God ordained the reckoning of the day from sunset to sunset right from the very dawn of history as we read from Genesis 1:5,8:

The evening and the morning were the first day the evening and the morning were the second day...

Fifth text:

The first day of the week, cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

John 20:1

We are all aware that the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each give parallel accounts of the work of Christ on earth. This is the reason for the repetition in the above verses quoted. Nothing is said about Sunday sacredness, nothing to suggest that Sunday should

be kept as the Sabbath.

Sixth text:

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and said unto them 'Peace be unto you.' John 20:19

The text says nothing about the disciples holding a meeting in honour of Christ's resurrection. In fact, they took the resurrection report of Luke as "idle tales, and they believed them not." (Luke 24:11)

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Luke 24:10-11

As is stated clearly in John 20:19, "the doors were shut" not for a meeting or celebration of the resurrection, but "*for fear of the Jews*". They were hiding from the Jewish persecutors. They assembled *for fear* and not for worship! While it is true that Christ rose from the grave on Easter Sunday, there is no evidence for keeping Sunday in honour of the resurrection. The Bible teaches that *baptism* is the memorial to the resurrection of Christ - not Sunday.

Seventh text:

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us . . . by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
I Peter 3:21 (See also Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12)

While there are recorded by Luke in the book of Acts as many as eighty-four Sabbath services, there is only one 'first day' verse in Acts, and it does not support Sunday sacredness. This verse is:

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. Acts 20:7

The New English Bible identifies the time:

*When the disciples came together to break bread, on the **Saturday night** in order to assemble for the breaking of bread, Paul, who was to leave the next day, addressed them, and went on speaking until midnight. Acts 20:7 NEB (Emphasis supplied)*

An evening meeting is recorded on the first day of the week. This means that since the Sabbath ended at sunset (Sabbath from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday as already noted), the first day of the week began according to Bible reckoning. The New English Bible puts it in modern language and uses the words - “on Saturday night”. It is recorded that Paul continued his speech until midnight on Saturday. Verse 8 says:

And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

Evidently, Paul had visited all day Sabbath with them, and was persuaded to stay on that night and speak further. Verse 11 of the chapter says:

*...he talked a long while even **until break of day**, so he departed. (Emphasis supplied)*

Paul did not stay on the Sunday, as one would have thought, if Sunday had obtained sanctity. Indeed, it was only after the Sabbath that the disciples came together to break bread (to have a meal together), and Paul spoke to them until daybreak (Sunday morning), and then left on a long journey by foot. In this case, he travelled nearly 30 kilometres from Troas to Assos, where he joined the rest of the missionaries on board

their ship. On the same day, they went to Metylene - a distance of 65 kilometres, and all this travelling was undertaken on the Sunday. (Acts 20:13-14) The text is thus in support of Sabbath sanctity, rather than Sunday sanctity. The fact that they broke bread together on the Sunday is often used as a support of Sunday worship. This is, however, not the case, as the disciples came to break bread together every day of the week.

*And they continuing **daily** with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart.*
Acts 2:46 (Emphasis supplied)

The partaking of communion is not limited to Sunday:

For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26

Eighth text:

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Paul here is referring to tithes and offerings set aside for God's work. This was to be done on the first day of the week. As everywhere else in the world, at the end of the week (Friday), the labourer received his pay. Paul regarded the sanctity of the Sabbath so highly that he suggested that the laying aside and calculating of tithes and offerings should not be carried out in the preparation time before the Sabbath nor on the Sabbath. He suggested rather that this work be done on the first day of the week, so that it wouldn't be spent on other less necessary items in the course of the subsequent week. Rather than to detract from the Sabbath, once again, this verse supports the Sabbath.

References to the Lord's Day

Verses that are often quoted in support of Sunday as the Sabbath, yet which do not refer to Sunday (the first day), are:

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.

Revelation 1:10

Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Mark 2:28

If Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, then it follows that the Sabbath is the Lord's day. The commandment calls it: "*the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.*" Exodus 20:10 (See Isaiah 58:13)

The original Sabbath, Saturday, is the Lord's Day. However, in an effort to bolster Sunday sacredness, Bishop Sylvester in 325 A.D. applied the term Lord's Day to Sunday without any Biblical authority.

The only other text that refers to the Lord's Day is that of the prophet in the book of Isaiah, where the Sabbath is referred to as the Lord's holy day. (Isaiah 58:13)

Colossians 2 and the Sabbath

The observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath is criticized by modern theologians on the grounds of Paul's writings in Colossians. In Colossians 2:11-17, Paul admonishes the followers of Christ not to have a religion of legalism. He refers to the handwriting of ordinances which were nailed to the cross, and finally admonishes:

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Colossians 2:16-17 NKJV

The handwriting of ordinances refers to the ceremonial law or shadow laws which pointed to the ministry of Christ. (See *An Advocate for Our*

Time). The sabbaths referred to in verse 16 are mentioned together with food, drink, and festivals - none of which occur in the moral law. Paul is thus stating that the ceremonial law together with all the special sabbaths find their fulfilment in Christ. They were a “shadow of things to come” (Christ), as he states in verse 17. The Sabbath of the Ten Commandments is a memorial to creation and redemption, and are not a shadow of things to come. Christ did not abolish the law. Indeed, he states:

Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets, I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.
Matthew 5:17 NKJV

If you love Me, keep My commandments. John 14:15

The Bible teaches us that the Lord does not change.

I am the Lord, I change not. Malachi 3:6

As one can readily see in Figure 5.1, God's law is a transcript of His character. It can no more change or end than can the eternal God Himself.

COMPARISON OF GOD AND HIS LAW¹

GOD

God is Spiritual John 4:24
God is Love 1 John 4:8
God is Truth John 14:6
God is Righteous 1 Cor 1:30
God is Holy Isaiah 6:3
God is Perfect Matt 5:48
God stands Forever Ps 29:10
God is Good Luke 18:19
God is Just Deut 32:4
God is Pure 1 John 3:3
God is Unchangeable Jam 1:17

HIS LAW

His law is Spiritual Rom 7:14
His law is Love Matt 22:37-40
His law is Truth Ps 119:142
His law is Righteous Ps 119:172
His law is Holy Rom 7:12
His law is Perfect Ps 19:7
His law stands forever Ps 111:7-8
His law is Good Rom 7:12
His law is Just Rom 7:12
His law is Pure Ps 19:8
His law is Unchangeable Matt 5:18

Jesus and the Sabbath

Did Jesus change the law or the Sabbath? No. He kept His Father's commandments, for He said:

...I have kept My Father's commandment and abide in His love. John 15:10

He kept the Sabbath according to Luke 4:16:

He came to Nazareth . . . and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

He also indicated that the Sabbath would be sacred forty years after the cross when, with reference to the coming fall of Jerusalem, He said:

Pray that your flight (from the city) be not in the winter; neither on the Sabbath day. Matthew 24:20

The Disciples and the Sabbath

The disciples and followers of Christ were not taught anything about a change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, for they too kept Saturday according to the commandment. Luke 23:55-56 reads:

And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments: and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

As we have seen in chapter 2, the entire moral law of God can be found reiterated in the New Testament. (See Figure 2.2, page 45)

Did Paul or the apostles change the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday?

The inspired Word of God in the book of Acts, as written by Luke, records the keeping of 84 Sabbaths by Paul and his companions, as mentioned earlier. We note first in Acts 13:14:

But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day...

This event occurred in 45 A.D., fourteen years after the resurrection, and Paul and his associates were still observing the Sabbath. He did not go to church only to preach to the Jews, for verses 42 and 44 add:

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. And the next Sabbath came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.
Acts 13:42-44

The Gentiles also observed the Sabbath with Paul, and they heard the “word of God.” No indication of a change is found. Besides worshipping in the synagogues, they also “on the Sabbath ... went out of the city by a river side.” Acts 16:13 This was twenty-two years after the resurrection, in 53 A.D. Reading further, we come to Acts 17:2:

And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.

And finally:

...Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. Acts 18:1, 4

The eleventh verse adds:

And he continued there a year and six months teaching the word of God among them.

As this amounted to seventy-eight weeks in all, (he preached on 78 Sabbaths), which added to the above, makes 84 Sabbaths in which the Scriptures state that Paul and his companions worshipped.

Saturday, the seventh-day Sabbath, is taught and enjoined upon Christians throughout the Bible, while Sunday sacredness is not taught in a single text in all the Bible. If the Sabbath was not changed by God or Christ or the apostles, who changed it? We have to go outside the Scriptures for the change from Saturday to Sunday.

Papal Authority and the Change from Sabbath to Sunday

The Papacy is the one organization on earth that claims it is responsible for the change from Sabbath to Sunday. The Catholic priest, Father T. Enright, C. SS.R. of Redemptor College, quotes in *The American Sentinel* as follows:

I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to any one who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the Holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." The Catholic Church says: "No - by my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep holy the first day of the week." And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic church.²

James Cardinal Gibbons declared:

You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation,

*and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day that we (Catholics) never sanctify.*³

*Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles ...From the beginning to end of Scripture, there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first.*⁴

*The Catholic Church, for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, CHANGED the day from Saturday to Sunday.*⁵

In the *New Jersey News* of March 18, 1903, Father Brady wrote in an article,

It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Methodists, and all other Christians that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church and those who observe the day, observe a commandment of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Virginian of October 3rd, 1917 made this declaration:

Nowhere in the Bible do we find that Christ or the apostles ordered that the Sabbath be changed from Saturday to Sunday . . . Today, most Christians keep Sunday because it has been revealed to us by the Church (Roman) outside the Bible.

The Catechism of Catholic Doctrine states:

Question: Which is the Sabbath Day?

Truth Matters

Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.⁶

On the 25th of January 1910, this catechism received the “apostolic blessing” of Pope Pius XI. In the East African, the Catechist is asked:

Question: What is the third commandment?

Answer: The third commandment is, “Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.”

Question: What are we commanded by the third commandment?

Answer: By the third commandment we are commanded to keep Sunday holy.⁷

In a copy of *The New Revised Baltimore Catechism*:

The early Church changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday on the authority given to it by Christ. The New Testament makes no explicit mention that the apostles changed the day of worship, but we know it from tradition.⁸

What exactly is our authority - the Bible or Tradition? What did Christ have to say on this matter?

Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?... Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition... But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Matthew 15:3,6,9

As the Sabbath is the commandment emphasizing the authority of the lawgiver, it is significant that this commandment has been

changed. By changing the Sabbath, there is also a change in the authority of the lawgiver. Another day grants the authority to another entity. God is not the one that is paramount, but the substitute or counterfeit grasps this position for himself. Another god on earth has attempted to replace the true God.

Behind papal authority, there must thus be even a higher authority, that of the prince of the air, who was worshipped in pagan traditions under the symbol of the sun. He was the hidden one, the god behind the scenes. Sunday was the day dedicated to sun worship. Paul called it “the worship of demons”.

Sunday ... so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship.⁹

Sunday, so called because it was dedicated to the worship of the sun.¹⁰

Sunday (Dies Solis of the Roman calendar, ‘day of the sun,’ being dedicated to the sun), the first day of the week.¹¹

This is a Jewish authority:

The day which the heathens in general consecrated to the worship and honour of their chief god, the sun, which, according to our computation, was the first day of the week.¹²

The most ancient Germans being pagans, and having appropriated their first day of the week to the peculiar adoration of the sun, whereof that day doth yet in our English tongue retain the name Sunday.¹³

In the *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, it states:

Truth Matters

It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.¹⁴

Through the influence of Mithraism (Persian sun-worship) in the Roman empire and the heathen festival of Sunday, the pure church of Christ gradually fell into apostasy. Even in the days of the apostles, the great apostasy had begun to develop. Paul wrote,

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.
2 Thessalonians 2:7

He declared again:

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves, shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
Acts 20:29-30

This departure from the faith would widen and grow to great proportions, said the apostle. A great “falling away”, or apostasy, would ultimately disclose “that man of sin”:

...the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.
2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

Sunday actually made very little headway as a Christian rest day until the time of Constantine the Great in the fourth century. Constantine was emperor of Rome from 306 A.D. to 337 A.D. One of the finest arches of triumph stands in his honour in Rome close to the Colosseum. He was a sun worshipper during the first years of his reign. Later he professed conversion to Christianity, but at heart remained a devotee of the sun. Edward Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* says:

The sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine.¹⁵

Constantine promulgated the earliest Sunday law known to history in A.D. 321. It reads:

On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits: because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain sowing or for vine planting: lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost.¹⁶

The Encyclopedia Britannica (11th ed.), “Sunday”, makes the following claim:

The earliest recognition of the observance of Sunday as a legal duty is a constitution of Constantine in 321 A.D., enacting that all courts of Justice, inhabitants of towns, and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday (venerabili die solis), with an exception in favour of those engaged in agricultural labour.

Chamber’s Encyclopedia reads:

Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the Sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, 321 A.D.¹⁷

Following this initial legislation, both emperors and popes in succeeding centuries added other laws to strengthen Sunday observance.

What began, however, as a pagan ordinance, ended as a Christian regulation. Close on the heels of the Edict of Constantine followed the Church Council of Laodicea (circa 364 A.D.):

Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday (Sabbath), but shall work on that day: but the Lord's day, they shall especially honour, and as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ.¹⁸

Protestant Testimony

The notion of a formal substitution (of the first for the seventh day) ... and the transference to it, perhaps in a spiritualised form, of the sabbatical obligation established by ... the fourth Commandment, has no basis whatever, either in Holy Scripture or in Christian antiquity.¹⁹

Augustus Neander, celebrated church historian, says:

The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect; far from them, and from the early apostolic Church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.²⁰

There never was any change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. There is not in any place in the Bible any intimation of such a change.²¹

Congregationalist testimony:

It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath ... The Sabbath was founded on a specific Divine Command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday ... There is not a single sentence in the

New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.²²

The current notion that Christ and his apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament.²³

Baptist testimony:

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of the *Baptist Manual*:

There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday... It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week ... Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week.

In a paper read before a New York Ministers' Conference held November 13, 1893, Dr. Hiscox goes on,

Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources; but what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism and christened with the name of the sun-god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism.

Lutheran testimony:

The observance of the Lord's day (Sunday) is founded not on any command of God, but on the authority of

*the church.*²⁴

Methodist testimony:

*It is true there is no positive command for infant baptism ... nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week.*²⁵

*Take the matter of Sunday...there is no passage telling Christians to keep that day, or to transfer the Jewish Sabbath to that day.*²⁶

Episcopal testimony:

*Is there any command in the New Testament to change the day of weekly rest from Saturday to Sunday? None.*²⁷

Bishop Seymour writes:

*We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy Catholic and apostolic church of Christ.*²⁸

Presbyterian testimony:

*A change of the day to be observed from the last day of the week to the first. There is no record, no express command, authorizing this change.*²⁹

*The Christian Sabbath (Sunday) is not in the Scripture, and was not by the primitive church, called the Sabbath.*³⁰

Church of Christ testimony:

I do not believe that the Lord's day came in the room of the Jewish Sabbath, or that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day.³¹

David Lipscomb, editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, says:

The question comes up: What are you keeping? The Sabbath? If so, our Seventh-day friends are right. God never authorized any day but the seventh day to be observed as a Sabbath day. He never changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.³²

Anglican testimony:

Many people think that Sunday is the Sabbath, but neither in the New Testament nor in the early church, is there anything to suggest that we have any right to transfer the observance of the seventh day of the week to the first. The Sabbath was, and is, Saturday and not Sunday, and if it were binding on us, then we should observe it on that day, and on no other.³³

With all this Protestant testimony, it is not surprising that the Roman Catholic church could state:

The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day, the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic church, as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the protestant world.³⁴

THE LAW OF GOD

I

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me"

II

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."

III

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

IV

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. "

V

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

VI

"Thou shalt not kill."

VII

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

VIII

"Thou shalt not steal."

IX

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

X

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. - Exodus 20:3-17

THE LAW OF GOD AS CHANGED BY MAN

I

I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

(The Second Commandment has been omitted!)

II (actually III)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III (actually IV)

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

(The Sabbath Commandment has been radically altered!)

IV (actually V)

Honor thy father and thy mother.

V (actually VI)

Thou shalt not kill.

VI (actually VII)

Thou shalt not commit adultery

VII (actually VIII)

Thou shalt not steal

VIII (actually IX)

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

IX (actually X, first part)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

X (actually X, second part)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

-The General Catholic Catechism

Figure 5.2

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6

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

The Battle for Supremacy Over God's People

“The view of the earth from the moon fascinated me,” said Frank Borman, member of the trio who completed the first circumnavigation of the moon.

It was hard to think that that little thing (the earth) held so many problems, so many frustrations; raging nationalistic interests, famines, wars, pestilences don't show from that distance.¹

Frank Borman viewed a planet in rebellion. But what was the origin of the rebellion? Who was the rebel?

The history of human woe began with an illustrious, majestic being of dazzling brightness called Lucifer, Son of the Morning, the morning star. However, just as the morning star shines brightest only for a short time, to be veiled by the break of day, so this majestic star shone brightly for a time, then to go out into utter darkness.

Lucifer, a “bright shining” angel, was up in heaven with an exalted position. *“Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth”* the

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throne of God. He was “*full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*” Apparently he had a beautiful voice and might well have led the choirs of heaven. (Ezekiel 28:12-14).

Did God Make the Devil?

Ezekiel continues his graphic description in chapter 28 verse 15:

*Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou
wast created...*

Here we are told Lucifer was a created being. He was created perfect. God did not create the Devil; He created Lucifer. God did not create rotten apples; He made good apples to be eaten when ripe. Likewise, God made grain, but man makes whiskey after he has spoiled what God made.

*Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou
wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.*

Freedom of Choice

Here is the origin of sin - in the originator - Lucifer. He was perfect until iniquity was found in him. God never put it there, but Lucifer developed it. Why did it arise in him? Could not God have made angels and men so that they would not have been able to sin?

Of course He could. He made the stars to remain in their orbital positions. But He made the angels and man not as automatons but as free agents. He gave them freedom of choice. They could either obey or disobey. Lucifer had this opportunity to obey or rebel. He chose to rebel. The same choice is ours.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve....
Joshua 24:15

Development of Sin

*"Vain and useless to inquire into the mode, time, and character, of the fall of the angels,"*² said the French reformer John Calvin.

To give a reason for sin would be to excuse it; to excuse sin would be to defend it. The Bible gives sufficient description of how sin developed in Lucifer.

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness...
Ezekiel 28:17

Lucifer was proud of his beauty. It went to his head and he became headstrong. So the seed of sin germinated. Little by little, Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. He developed "I" trouble. The Scripture says:

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit upon the mount of the congregation . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Isaiah 14:13-14.

Why did God not destroy Lucifer?

Had Lucifer been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question. Sin must run its course that its enormity may be fully abhorred; but it *will* be finally eradicated, along with its instigator.

...Therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, and it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes ... and never shalt thou be any more.

Ezekiel 28: 18-19

Prince of this Planet

Filled with pride in his own glory, Lucifer fomented discord, discontent, and disaffection amongst the angels, leading to open rebellion. This had never been known in the universe. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. There was war in heaven.

Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan ... he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Revelation 12:7-9

The two great adversaries here mentioned are Michael and the dragon. We know who the dragon is; it is the fallen angel Lucifer or Satan because Revelation 12:9 identifies him.

... the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called Devil, and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world ...

Revelation 12:9

Who is Michael? Because he is called the Archangel, some believe him to be an angel of the same rank as Lucifer was, but the Bible leads one to believe that Gabriel has taken the position of Lucifer. The name Michael is mentioned in Daniel, Jude and Revelation, and each time it is in the context of the great controversy with Lucifer, with Michael commanding the angelic host. The designation 'archangel' here refers to more than highest angel, but to leader of the angels. The name Michael means "He that is what God is," and only Christ qualifies for that position. Who

would contend with Satan over the body of Moses (Jude 9) other than Christ Himself? The voice of the archangel that calls forth the dead at the second coming of Christ, can only be the voice of Christ Himself.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first.

1 Thessalonians. 4:16

(Voice of the Son of man... John 5:27-28)

Christ is the Creator of all things and is the One who therefore created the worlds, the angelic host, and mankind.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

John 1:1,3,10,14

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

1 Corinthians 8:6

In the Old Testament, Christ is called the “Angel of the Lord” or the “Angel of His Presence”, and Michael is the Ruler of God’s people.

... Michael your prince... Daniel 10:21 NKJV

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people:

Daniel 12:1

...the Angel who redeemed me from all evil ...

Genesis 48:16

...and the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire ... Exodus 3:2

For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them... Isaiah 63:8-9

Only Christ can claim to rule, save, and redeem His people. Genesis 48:16 refers to the angel who has redeemed me from all evil. Only Christ has redeemed anyone from all evil. He is also referred to as the captain of the Lord's host. In Joshua 5:13-14, Joshua meets the captain of the Lord's host and falls down to worship him. Only God, and not angels, may be worshipped. (Revelation 22:8-9) When God had created this world and all its creatures including man,

God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. Genesis 1:31

God is not the author of sin, but He was willing to bear its consequences. The great controversy raging in the universe is between the Creator of all things and Satan the covering cherub, who rebelled against God because he deemed himself equal with Christ in glory and refused to be subjected to His authority and government.

Having been driven from heaven, Satan turned his attention to the newly created earth. When Eve had wandered from Adam's side and was confronted by Satan, she was deceived into believing that a knowledge of good and evil would enable her to be like God, and that sin would not carry with it the consequence of death. Sin is the transgression of the law ("Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4), which forms the basis of God's government in heaven. He tempted her to break the law of God by coveting the position of God. This planet has been suffering those consequences since that time. It is a planet in rebellion against the government of God. By being obedient to the will of Satan, Adam and Eve became subject to his rule.

...of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 2 Peter 2:19

...to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are. Romans 6:16

Satan now played to the full his usurped role of “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4) or “prince of this world” (John 12:31), prince of this planet, “prince of the power of the air,” (Ephesians 2:2), “He is the prince of Devils.” (Matthew 12:24-26) Said Martin Luther,

The wickedness of the Devil is so great on this planet, that no man can grasp it. To be so wicked to find one's pleasure and delight only in the misfortune of other people; in their lingering hunger, thirst, misery, and want, in the perpetration of nothing but bloodshed and treason, especially in the lives of those who neither have done nor could do any harm, this is the hellish and insatiable rage and fury of the wretched Devil.³

The Scriptures say,

*...He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.
John 8:44*

His pride led to envy and his envy led to hatred. His hatred for Christ is so all consuming, that he eventually murdered the Son of God on Calvary. His hatred for those whom Christ has redeemed is what fuels the fires of the pain and grief of this world. Those who love and serve Christ are the enemies of Satan. Fortunately, they know the words of Christ.

*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In this world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.
John 16:33*

With all the evidence of senseless hatred, war, and bloodshed on this earth, there are some who will still deny the existence of Satan. However, the man who doesn't believe in the existence of the Devil is already deceived.

Medical tradition and superstition are the source of the conception which has come down to us of Satan as a monster of horrid form and hideous expression, with an accompaniment of hooves, horns, pitchfork, barbed tail, and breath of flames. This hobgoblin of the ignorant and superstitious has no reality in fact, no basis in the Scriptures, and is the source of derision on the part of intelligent and cultured people. This very grotesque and absurd impression regarding Satan is in itself an evidence of the craft and guile of the deceiver.⁴

The Devil is no theological abstraction, some psychic trauma, or distortion of the mind. The Devil is a personal being, able to assail unsuspecting individuals. He had a personal encounter with Christ in the wilderness of temptation where Christ said to him, “*Get thee behind me Satan.*” (Matthew 16:23) John writes of “*the spirit of Satan entering into the heart of Judas*” who betrayed his Lord. (John 13:27) The question was put to Ananias, “*Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?*” (Acts 5:3) We are told that the devil occupies this planet.

...going to and fro on the earth and ...walking back and forth on it. Job 1:7 NKJV

Your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter 5:8

The devil is a deceiver, even working miracles to achieve his aims (1 Timothy 2:14, Revelation 16:14); he transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14); he is a power warring against God's people (Ephesians 6:12); he is an accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10), af-

flicting them (Job 2:7), persecuting them, and killing them (John 8:44).

The only way to overcome him is to take the “*sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*” (Ephesians 6:17) Christ said to Satan in the wilderness of temptation, “*It is written.*” The promises of God are worth committing to memory now. The example of the prophets and apostles of old are an encouragement to the believer.

Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Revelation 12:11

In the great controversy between Christ and Satan, man was never to be left to his own devices. God had a plan and chose to bear the consequences of sin Himself. He was to become sin for us and bear the shame of a cross, so that whosoever might believe in Him could be saved. The weapons of God’s people were not to be earthly, but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Satan, on the other hand, has always tried to force conscience, and through his agents on earth, he has waged relentless war using the cruelest of methods to turn the allegiance of God’s people from Christ.

Revelation 12 gives a brief outline of the conflict between Christ and His New Testament church and Satan to the close of time. The first scenes describe the efforts of Satan to destroy Christ at His birth in order to thwart the plan of salvation, followed by the crucifixion, the efforts of Satan to destroy His New Testament church, and finally his efforts to destroy the remnant. The symbol used to describe the church of Christ is that of a chaste woman, and to describe Satan and his allies - that of the dragon.

A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third

of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron sceptre. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.
Revelation 12:1-5 NIV

Before we continue with our study, we must find out who is represented by the woman with the sun, moon, and stars. We read in the book of Isaiah:

As a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. Isaiah 62:5 NKJV

Paul called the Corinthians the bride of Christ.

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2

What an apt description of the church of Christ! She has not committed fornication with the world; her doctrines are pure. The sun, moon and stars represent the light of heaven that illuminates her.

The woman is pregnant and about to give birth, and later we read that she gave birth to a male child:

She bore a male child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Revelation 12:5 NKJV

This can only be Jesus, as it is He that will rule the nations, and He that ascended into heaven. Psalms 2:7-9 says:

I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You. Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the

ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like potter's vessel.' NKJV.

This child was none other than God Himself:

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6 NKJV

The Catholic Church teaches that this woman, clothed with the sun, is Mary as she gave birth to Jesus. However, this interpretation creates problems because the woman is later persecuted by the Dragon, flees into the wilderness, is taken care of for 1260 days (which is the same time period that the little horn would persecute God's people as described in Daniel 7), and then the Dragon finally makes war on the remnant of her seed. Clearly, the symbol therefore refers to God's faithful people (of which Mary was a member). It was out of His people that the Messiah was to come. The next scene introduces the adversary.

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.
Revelation 12:3-4 NKJV

We know from verse 9 that the dragon is Satan, but Satan works through earthly instruments to achieve his aims. The dragon also has ten horns, which remind us of the fourth beast of Daniel 7, which represented Rome. Satan worked through pagan Rome to destroy Jesus. It was a Roman official that condemned Him to die, Roman soldiers that crucified Him and guarded his grave, and a Roman seal that sealed His grave. At His birth, Herod had *tried* to destroy the newborn king by issuing the harsh

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decree condemning male infants to death, but *Rome* crucified Him. But, instead of defeating Christ by this act, it produced the greatest victory the universe had ever witnessed, because Christ, the sinless One, rose from the grave. No Roman seal could hold Him and Satan lost the battle.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.'

Revelation 12:10

Satan's apparent victory at the cross was to be his greatest defeat. Not being able to tempt Christ, and realizing that his own fate had been sealed forever, he determined to destroy off the face of the earth those who believed in the merits of the risen Saviour. He relentlessly persecuted God's church using the state, first in the form of pagan Rome, and then in the form of papal Rome, but:

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Revelation 12:11

History tells us how cruel Rome was in its persecution of God's people. The Colosseum, where an estimated 80,000 Christians were set alight or killed by lions, testifies to the fact that almost 3 million Christians were martyred during the first two and a half centuries after Christ ascended to heaven. The emperors of Rome were relentless in their cruelty towards the new converts, and monsters such as Nero and the Emperor Marcus Aurelius made a sport of devising methods to kill them. Historians tell us that Marcus Aurelius used to tie the legs of his victims onto two horses and watch how these Christians were torn asunder.

When Rome adopted the Christian religion and made it the state religion, matters did not improve. They got worse. Firstly, a subtle compromise bred complacency, and when this did not work, the fires of persecution were rekindled. When Constantine adopted the new religion,

he did so with a mind to blend the old pagan religion with Christianity. Harry R. Boer's book: *A Short History of the Early Church* tells us what happened when church and state united:

The multiplication of holy days, the veneration of saints, martyrs and relics, and the value attached to pilgrimages and holy places often pushed truly spiritual concerns into the background. (p. 42)

F. J. Foakes-Jackson, in his book *History of the Christian Church*, describes Constantine's aims:

In dealing with the church, his object was gradually to transfer to Christianity from heathenism all that had hitherto made it attractive in the eyes of the people. (p. 286)

Constantine, in fact, was the first to enact Sunday laws in 321 A.D., enforcing the maintenance of the pagan day of worship in violation of the law of God. The German historian, H. G. Heggtveit, describes the compromise in these words:

Constantine labored at his time untiringly to unite the worshippers of the old and the new faith in one religion. All his laws and contrivances are aimed at promoting this amalgamation of religions. He would by all means melt together a purified heathenism and a moderate Christianity.

With regard to the Sunday laws, Heggtveit states:

His injunction that the 'Day of the Sun' should be a general rest day was characteristic of his standpoint... Of all his blending and melting together of Christianity and heathenism, none is more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law. The Christians worshipped their Christ, the heathen their sun god; according to the opinion of the Emperor, the objects

for worship in both religions were essentially the same.

Harry Boer, in his historical account *A Short History of the Early Church*, makes the following statement:

He (Constantine) designated Sunday by its traditional pagan name - The Day of the Sun, not the Sabbath or the Day of the Lord. Pagans could therefore accept it. Christians gave the natural sun a new meaning by thinking of Christ the Son of Righteousness. Constantine and later emperors, as well as the church councils, enacted additional Sunday legislation. It was Constantine's decree of 321, however, that laid the basis of the universal recognition of Sunday as a day of rest. (p. 143)

In response to the crisis, those who wanted to remain faithful to God and His Word fled into the solitary places to be able to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. In Revelation 12:6 we read:

The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1260 days.

This is the period of persecution predicted by the prophet Daniel in connection with the little horn, which we identified as the antichrist or papal Rome (See *The Man Behind the Mask*). The church that compromised with heathenism became the persecutor. Pagan Rome was replaced by papal Rome.

And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.
Revelation 12:13-14

The church fled into the solitary places of the world, and during the time of papal supremacy, the word of God was kept alive by small groups of believers such as the Waldenses, who kept the Sabbath of the fourth commandment rather than the pagan Sunday and chose rather to die than deny their faith in Christ and the Scriptures. They were thrown off cliffs, their children's heads were bashed against the rocks, and some were cremated alive. The church (the woman) fled to solitary places in the Alps in order to escape the persecution of the dragon, and in the Piedmont valleys in northern Italy, hundreds of thousands of them were martyred because of their faith.

The church in the wilderness kept the flame of truth burning. They cherished the Scriptures, and when the Reformation spread the word of God, Rome stepped up its efforts to destroy those who would defy its doctrines. History abounds with atrocities against Protestants, the wars that were fought to exterminate them, the massacres that took place, and the work of the Inquisition that led to the torture and burning at the stake of thousands. When persecution could not destroy the work of the Reformation, a more subtle strategy was employed, and the Counter Reformation led by the Jesuits was born (see *The Spirit of Unity*). Sadly, this bore fruits of compromise, as in the days of Constantine, and the church in the wilderness once more became a church at peace with Rome. However, the Bible predicts that after the 1260 days, after 1798 (see the chapter *The Man Behind the Mask*), a remnant would arise that would enrage the dragon because they would follow Jesus in obedience to His commandments.

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring - those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. Revelation 12:17

As seen in the previous chapter, the two beasts of Revelation 13 will unite in their persecution of this remnant, and decrees (see *The Mark of the Beast*) will be legislated, enforcing papal doctrines. The great controversy will end when the final apostasy against God's government declares the law of God null and void, and issues decrees that God's commandment-keeping people, who refuse to obey man rather than

God, should be destroyed.

*Here is the patience of the saints. Here are those who
keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*
Revelation 14:12

This patience will be rewarded when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords to take those who have patiently waited for Him to mansions, which He has already prepared.

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7

TWO BEASTS BECOME FRIENDS

Setting Up The Final Conflict

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.... And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life... And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads... Revelation 13:1,8,11-12,16

In Revelation 13, two beasts are described that will dominate world events at the end of time. The first arises out of the sea and the second out of the earth. Moreover, the second beast pays homage to the first beast by causing all that dwell upon the earth to worship the first beast and in so doing, they receive the mark of the beast. Again, by applying the Biblical definitions to the symbols employed in this great prophecy, we can unravel its mysteries.

The core symbols are beasts, heads, horns, sea, dragon, and earth. As outlined in the chapters *The Mists of Time* and *The Man Behind the Mask*, a beast is a king or a kingdom (Daniel 7:17) and the two beasts of Revelation 13 thus represent two kingdoms or political powers that dominate world events in the last days. The first beast arose out of the *sea*, representing the nations, the multitudes, peoples, and kings as defined in Revelation 17:15 where the waters were said to symbolize the nations of the earth. In contrast, the second beast arises out of the *earth* thus representing the opposite of nations, multitudes and kingdoms; therefore, it must arise in areas of the world where nations, multitudes, and kings were not established.

The first beast has ten horns, which remind us of the fourth beast in Daniel 7 which referred to Rome with its ten horns. The seven heads of the first beast represent historic time periods, but the number seven is also the divine number, thus indicating that this beast lays claim to deity. The attributes of the beast are further described, and the similarities with the little horn power of Daniel 7 are seen to be the same as those of this beast. They must be seen as one and the same and we are thus dealing with Rome in its papal form (see *The Man Behind The Mask*). This beast has leopard, bear, and lion characteristics, which we recognize again from Daniel. The order in which these three beasts appear here in Revelation is the reverse seen in Daniel. This is because Daniel was looking ahead and John was looking back.

... and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat and great authority. Revelation 13:2

The dragon is identified as Satan in Revelation 12:9.

The little horn power of Daniel 7 had the following attributes in common with the first beast of Revelation 13:

7 - Two Beasts Become Friends

- it spoke great things and blasphemies (Verse 5)
- it made war with the saints (Verse 7)
- it overcame the saints (Verse 7)
- it was more stout than its fellows, or authority was given him over every tribe, tongue and nation (Verse 7)
- it was given authority to continue forty-two months/1260 days (Verse 5)

John's vision parallels that of Daniel 7 and the imagery and attributes of the beast out of the sea link it directly with the little horn power. However, the imagery is enlarged, in that the beast also incorporates components of the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the terrible ten-horned beast, which were symbols of the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. There is a distinct reason for this, as the Church of Rome has incorporated and refined many of the systems of worship and styles of governance of the kingdoms of antiquity into its own systems. The absolute power of the ruling monarch, the infallibility of his decrees, the total subservience of his officers, the hierarchy of its elite and the many secret organizations that make her power absolute are all inherited from the kingdoms of old. Rome also maintains many of the rites and vestments of the bear; the triple crown worn by the Pope, made of solid gold, is of Persian origin- "King of Heaven, and of Earth, and of the Nether World," as well as the rites and titles of Mithraism. The rites and ceremonies dating from the Grecian and Babylonian periods form the basis for most of the liturgies, festivals, and grand ceremonies observed by the Roman Church. Even the titles used by present-day popes are the same as those used in early pagan religions and by the monarchs who were seen as representatives of the gods and even as gods themselves.

As the power of pagan Rome declined, the power of papal Rome increased as the Church accumulated more and more power and influence. When the emperor Constantine accepted the veneer of Christianity and paganism and Christianity blended into one, Rome became the religious capital of the world. *Abbot's Roman History*, p.236 declares:

The transfer of the emperor's residence to Constantinople was a sad blow to the prestige of Rome, and at the time one might have predicted her speedy decline.

But the development of the Church, and the growing authority of the Bishop of Rome, or the pope, gave her a new lease on life, and made her again the capital – this time the religious capital – of the world.

From 538 A.D., when the emperor Justinian issued a decree proclaiming the pope to be supreme in religious matters, he assumed the garb of representative of Jesus Christ on earth. When Constantine moved his seat to Constantinople, the popes inherited the power of the Roman emperors - their prestige, and even their titles. The most significant of such titles was that of: "Pontifex Maximus" - a pagan title for "Bridge-builder between Heaven and Earth." Moreover, the Roman clergy also wore the same vestments of the priests of Dagon, the fish-god. The fish-head mitre, worn by bishops and popes, is also the same as the ancient mitre used by the priesthood of Babylon. The keys of the pagan female and male god figures have also become a symbol of the papacy, as are his staff, which is the symbol of the snake, and was carried by ancient emperors from Babylonian through Egyptian to Roman times. The keys became the "keys of Peter" and the staff became a shepherd's staff, christianizing these pagan artifacts.

The papacy is but the ghost of the Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon its grave.¹

The symbol of the forty-two months that the beast power would have authority (Revelation 13:5) is the same time period as that of the little horn power in Daniel 12:7. The little horn would rule for a "time, times and half a time." Time, times and half a time, forty-two months, and 1260 days are the same time period written in different forms. This can be deduced from Hebrew parallelism. In Revelation 11:2-3, we have the parallelism of a pagan power that would tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months, but that God's witnesses would witness and prophecy during those 1260 days, thus equating forty-two months with 1260 days. A further example we find in Revelation 12:6 where the woman fled into the wilderness, and was taken care of for 1260 days. As the woman stands for a church, this represents the church being taken care of in the solitary places of the world, during the period

of papal supremacy. The parallel text to this is found in Revelation 12:14 where again the woman flees into the wilderness to be taken care of for a time, times, and half a time, thus equating the 1260 days to a time, times, and half a time. The Bible mentions this prophetic period seven times and, in each case, it refers to the Papacy. It began in 538 A.D. and ended in 1798 when the Papacy appeared to receive a deadly wound (for a detailed analysis of this period representing 1260 days, see the chapter *The Man Behind the Mask*)

During its period of supremacy, the Pope wielded more power than even the emperors of Rome. The historian Gibbon said that Pope Innocent III was more supreme in the world than any Caesar that ruled the empire. Kings laid their crowns at the feet of the Pope, and had him crown them. They kissed the Pope's slipper to show their subjection. Any king who rebelled was dethroned. King John of England was one example, and he was excommunicated by the Pope. The only way he could be reinstated was to lie a day and a night on a cold marble floor naked. The king complied. Henry the IV, emperor of Germany, had to stay four days in the rain and snow before the Pope would grant him an audience. The Pope was supreme over all nations and peoples.

In Revelation 13, the beast from the sea seems to receive a mortal wound, but the prediction is made that the wound would be healed, and that all the world would wonder after and worship the beast.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

Revelation 13:3-4

The BBE version renders the text:

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been given a death-wound; and his death-wound was made well: and all the earth was wondering at the beast.

And the NIV translates it as:

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.

The wound is a counterfeit wound, but nevertheless appears real. Later we shall see (in *The Wine of Babylon*) that the beast forms part of a trilogy of powers that constitute the last great confederacy against God and which the Bible calls Babylon. This antitypical Babylon consists of three components: The Beast, the Dragon, and the False Prophet, which counterfeit the trinity. The Beast, or Papacy, claims to be the representative of Christ. It demands obedience of the whole world and also experiences a counterfeit death and resurrection. At the end of time, the power of the resurrected papacy would be so great that no one would venture to make war against it - the deadly wound would be healed.

Papal supremacy of the Middle Ages ended in the year 1798, exactly 1260 years after the establishment of the papacy as the supreme Christian power in 538 A.D. by Justinian's decree. In 1798, General Berthier, Napoleon's general, took the Pope captive and put him into exile. The murder of a Frenchman in Rome in 1798 gave the French the excuse they wanted to occupy the eternal city. It was really believed that the era of papal power had come to an end forever, but the prophecy says:

And his deadly wound was healed and all the world wondered after the beast. Revelation 13:3

Since the Papacy had apparently lost its political status after the Pope's capture in 1798, the beast, which represents a kingdom or political system, was, for all intents and purposes, dead. It could only be resurrected as a beast if it regained its viable political status. In 1929, Mussolini and Gaspari signed an Accord whereby the Pope had to pledge his own political party's support to Mussolini in exchange for the return and acknowledgment of his papal seat and power. From 1929 onward, the political status of the Vatican was thus reinstated and the

apparent wound could heal. Since then, the power and influence of the Papacy has again grown to worldwide proportions, particularly during the closing years of the last millennium. Pope John Paul II has received heads of state from all over the world and has, in turn, visited many countries. His stature as a world leader has grown astronomically, and even Bill Clinton, the last United States president of the previous millennium, thanked him during the Pope's visit to St. Louis for saving the world from the horrors of nuclear war and freeing millions from political oppression.

Beside the political accolades, religious leaders from all religious groups have paid him homage. The Pope is recognized as the supreme religious leader in the world today and at the council of Assisi, leaders from all persuasion acknowledged him as the supreme ecclesiastical authority. Religious leaders of all persuasions have frequently met to discuss unity of faith, and before the close of the last millennium, there were meetings held at the United Nations in which religious leaders pledged to work together to end religious strife. Within the Christian world also, the stated aim of the ecumenical movement is to reassert papal authority, and Pope John Paul II issued the statement that it is necessary for all denominations to accept papal authority before unity can be achieved.

On a plaque outside the Pope's Lateran Church in Rome, where he was crowned in 1978, are the words - "Ecclesium Mater" - Mother of the Churches. The chasm between the world's 1.2 billion Catholics and 350 million Protestants is steadily closing. However, Rome itself has not changed one of its doctrines in the process. Yet it seems that many of the reform churches are lining up to pay homage to Rome. (see *The Spirit of Unity*)

Rome had always been an ecclesiastical as well as a secular power, combining church and state. It was also able to enforce any laws it wished. When she wielded power during the Middle Ages, she claimed:

The Church may by Divine Right confiscate the property of heretics, imprison their persons, and condemn them to the flames.

This statement emphasizes the power which Rome wielded, and will once again wield upon the earth. In one of his encyclicals, *Dies Domini*, issued on May 7, 1998, Pope John Paul asked for civil legislation to support the observance of Sunday, although the sanctification of Sunday rests only on papal premises.

When, through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, (109) the Church has had in mind above all the work of servants and workers, certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared to the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord's Day holy. In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical Rerum Novarum spoke of Sunday rest as a worker's right which the State must guarantee ... Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy. (DIES DOMINI)

In a further Apostolic letter, *AD TUENDAM FIDEM*, issued on May 18, 1998, the Pope uses the term heretic for the first time since the healing of the wound and warned disobedient members of the flock that they will be punished if they do not accept papal authority in matters of doctrine.

*Can. 1436 § 1. Whoever denies or places in doubt any truth that must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or repudiates the Christian faith as a whole, and does not come to his senses after having been legitimately warned, is to be punished as a **heretic** or as an apostate by major excommunication; a member of the clergy, furthermore, can be punished by other penalties, not excluding deposition. 2. Aside from such cases, whosoever rejects a doctrine proposed, as definitively to be held, by the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops exercising their authentic Magisterium, or else accepts a*

doctrine condemned by them as erroneous, and does not come to his senses after having been legitimately warned, is to be punished by an appropriate penalty. AD TUEN-DAM FIDEM

Imperceptibly and stealthfully, Rome is preparing to once again enforce her decrees, just as the Bible predicts. In the secret recesses of her grand buildings and in the legislative halls of the world's political powers, the stage is being set for the final confrontation between those aligned with the Prince of Darkness and those who stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel.

In Daniel 7 and Revelation 13:5, it states that the beast power would be a blasphemous power. Pope Leo boasted:

We hold upon earth the place of God Almighty. God Himself is obliged to abide by the judgments of His priests on whether to pardon or not to pardon. The pronouncement of the priest precedes and God subscribes to it.²

Not one of these statements has been rescinded in recent years, even since Vatican II.

Know you not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Romans 6:16

A final attribute of the sea beast is that it has a number, and this number is the number of a *man*.

Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, threescore and six. (666) Revelation 13:18

Modern interpretations of this prophecy apply the 666 to a computer in Brussels, and imply that this number represents registration

of every citizen of earth who is to be subjected to the new economic policies of the new world order. The questions we need to ask ourselves are: Did this computer persecute the saints for 1260 years? Did it say it was God? and Does it claim to forgive sins? The text clearly states that it is a man's number, but also that of the beast. Does the number 666 apply to the Papacy, and is it the number of a man, bringing it in line with the 'man of sin' recorded in the Scriptures?

One of the official titles of the pope is "Vicarius Filii Dei"- "Vicar of the Son of God". This can be verified in the papal canons issued during the past years.

Latin letters have a numerical value and the title "Vicarius Filii Dei" adds up to 666. (V=5,I=1,C=100,U=5,L=50 and D=500). Greek letters also have numerical value. And if the official titles of the Roman Church in both her secular and religious capacity are examined, then the number 666 is again prominent. The title "Italika Ekklesia" (I=10,T=300,A=1,L=30,I=10,K=20,A=1,E=5,K=20,K=20,L=30,É=8,S=200,I=10,A=1) meaning "Italian Church" totals 666. The Greek title "Hélatiné Basileia" (H=0É=8,L=30,A=1,T=300,I=10,N=50,É=8,B=2,A=1,S=200,I=10,L=30,E=5,I=10,A=1) meaning "The Latin Kingdom" also totals 666 as does the title "Dux Clerici" (D=500,U=5,X=10,C=100,L=50,E=0,R=0,I=1) meaning "head of clergy", and "Lateinos" (L=30,A=1,T=300,E=5,I=10,N=50,O=70,S=200) meaning "latin speaking man".

Having identified the first beast of Revelation 13, it now remains for us to identify the second beast which will work together with the first beast and which will force the world to pay homage to the first beast. Which political power would arise on earth with enough power to compel the world and what will its relationship be with Rome?

The verse which lies at the transition point between the descriptions of the two beasts is Revelation 13:10:

He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. NKJV

This text is significant as it serves as a time marker identifying the time at which the second beast would arise, as verse 11 starts with the wording, "then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth..."

In 1798, the first beast was taken into captivity and ‘killed’ by the sword. And this is the time period when John saw the other beast arising. It arises not out of the sea (the multitude of nations) but out of the earth, in an area that was previously not inhabited by great nations, multitudes, peoples, and tongues. There is only one nation on earth that qualifies for the criteria mentioned in the second half of Revelation 13. The power described would have to become a mighty nation in order to exercise the authority predicted over all the nations of the world. The power would have lamb-like qualities, but would speak like a dragon. This means that the nation must have attributes of Christ, but that it would relinquish these attributes in favour of the attributes of the dragon. We know that the dragon represents Satan, who persecuted God’s people by means of the church in the Middle Ages. In like fashion, the second power would also persecute God’s people who would not accept teachings of the first beast, even to the point of issuing a death decree against them.

Only the United States of America qualifies for all the points mentioned. The War of Independence ended in 1776 on the 4th of July. The American constitution was written in 1789. America was formally recognized as an independent nation by France (then the mightiest nation in Europe), who also gave them the Statue of Liberty in 1798.

So the nation that terminated the first beast’s power and influence made a dominant and significant gesture in recognizing the new nation which had avowed to keep church and state apart. The constitution of the new States gave complete freedom of worship to its citizens.

Congress shall make no laws respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust.

The USA aptly fits the description given to the lamb-like, two-horned beast of verse 11. It starts off like a lamb and will later speak like a dragon.

Hordes of persecuted Christians fled from the terrors and trials of the European oppression, seeking freedom and a better life in the New World of North America.

There is no doubt that this beast is the USA. However, it would become more militant as time moved on. Verse 12 warns us that this beast would exercise all the power of the first beast before him. Therefore, we can expect persecution as church and state (represented by the two horns of this beast) again come together in the last days, for verse 12 continues by warning us that the USA will cause all who dwell on the earth to worship the papal power (the first beast), which can only be achieved by enforcing papal doctrines.

And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. Revelation 13:12

This means that papal doctrines must be legislated, or else the law will have no right to enforce them. This would further mean that the constitution of the United States will have to be ignored or amended, since it forbids the legislation of religious laws. Somehow, the popular feeling must be swayed under the directive of religious bodies in order to permit such laws, calling for a change in the constitution, or else, it must be suspended.

America is rapidly becoming a global policeman, getting involved in all parts of the world - all in the name of freedom and justice. With the fall of the Soviet Union, there is no other power that has the resources to fill this role, and by its own admission, the United States is the only superpower left on earth.

The question still remains as to how church and state will get together to fulfil this prophecy. Verses 13 and 14 provide a possible solution to this dilemma.

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

Revelation 13:13-14

What does it mean that fire will come down from heaven? The United States certainly has the capacity to make fire come down from heaven in a military capacity, but perhaps these words have a spiritual connotation as well. When Elijah confronted the children of Israel to choose between the God of heaven and Baal, the contest was to be decided by which god would rain fire from heaven, and we know that the God of Israel displayed His power on that occasion so that there was no doubt as to who the true God was. No doubt, Satan would have loved to rain fire on that occasion, but his power was curtailed by God. At the end of time, there will once again be a decision to be made, perhaps fire will come down from heaven, but the verse says it will be a fire of deception and can therefore not be from God. If this is the case, then what will keep God's people from being deceived? Surely it can only be through a plain "thus saith the Lord." When Satan tried to deceive Christ by misapplying Scripture, Jesus answered him with: "It is written..." Christ has made all things plain in His Word, and there will be no need for Him to prove their truthfulness. If people do not want to believe the plain statements of the Word, Christ will not force them.

There is another possibility which could shed light on this verse regarding the fire to come down from Heaven, which will deceive those who dwell on the earth. Fire in Scripture signifies the Holy Spirit. In Acts chapter 2, there is a description of the events which took place during Pentecost. As the disciples were praying together, flames of fire settled on them, signifying the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that would empower them to preach the Gospel in the power of God. It is possible that the fire which will come down from heaven during the final events will be an outpouring of the false Holy Spirit which will deceive people into accepting the lie rather than believing the truth. It is possible that religious and political leaders will be so enthralled by the manifestations of the 'Spirit,' that when they witness the miracles that are wrought, they will become convinced that they are dealing with the power of God. Deceived by their senses, they would collectively act in such a way that the prophecies will be fulfilled.

In order to enforce religious doctrine, church and state must once again be unified. In the United States, the Christian coalition was

formed with this very objective in mind, and though no longer present in that form, the same ideals still hold priority in the minds of many politicians. To be deceived means to believe that one is doing something right, when actually it is wrong. Christ never forced anyone, but demonstrated His love for mankind by His willingness to die for fallen man. Contrarily, it has always been the policy of the deceiver to force people into submission. Sadly, Revelation 13 predicts that, as in the case of the Middle Ages, religious intolerance will once again raise its ugly head. In the name of peace and order, moral issues fuelled by religious fervour will be legislated, and amongst these issues will be doctrines originating from no other authority but that of Rome.

Already the United States and the Vatican are working towards common goals. In 1982, there was a private meeting between the Pope and President Ronald Reagan, and soon after an American Envoy was posted to the Vatican. Previous presidents had tried to do this but their actions were voted as being unconstitutional. President Reagan accomplished this, however, without referring to Senate or Congress.

In response to concerns by the Vatican, the Reagan administration agreed to alter its foreign aid programme to comply with the Church's teachings on birth control.³

Evangelical forces have the power to change the course of the United States of America. They now have the political clout to achieve their objectives, and once in place, the table will be set for the final events described in Revelation 13. The precise nature of the laws that will be enacted and the meaning of the mark of the beast will be discussed in the chapters *The Mark of the Beast* and *Spirit of Unity*.

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The Last Great Conflict Between Truth and Error

8

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

The Final Test

The book of Revelation describes the last great conflict between Christ and Satan, and this conflict is a conflict of authority. We saw in Revelation 12 that the dragon would make war on those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17). There are thus two issues that the enemy will target in particular in the final conflict, namely: “The commandments of God” and “The testimony of Jesus Christ.” We will deal with the testimony later (see *God’s Guiding Gift*), but the law of God is the issue, which touches the authority and government of God. In Revelation 11:19 we read:

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament. And there were lightnings, and voices and thunderings and an earthquake and great hail. Revelation 11:19

The prophet John is alerting us to the fact that the issues in the last great controversy will center around the law of God. The enemy is going to challenge the authority of the Creator and try and establish his own sign of authority. Revelation 13 identified the powers that would be involved in the final challenge to God’s authority, and we saw that Papal Rome and the United States of America would play pivotal roles

in this conflict. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Papal Rome spoke with the mouth of the lion, which, in Daniel's prophecy, represented Babylon. In other words, there would be a Babylonian component to the Papacy, especially concerning its speech.

History tells us that during the fall of Babylon, its priesthood fled to Pergamum in Asia Minor, and there the Babylonian religion, its rites and rituals, as well as its hierarchy, were maintained. The last pontiff king of Pergamum, King Attalus, bequeathed his title (Pontifex Maximus), structure of the Babylonian priesthood, and vestments to Rome.¹ Initially only the pagan high priest of Rome used this title, but when pagan Rome fell, this Babylonian title was transferred to the Pope. And the very first thing you see as you enter St. Peter's is this Babylonian title, Pontifex Maximus. This title is to be seen in the entrance to the Vatican and on every papal statue. Interestingly, the statue of Pope Gregory XIII shows the title, but also shows him on top of the dragon. According to Revelation 13, the dragon gave his power to the sea beast, the Papacy. In a special sense, the Roman Pontiff is thus the spokesman of the dragon and it is through the Papacy, the heir of the Roman Empire, that the dragon exercises his authority.

After Emperor Constantine left Rome in AD 330 to make Constantinople, present Istanbul, his new capital, Pagan Rome transferred its power and throne, to papal Rome. Cardinal Henry Edward Manning of England says that the abandonment of Rome was the "liberation" of the Pontiffs. With the passage of time, he says, "the Pontiffs found themselves alone; the sole fountains of order, peace, law, and safety", in western Rome.²

The Roman Pontiff claims to possess extraordinary powers in both moral and civil matters, even to the point of asserting his authority over the precepts of God. The Roman Decretalia states:

He can pronounce sentences and judgments in contradiction to the rights of nations, to the law of God and man... He can free himself from the commands of the apostles, he being their superior, and from the rules of the Old

Testament.” He also states that: “The Pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and to dispense with all things, even the precepts of Christ.³

A further statement to illustrate this point is:

The Pope’s will stands for reason. He can dispense above the law; and of wrong make right, by correcting and changing laws.⁴

If, as we have seen, the commandments of God, and thus the government of God, are targets of the ire of Satan, then it stands to reason that these supposed powers of the Papacy will be used in the final conflict between good and evil and will culminate in the enforcing of the mark of the beast on all the citizens of earth. The warnings concerning the mark of the beast are the most serious and solemn message to be found in the Bible, and it is essential that we apply careful exegesis to unravel its meaning.

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Revelation. 13:16-17

...If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Revelation 14:9-11

The mark of the beast carries with it the greatest punishment, that God has ever pronounced upon man. It is the punishment of eternal separation from God. The mark of the beast must therefore be an issue of vital importance, and since God searches hearts and characters, the issue must pertain to man's relationship with God. It is surprising how many theories there are on the mark of the beast, ranging from computer-generated I.D.s to implants of computer chips, none of which have any bearing on man's character, personal relationship with God, or subjection to the government of God. The beast in some of these prophetic interpretations has likewise been likened to a monstrous individual or a giant computer somewhere, containing all information about individual citizens. All of these may be useful to the enemy in terms of monitoring human activities and controlling access to resources, but they cannot be the mark of the beast as the beast refers to the Papacy, which we established in our study of the two beasts of Revelation 13. If we are going to identify the mark of the beast, then we must do so within the framework of the great controversy and how it effects the plan of salvation. It is through sin (breaking God's law, 1 John 3:4) that separation between God and man came about, and this rebellion against His government has brought about the consequences which the human race is experiencing.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

The wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23

Justice demanded that the penalty for sin be paid, and Christ fulfilled these requirements by paying the price Himself. Through this sacrifice, grace could abound, and the broken relationship between man and God could be re-established. The renewed heart is one that

...keeps the commandments, and the faith of Jesus
Revelation 14:12

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house

of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Hebrews 8:10

A restored relationship implies a life that is once again in harmony with God's precepts. He who says that he knows God and keeps not His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:4). If separation is the consequence of sin, then the mark of the beast must also pertain to sin, as this is the only cause for separation. If sin is transgression of the law (1 John 3:4) then, as in the beginning, the final cause for ultimate separation must be sought in the breaking of God's law.

The beast and its number were identified in *The Two Beasts of Revelation 13*. Revelation 13 tells us that the mark would be enforced by the image of the beast. An image is something that has the attributes of the original, like a mirror image. The first beast of Revelation 13 (the Roman Catholic system) was a power that utilized state resources in order to enforce its doctrines even when these doctrines were contrary to the word of God. According to Revelation 13, the image is developed in the second beast, which was identified as the United States of America. The United States of America as the superpower in the world will likewise tend to use the power of the state to enforce religious doctrines even when contrary to the Scriptures. If the United States is to exercise all the authority which the papacy had and is to force all to worship the papacy, then it follows that they shall become like Rome was during the 1260-year period when she enforced her doctrines through the law and persecution. The United States will, however, enact papal laws and enforce their observance internationally. In becoming like Rome, by forming a union between church and state and using the power of the state to enforce such laws, the United States will make an image of the beast, a system that is like the original, or a reflection of the original. This religio-political giant will then enforce the mark of the first beast.

The manner in which the mark will be enforced, according to the Scriptures, is by first imposing economic sanctions on any organization or individual that would be unwilling to accept the mark.

And that no man might buy nor sell, save he that had

the mark, or the name of the beast or the number of his name . . . and his number is six hundred, three score and six. Revelation 13:17-18

A mark is something which distinguishes one thing from another. A mark of a religious power would be some outstanding belief that distinguishes it. The best way to determine the distinguishing mark of the Roman Catholic Church is to consult her teachings directly. Cardinal Gibbons claimed that Sunday-keeping was the mark of Roman Catholic authority.

*Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything, in matters spiritual, ecclesiastical and religious without her. This act is a **mark** of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.⁵*

The sun was a foremost god with heathendom . . . The sun has worshippers at this hour in Persia and other lands . . . There is in truth, something royal, kingly about the sun, making it a fit emblem of Jesus, the Sun of Justice. Hence the church in these countries would seem to have said, "Keep that old, Pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified." And thus, the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus.⁶

Sunday worship has no Scriptural authority, and rests solely upon tradition. Protestants have always claimed that the Bible and the Bible alone should be the standard for our religious beliefs. To meet this challenge, the Roman Catholic Church called the Council of Trent in 1545, and proclaimed that tradition stood above Scripture. The archbishop of Reggio, in a speech concerning this issue, maintained that proof for tradition superceding Scriptural authority could be found in the changeover from Sabbath to Sunday.

The Church has changed Sabbath into Sunday, not by

*the command of Christ but by its own authority.⁷
Tradition, not scripture, is the rock on which the
Church of Jesus Christ is built.⁸*

Protestants who observe Sunday as the day of worship are honoring the *mark* of Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholics claim:

The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic church, as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the protestant world.⁹

Sunday is our mark of authority...the church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact.¹⁰

Q: Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

A: Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her, she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.¹¹

You will tell me that Saturday was the Jewish Sabbath, but that the Christian Sabbath has been changed to Sunday. Changed! But by whom? Who has authority to change an express commandment of Almighty God? When God has spoken and said, 'Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day', who shall dare to say, nay, thou mayest work and do all manner of worldly business on the seventh day, but thou shalt keep holy the first day in its stead? This is a most important question which I know not how you can answer. You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the Bible and the Bible only; and yet, in so important a matter as the observance of one day in

*seven as a holy day, you go against the plain letter of the Bible, and put another day in the place of that which He has commanded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the ten commandments; you believe the other nine are still binding; who gave you authority to tamper with the fourth? If you are consistent with your own principle, if you really follow the Bible and the Bible only, you ought to be able to produce some portion of the New Testament in which this fourth commandment is expressly altered.*¹²

Why is the Sabbath commandment so relevant to God's law, and why is there such importance attached to the keeping of the particular day? The answer lies in the wording of the commandment which contains the seal of God.

The Sabbath commandment is not only the heart of the Ten Commandments, but it is the seal of the commandments. Remove it and the commandments have no authority or official seal.



A seal contains three specifications:

- the name of the writer of the law,
- his office, and
- the name of the territory over which he rules

Only the fourth commandment has these three items:

- Yhwh God (God's Name)
- Creator (His office, position)
- Heaven and earth (His territory).



Remove this commandment and any adherent of any religion could subscribe to the other nine. A change in the seal means a change of rulership; it implies a new authority with power to implement laws. Obedience to new laws ratified by the seal of authority entails submis-

sion to that authority. This was ever Satan's aim - to place his authority above that of the throne of God. By claiming authority as lawgiver and enforcing his seal in opposition to the seal of God, Satan shifts the position of authority from God to himself. Obedience to his seal (or mark) of authority means subjection to his government in direct opposition to that of God. This is the ultimate apostasy. When mankind submits to this spurious seal and openly confesses it by the proclamation of laws for the maintenance of Sunday, then man would have fully subjected himself to Satan's reign. Until such laws are enacted, freedom of choice is still possible. The mark of the beast only leads to ultimate separation from God once individuals are forced to choose whom they wish to obey. If they choose to obey God in this issue, then the penalty is persecution. If they choose to obey the earthly authorities, then the penalty is separation from God. All will have to make this choice.

Throughout the Scriptures, the Sabbath of God is treated with the utmost solemnity.

And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. Ezekiel 20:20

For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Matthew 5:18

Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Matthew 15:3

But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Matthew 15:9

Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. Matthew 15:13

Choose you this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord be God, follow Him. Joshua 24:15

Truth Matters

The Church of Rome claims that Sunday is her mark of authority. Moreover, she claims that it is her right to legislate moral issues and that governments should subscribe to her directives. This is not only a right which she claimed for herself during the middle ages, but is a right which she claims for herself today. The official *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, sanctioned by Pope John Paul II, has this to say on the issue:

*The Church, the pillar and bulwark of the truth, has received this solemn command of Christ from the apostles to announce the saving truth....To the Church belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles, including those pertaining to the social order, and to make judgments on any human affairs to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls.*¹³

According to this Catechism, moral issues are dictated by the Ten Commandments, but not the Ten Commandments as found in the Bible, but the Ten Commandments as defined by Augustine, the Catholic Church father.

*Ever since St. Augustine, the Ten Commandments have occupied a predominant place in the catechesis of baptismal candidates and the faithful. ... The catechisms of the Church have often expounded Christian morality by following the order of the Ten Commandments. The division and numbering of the Commandments have varied in the course of history. The present catechism follows the division of the Commandments established by St. Augustine, which has become traditional in the Catholic Church.*¹⁴

What an amazing confession! Not the Ten Commandments as they occur in the Bible, but as defined by Augustine form the basis for Catholic morality. Since Sunday is also the mark of the Catholic Church's authority, it follows that this mark is in direct opposition to the declared will of God and that compromise on this issue is thus not

possible. Sunday worship can be defended only on Catholic principles. The Catholic Church itself has this to say on the issue:

*Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles... From the beginning to the end of Scripture there is not a single passage, which warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first.*¹⁵

*The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church, as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the protestant world.*¹⁶

*If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath Day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.*¹⁷

*Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the Roman [Catholic] Church, has no good reasons for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath.*¹⁸

*Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.*¹⁹

One might think that some of these statements are dated, and that Rome would not pursue the issue as vigorously in our age. If, however, the enforcing of the mark of the beast is to become a reality, then one would expect this controversy to escalate and one could expect calls for legislation enforcing the maintenance of Sunday. This is precisely what John Paul II did just prior to the new millennium. Moreover, the Church has introduced strict obedience laws into its canon requiring

total submission to the Pope in matters of doctrine. Strangely, words such as *heretic* and *punishment*, used in these Papal letters for dissenters, remind one of the persecutions in the time of the Inquisition. In his apostolic letter on Sunday sanctity, the Pope repeatedly asks for Sunday legislation to enforce its observance:

The day of rest 64.Only in the fourth century did the civil law of the Roman Empire recognize the weekly recurrence, determining that on “the day of the sun” the judges, the people of the cities and the various trade corporations would not work. (107) Christians rejoiced to see thus removed the obstacles which until then had sometimes made observance of the Lord’s Day heroic. They could now devote themselves to prayer in common without hindrance. (108)

It would therefore be wrong to see in this legislation of the rhythm of the week a mere historical circumstance with no special significance for the Church and which she could simply set aside. Even after the fall of the Empire, the Councils did not cease to insist upon the arrangements regarding Sunday rest...

When, through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, (109) the Church has had in mind above all the work of servants and workers, certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared to the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord’s Day holy. In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke of Sunday rest as a worker’s right which the State must guarantee..... ***Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy.***²⁰

This papal letter prompted the *Sunday Times* of London to write: “Pope

launches crusade to save Sunday.”5-7-1998

Just a few days after issuing the directive on the maintenance of Sunday, on 18 May 1998, the Vatican issued its apostolic letter, AD TUENDAM FIDEM by which certain norms are inserted into the Code of Canon Law and into the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, which makes some strong statements with regard to submission to the Pope on issues of doctrine.

*Can. 1436 § 1. Whoever denies or places in doubt any truth that must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or repudiates the Christian faith as a whole, and does not come to his senses after having been legitimately warned, is to be punished as a **heretic** or as an apostate by major excommunication; a member of the clergy, furthermore, can be **punished** by other penalties, not excluding deposition.*

*§ 2. Aside from such cases, whosoever rejects a doctrine proposed, as definitively to be held, by the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops exercising their authentic Magisterium, or else accepts a doctrine condemned by them as erroneous, and does not come to his senses after having been legitimately warned, is to be **punished by an appropriate penalty.***

5. We order that everything decreed by Us in this Apostolic Letter motu proprio be firm and valid and we command that it be inserted into the universal law of the Catholic Church that is, into the Code of Canon Law and into the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, respectively exactly as set forth above, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. Given at Rome, St. Peter's, 18 May 1998, in the twentieth year of Our Pontificate.²¹

Whoever denies or places in doubt any truth that must be believed with divine and catholic faith will be branded a heretic? Punished by an appropriate penalty? That certainly sounds ominous and reminds one of the days when heretics received a penalty appropriate to their transgression. That penalty, of course, was death. The Bible says that

history will repeat itself and that just as refusal to observe Sunday led to economic measures and eventually death in the Middle Ages, the same will happen just before the close of probation. However, this time the decree will be universal and the whole world will have to choose between allegiance to God or allegiance to man. Then, according to Daniel and John, will follow a time of trouble as never before.

Referring to the destruction of Jerusalem and the events to occur just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, Jesus warned of the abomination that would cause desolation. What Jesus and Daniel spoke of ties in with what John the Revelator saw. The destruction of Jerusalem serves as a type of what will happen in the whole world, and if we heed the warnings of the Bible, then God will protect His faithful people according to His promises.

So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation’, spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand.
Matthew 24:15

What is this ‘abomination’ that causes desolation? In Luke 21:20 we find the answer.

When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Luke 21:20

This parallel text tells us that the Roman legions were referred to as the abomination that makes desolate. Pagan Rome was thus called an abomination, and we know that the Prince of Peace was crucified by this power. Moreover, they also persecuted God’s people and mercilessly tried to exterminate them off the face of the earth. Their religion was also an abomination. Not only did they worship the emperor, but they also forced upon the world a false day of worship in 321 A.D. The Romans had a sacerdotal system, or priesthood, where priests exercised supernatural powers, which the Bible also calls an abomination.

A further reason for referring to Rome as the abomination that makes desolate is the idolatrous nature of their religion. They worshipped

a pantheon of gods among which the female goddess played a prominent part. The Roman goddess Diana, whom the Greeks called Artemis, was worshipped as the main goddess in the pantheon of Roman goddesses, and 2 Kings 23:13 and Isaiah 44:19 call idol worship an abomination.

Since Jesus is referring to two time periods in the history of His people, the term “abomination that causes desolation” cannot only apply to pagan Rome, but must also apply to papal Rome, who will repeat the atrocities at the end of time. In other words, when Jesus refers to pagan Rome who persecuted God’s people and destroyed literal Jerusalem, He speaks of a type of which papal Rome is the antitype. Papal Rome is thus also an abominable system - a false religion that persecutes spiritual Jerusalem, God’s worldwide people. Like the emperor’s of old, the Pope possesses ecclesiastical as well as secular powers and the pantheon of gods is replaced by Mary and the saints, who all have the capacity to intercede on man’s behalf.

To understand the antitypical fulfilment of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24, it is necessary to study the type, the literal destruction of Jerusalem when the Roman armies besieged Jerusalem. Historians tell us that Cestius Gallus arrived at Jerusalem in October 66 A.D. He destroyed a section of the wall that protected the city, but after the Jewish defenders fled to the confines of the temple, Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that for no reason whatsoever, he suddenly withdrew from the city and headed back to Antioch. His decision however, was disastrous, as Jewish resistance fighters manning the ridges above the northbound mountain road succeeded in killing almost six thousand Romans. This respite gave the Christians who heeded the words of Jesus the opportunity to flee from Jerusalem.

So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation’, spoken of through the prophet Daniel - let the reader understand - then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no-one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no-one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

Matthew 24:15-20 NIV

Why did Jesus here mention the winter and the Sabbath? Everything that Jesus said was important, and so we can assume that the Sabbath issue will be prominent at the end of time. We too will have to flee from the coming persecution of Rome, the “abomination that desolates.”

The Sabbath is the symbol of rest in His completed work on Calvary, and history tells us that God answered the prayers of those Christians who lived in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. They fled Jerusalem in November, just before winter and the day was a Wednesday. They founded a colony at Pella, south east of sea of Galilee, and not one of those early Christians who accepted the prophetic word of Jesus died. In the same way, those living at the end of time, when the mark of the beast is promulgated, will have the opportunity to flee to solitary places, as did those early Christians in Jerusalem. God promises protection during these times.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

Isaiah 26:20

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Psalm 91:7-8

If we ignore the prophecies, we will eventually perish as the disobedient Jews perished in the year 70 A.D. In the spring of that year, thousands of Jews flocked to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. Suddenly the city was surrounded by the Romans who came to avenge their 66 A.D. defeat. The inscriptions on the Titus arch in Rome tell us that Titus besieged the city after the Jews had gathered inside Jerusalem. As the siege progressed, disease, filth, and famine took their toll, and amid the panic, three gangster groups added to the horror by terrorizing their fellow Jews and competing viciously for control of the dwindling supplies. The historian Josephus even records that mothers ate their babies.

In spite of Titus' orders to preserve the temple, the beautiful temple complex was burned down and destroyed just as Jesus had predicted. Not one stone was left upon another because, in their search for molten gold, the Roman soldiers overturned every single stone. All that is left of the original Jerusalem from the time of Christ is the Wailing Wall, which formed part of the outer court of the temple.

Two hundred fifty thousand Jews perished in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. After the Romans captured the city, they sacrificed pigs on the temple site to show their contempt for the Jews and also worshipped their heathen Roman banners. Ninety-seven thousand men, women and children were taken prisoner and many others were sent to Egypt and other countries as slaves. Moses had predicted the results of disobedience.

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Deuteronomy 28:15

And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. Deuteronomy 28:52-53

God told His people exactly what blessings they would enjoy should they obey and what curses they would experience if they should disobey. The choice was theirs. God's law is not designed as a means of punishing the disobedient, but the consequences of disobedience are self-inflicted. God does not ask us to keep His law in order to be saved, but rather the law is given to those who are redeemed to protect them from harm. Obedience to God's law is an expression of love; it is the

means whereby we develop a friendship with Him.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14:15

What Jesus told those early disciples, He is also telling us. Rome will once again persecute God's people and we should read the signs of the times which tell us that the second coming of Jesus is nearer than ever before. When we study the prophetic word, we discover where we are in the stream of time. It is later than we think. It is time for us to wake up from our slumber and get ready for the second coming of Jesus.

The mark of the beast is the ultimate test of obedience. It will determine who will remain faithful to the precepts of Christ at all costs and who will fall under the banner of Satan. The keeping of the Sabbath is the greatest signal to the world that we believe that God is our Creator and our Redeemer. It is the signal that we acknowledge His authority and His authority alone in our lives, in terms of religious matters. In our time, anyone upholding the seventh-day Sabbath will be subject to ridicule. The question might well be asked, "How can one keep the seventh-day Sabbath commemorating a six-day creation when the rest of the world adheres to evolutionary principles?" The question may also be asked how the whole world can be wrong, particularly in the light of miraculous signs among Sunday adherents, and only a few so-called fanatics be right. It will take courage to stand on God's side. The issue is not a day. The issue is the acknowledgement of the entire government of God, for which the day is merely a sign.

...If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they shall have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Revelation 14:9-11

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9

THE WINE OF BABYLON

The World Apostate Religion

The name Babylon is derived from BAB-ILU – "the portal of the gods", and in a sense, it thus portrays a means of access to the gods that is contrary to God's prescribed plan of salvation. Access is granted through the system and not by faith in Jesus Christ. It is a system where salvation by works replaces salvation by faith. To add to the confusion (which is also implied in the name Babylon), the Babylonians believed in a pantheon of gods, thus providing more than one intercessor, which makes Jesus' ministry non-effectual.

The Babylonian system of worship has ever been a snare to God's people, as it is more in tune with human nature to rely on salvation by works than on salvation by grace. From the very beginning, these two systems of worship have been in confrontation with each other. The story of Cain and Abel illustrates this point. Abel listened to the divine directive and brought a lamb without blemish (symbol of Jesus Christ) as an offering, but Cain brought the fruits of his labor. When the offering of Abel was accepted by God, the anger of Cain was aroused and ever since, this first confrontation between these two systems of worship - the fires of religious intolerance and persecution - have been burning on this planet.

Ancient Babylon serves as a type of a much greater end-time confederacy of religious apostasy and intolerance that would seek to control conscience before the close of earth's history. Ancient Babylon, according to the Scriptures, was the pride of the Chaldeans. It was larger and more impressive than any of the ancient cities and it was the centre of ancient worship. Babylon reached the height of its power and glory under Nebuchadnezzar, and ancient inscriptions on clay tablets tell the story of how his father (Nabopolassar) and he restored the ancient tower of Babel which epitomized salvation by self:

At the time Marduk commanded me to build the tower of Babel, which had become weakened by time and fallen into disrepair; he commanded me to ground its base securely on the breast of the underworld, whereas its pinnacles should strain towards the skies.
Nabopolassar

To raise up the top of the E-temen-an-ki that it may rival heaven, I laid my hand. Nebuchadnezzar

No wonder that God predicted that this great city would fall never to be inhabited again. Approximately 300 years before its destruction by Xerxes, the prophet Isaiah predicted:

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.
Isaiah 13:19-20

In spite of this prophecy, there have been attempts to rebuild Babylon. Alexander the Great tried to restore the Tower of Babel to its original glory and make the city his capital in 330 BC, but before he could begin, he died. In modern history, Saddam Hussein of Iraq was also restoring Babylon, a work he began in the 80's. He used approximately

60 million bricks in the process and had his name engraved every three meters so that posterity would remember him. However, he seems to have read the prophecies of Isaiah, as his restorations are not an attempt to re-inhabit the city because he had his palace built on the other side of the Euphrates River. Babylon, the great city, referred to in the book of Revelation, can thus not refer to literal Babylon, as that was never to be inhabited again. Rather, it refers to anti-typical Babylon, which must be a much greater fulfilment of all that ancient Babylon stood for. Moreover, just as ancient Babylon came to a fall, so the end-time confederacy will also come to a fall because, as in ancient times, she made all the people drink of the wine of her false doctrines.

The second angel's message in Revelation 14:8 reads:

And there followed another angel saying, 'Babylon is fallen is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'

In order to understand this message, it is essential that we identify modern Babylon. Numerous verses in the book of Revelation warn against Babylon and admonish God's people to come out of Babylon. Moreover, the message in Revelation 14:8 is repeated in Revelation 18:2 with a much stronger admonition reflecting the spiritual decay of the system.

And he cried mightily with a strong voice saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'

The unclean and hateful birds must be a reference to a counterfeit Holy Spirit that would power the system and lead people to believe that they are working with the power of God when it is really a deception masquerading as truth. In verse 4, John hears another voice from heaven saying:

Come out of her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.
Revelation 18:4

God would not admonish His people to come out of Babylon if it were impossible for them to identify Babylon. During the early Christian centuries, Jewish and Christian literature referred to the city of Rome as Babylon. 1 Peter 5:13 also refers to Rome as Babylon, since Peter wrote these words whilst in Rome, and literal Babylon no longer existed.

The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

1 Peter 5:13

Roman Catholics have also acknowledged this association:

"Babylon," from which Peter addresses his first Epistle, is understood by learned annotators, Protestant and Catholic, to refer to Rome - the word Babylon being symbolic of the corruption then prevailing in the city of the Caesars.¹

Moreover, the description given in the book of Revelation clearly identifies the attributes of the Church of Rome, which are synonymous with those of Babylon. Because of the apostasy of the Church of Rome, most Protestants of the Reformation and Post-Reformation era referred to it as spiritual Babylon, the great enemy of God's people. The woman that rides the beast in Revelation 17 also has all the identifying features of Rome. In fact, Rome applies the very symbolism employed in this chapter to itself.

And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Revelation 17:4-5

In the Bible the symbol of a woman represents the church.

I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman. Jeremiah 6:2

Isaiah the prophet extends the symbol of a woman to that of a bride. The pure bride represents the pure church:

As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. Isaiah 62:5

Hosea describes the union of God and His people in the following way:

I will betroth thee unto me for ever. Hosea 2:19

Turning to the New Testament the same symbolism is employed:

...for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (See also Ephesians 5:22-25; Revelation 19:7-8)

Babylon is described in Revelation 17:5 as the “**mother of harlots**” (apostate religious systems or churches), “**Mystery**” and the “**abominations of the earth**”. Obviously if God’s people are the chaste woman faithful to her husband, then Babylon is the opposite of this symbol or that system of worship which is unfaithful to God, and has a mystery religion and teaches and practices abominations. The harlot daughters of Rome must represent those churches that follow her false teachings and thus subject themselves to her rule, or even worse, officially accept the Roman leadership as authoritative.

Does Rome claim to be the mother of all the churches? Yes, indeed she does. At the entrance of St. John Lateran church in Rome there is a huge Latin inscription (“SACROS LATERAN ECCLES OMNIVM VRBIS ET ORBIS ECCLESiarVM MATER ET CAPVT”) which translated into English reads:

Sacred Lateran Church. Church mother and head of all the churches of the city and the world.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the Church:

*The Church, Mother and Teacher.*²

In September 2000, The Vatican issued a statement titled “Dominus Iesus,” in which Cardinal Ratzinger said:

*It must be always clear that the one, holy, catholic and apostolic universal church is not the sister, but the mother of all the churches.*³

The *Washington Post* had this to say on the statement:

*A new Vatican dictum issued today declares that individuals can attain full salvation from earthly sin only through the spiritual grace of the Catholic Church and that other faiths—including Protestant Christian ones—have defects that place their followers in a “gravely deficient situation” in seeking salvation. The goal, according to a top Vatican official, is to combat the “so-called theology of religious pluralism,” which suggests that Catholics are on a par in God’s eyes with, say, Jews, Muslims or Hindus.*⁴

Rome, therefore, is the one institution on earth that claims the title of “Mother,” but what about the other attributes described in Revelation 17? She is called a great city, a woman with a golden cup. Her colours are crimson and purple. She is decked with gold and precious stones, she sits on seven hills, and on her forehead is written mystery.

The word “Vatican” literally means “Divining Serpent,” and is derived from Vatis=Diviner and Can=Serpent. Vatican City and St. Peter’s Basilica were built on the ancient pagan site called in Latin vaticanus mons or vaticanus collis, which means *hill or mountain of prophecy*. Coins minted in Vatican City often bear the inscription

“CITTÁ DEL VATICANO”, which means *City of Prophecy*. The Church of Rome thus applies the title of “City” to its structure and as we shall see, lays claim to all the other attributes as well. In the coin shown here, minted in 1963, Pope Paul VI is shown together with his title Pontifex Maximus. The inscription on the reverse side reads “CITTÁ DEL VATICANO.” The full title of the Vatican State is “STATO DELLA CITTÁ DEL VATICANO” which is the combination of Church and State. There is also a woman on the reverse side of the coin, and at her feet is her title, FIDES, which means *faith*. This woman is symbolic of the Roman Catholic faith, or Roman Catholic Church, which claims power over all governments on earth.

*And the woman which thou sawest is that great city,
which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

Revelation 17:18

Figure 9.1



Does Rome claim to control all governments on earth? She certainly does. The Jesuit oath (as recorded in the congressional Record of the United States of America (*House Bill 523, 1913*)) includes the following statement:

... by the virtue of the keys binding and loosing, given to his Holiness by my Saviour, Jesus Christ, he has power to depose heretical kings, princes, states, commonwealths and governments, all being illegal without his sacred confirmation, and they may be safely destroyed.

The woman (Fides) with the golden chalice or cup in the hand is a common symbol in Roman Catholic sculptures and paintings and no other Christian denomination has depicted itself in this manner. According to Revelation 17, the cup is full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication, which represent apostate doctrine and dogma, which she has made all the nations drink. These unbiblical doctrines were exposed by the reformers during the Reformation, but sadly, the protestant churches are today willing to set aside their doctrinal differences with Rome in order to achieve Christian unity. However, unity, which is achieved by sacrificing truth, stands on a foundation of sand and will be swept away in times of tempest. Let us therefore briefly list the main doctrines challenged by the reformers and reconfirmed by Rome during the Council of Trent. This Council was called by Pope Paul III between 1545-1563 and met in three sessions with Protestants present at the second meeting.

DOCTRINES REAFFIRMED: transubstantiation, justification by faith and works, the medieval mass was upheld, the seven sacraments were confirmed, celibacy was maintained, the doctrine of purgatory was maintained, indulgences were reaffirmed, papal power was increased by giving the pope the authority to enforce the decrees of the Council and requiring church officials to promise him obedience.⁵

Transubstantiation is the doctrine, which claims that Jesus is offered every time the mass is held:

Marvellous dignity of the priests, in their hands as in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary the Son of God becomes incarnate. Behold, the power of the priest! The tongue of the priest makes God from a morsel of bread, it is more than creating the world.⁶

Canon 1: If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with soul and

divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and consequently the whole Christ, but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or a figure or force, let him be anathema.⁷

The Bible, however clearly states:

Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy. Hebrews 10:14 NIV

Grace can only be sought in the merits of Christ and **sacraments** cannot contribute to one's salvation. If by one sacrifice Christ justifies the sinner who comes to Him in repentance, then it also follows that the doctrine of purgatory has no Biblical basis. In fact, Catholic doctrine completely negates the ministry of Christ and replaces it with salvation by the system. The Pope becomes the supreme leader, the priest becomes the one who forgives transgression, and Mary becomes the mediator between man and God. Following are some Catholic statements to illustrate this point.

The priest has the power of the keys or the power of delivering sinners from hell, of making them worthy of paradise and of changing them from slaves of Satan into children of God. And God himself is obligated to abide by the judgement of his priests and either not to pardon or to pardon.⁸

*The Purification, or **Purgatory**: 1030 All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter heaven.⁹*

The Catholic Church has elevated **Mary** to the level of mediator, advocate and co-redeemer of man in clear and direct contradiction of the Scriptures. In 1854, Pope Pius IX declared Mary 'immaculate', and in 1951, Pope Pius XII defined and enforced the doctrine of the Bodily Assumption of Mary, thus placing Mary in a position to act as

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mediator and supporting the long list of claims made by Catholic saints over time.

The sinner that ventures directly to Christ may come with dread and apprehension of his wrath; but let him only employ the mediation of the Virgin with her Son and she has only to show that Son the breasts that gave him suck and his wrath will immediately be appeased.¹⁰

Statements on Mary by Catholic saints:

...He falls and is lost who has not recourse to Mary. Mary is called the gate of heaven because no one can enter that blessed kingdom without passing through her. The way to salvation is open to none otherwise than through Mary.... The salvation of all depends on their being favoured and protected by Mary. He who is protected by Mary will be saved: he who is not will be lost...Our salvation depends on thee...God will not save us without the intercession of Mary...¹¹

Mary takes the place of Jesus in Catholic teaching. Instead of the faithful looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, they look to Mary. In Mary they find access to God, in her the Church is all holy. In her they learn obedience to God and the list goes on and on. Not one of these doctrines can be supported by Scripture. In fact, the Scriptures teach the exact opposite. Mary takes the place of God and she herself is treated like a goddess, a teaching to which the Catholic Church is not averse if we study even her modern statements on this issue. Article 829 of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

But while in the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle, the faithful still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary: in her, the Church is already the "all-holy."

Mary – Eschatological Icon of the Church. Article 972, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

After speaking of the Church, her origin, mission and destiny, we can find no better way to conclude than by looking to Mary. In her we contemplate what the Church already is in her mystery on her own 'pilgrimage of faith', and with her she will be in the homeland at the end of her journey. There 'in the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity,' 'in the communion of all the saints,' the Church is awaited by the one she venerates as Mother of her Lord and as her own mother. In the meantime the Mother, in the glory, which she possesses in body and soul in heaven, is the image and the beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise she shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God.

As found in the book *Thunder of Justice*, titles employed for Mary in our age include:

Prophetess Of These Last Times, The Immaculate Conception, Mother Of The Church, Mary As The New Eve, Queen Of Heaven and Earth/Queen of Peace, The Assumption, Queen of the Holy Rosary, Queen and Mother of Families, Mary as Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate, Our Lady of all Nations, Ark of the New Covenant, Mother of the Second Advent.

The title Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate in particular should raise serious objections as it so obviously contradicts the plainest teachings of Scripture. The Bible clearly teaches that there is but one Redeemer, Mediator and Advocate for the people of God—the man Christ Jesus.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people. Luke 1:68

Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Isaiah 49:7

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 2:1

Yet, in spite of this, the Catholic Church is willing to accept Mary in the place of Jesus Christ, thus depriving Christ of His mediatorial role. In the book *The Thunder of Justice* that discusses the role and visionary accounts of Mary, the following statement is found, which acknowledges the Church's sanction of this title at the highest level:

The Lady of All Nations predicted a 'final Marian dogma' proclaiming Our Lady 'Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate,' which would sum up and explain Marian theology, and would 'crown' Our Lady. These apparitions are under investigation by the Church as of this writing. Cardinal Ratzinger reportedly has written the visionary that there are no theological barriers to the possible proclamation of the dogma. p.53-54

Even more surprising is the willingness of the Catholic Church to teach Mary to the extreme and to acknowledge Mary as goddess and part of the Godhead. This teaching is already covertly in place and is, in effect, nothing other than pagan goddess worship. In this regard,

The Kronen Zeitung, 30.8.97, published an article in Germany with the headline: "Millions of US-Catholics want a 'godly' Virgin Mary." According to this article and a reference to *Newsweek*, behind the scenes negotiations with the Vatican to this effect have been under way, and Cardinal John O'Connor and Pope John Paul II are, according to the article, not averse to the idea.

Roman Catholic teachings seem determined to minimize the role of Jesus in the salvation of souls and, at best, to place Him on a par with any of the founders of the religious systems of the world. Either Jesus is God and, as such, the only one in heaven and earth that can save us, or He is not. Compromise on this issue is impossible no matter how much one bends the rules to suit the aspirations of all groups. The Bible clearly states that:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12

In spite of this, in order to achieve the objective of religious unity, the Catholic Church teaches otherwise. After Vatican II the Jesuit Karl Rahner was entrusted with the task of reconciling all the churches and religions with Rome under the pretext that salvation could be found in all confessions provided that they acknowledge the supremacy of Rome. In order to achieve this objective, the role of Christ would have to be minimized. This new apostate teaching was soon introduced into the world's institutes of higher education, and the Catholic theologians and scholars propagated the idea with vigor. Paul Knitter, Professor of Theology at Xavier University and erstwhile student of Karl Rahner at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, wrote a book titled *No Other Name? A critical survey of Christian attitudes toward world religions* in which he propagates the idea that indeed Jesus Christ is not the only way to salvation. Leonard Swidler in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* and editor of the book writes:

Paul Knitter faces honestly the conundrum of what the committed Christian believer does theologically in the face of growing evidence, scholarly and from personal

encounter, that there are other ways of leading a full, authentic human life, than the Christian way. Can a person be 'saved,' that is, come to live a truly human life, by some other name than that of Jesus Christ? Knitter's answer is that one can be 'saved' by 'some other name,' and then he proceeds to show how this affirmation can be squared theologically with full Christian commitment. This is first-rate creative theology. It is theology done the only way it can be done today: In dialogue with other world religions and with one's own Christian tradition. ...

This is indeed creative theology, but it is not Biblical theology. Notice how the definition of salvation has been changed to: "live a truly human life" before one can twist the Scriptures sufficiently to accommodate all world views so that the theology of ecumenism can be conducted in: "the only way it can be done today."

Many Catholic doctrines are supported by the writings of the Gnostics and by the **Apocrypha** (The Apocrypha are the books which the Catholic church consider canonical and which are included in Catholic Bibles. They are based on mysticism and supposedly contain the secret doctrines (hidden things) which are opened to the enlightened or illuminated ones.) Regarding the *Apocrypha*, The Council of Trent decreed:

Whoever shall not receive as sacred and canonical all these books and every part of them, as they are commonly read in the Catholic Church, and are contained in the old Vulgate Latin edition, or shall knowingly and deliberately despise the aforesaid traditions, let him be accursed. - Council of Trent fourth session.

These writings were never considered part of the Canon, as they clearly contradict the Scriptures as can be seen in the following few examples:

Bewitching Art:

Tobias 6:4-8 ... *Open the fish, and take the heart and*

liver and the gall.....if a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall no more be vexed. As for the gall, it is good to anoint a man that hath witness in his eyes, and he shall be healed.

The **Biblical rebuke** to this statement is found in Mark 16:17 and Acts 16:18:

And signs will follow to those believing these things: in My name they will cast out demons. Mark 16:17

... But being distressed, and turning to the demonic spirit, Paul said, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her! And it came out in that hour. Acts 16:18

Salvation by Works:

Tobias 12:9 For alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin.

Biblical rebuke: *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. 1 Peter 1:18-19*

Prayer for Dead:

2 Maccabees 12:43-46, ...For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.... Whereupon he made reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin.

Biblical rebuke: *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and*

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

Space does not allow us an exhaustive discussion on the numerous translation differences between various Bibles, but the fact is that those translations that lean heavily on Catholic documents are highly problematic in some of their renditions. Some examples from the Vulgate Bible and translations based on the Vulgate pave the way for relic worship and question the level of God's inspiration.

Errors in the VULGATE:

2 Tim. 3:16 - *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (KJV)*
Douay version - *All Scripture inspired of God is profitable.*

Heb. 11:21 - *Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff. (KJV)*
Vulgate - *Jacob adored the top of his rod.*

Rev. 22:14 - *Blessed are they that do his commandments. (KJV)*
Translated from Codex Vaticanus - *Blessed are they that wash their robes.*

To counter the stand of the Reformers, the Catholic Church launched the Counter Reformation, spearheaded by the Jesuit Order. The doctrines of **Preterism** and **Futurism**, published in 1585 by Alcasar and Ribera, two Jesuit priests, redefined the Reformation position on the Antichrist and shifted the emphasis away from the Papacy to the Greek king Antiochus Epiphanus IV and to some future tyrant who would persecute the Jews in the future. The doctrines of **Higher Criticism**, started by the Catholic theologians Richard Simon and Dr. Alexander Geddes in 1678, ripped the heart out of the Scriptures and called into question the plainest teachings on history and origins. The writings of Moses were relegated to the realms of mythology, and faith was thrown down to the ground. Jesus had a strong rebuke for those who chose to question the validity of Scripture.

*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me,
for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings,*

how shall ye believe my words? John 5:46-47

The Catholic Church has officially negated the **creation account of the Bible** and relegated it to the trash heap. *The Sunday Times*, December 6, 1987, in an article by Nic van Oudtshoorn, Sidney, carries the caption: "Genesis is 'Nonsense' ... The Catholic Church has officially debunked a literal interpretation of the Creation according to Genesis as "utter nonsense." The official declaration of this teaching by Pope John Paul II was heralded in the international press, and *Time Magazine* carried the headline "Vatican Thinking Evolves... The Pope gives his blessing to natural selection though man's soul remains beyond science's reach." Even more astounding was the statement made by the Jesuit, Consolmagno, who in an interview with the magazine *Elm Street* in 1999 in their lead article "And Heaven and Nature Sing," responded to the question: "Aren't you guys all creationists?" by stating that creationism is "a 19th-century heresy. The ancient Church fathers knew better than to interpret the Bible that way."

The Catholic Church has, in the past, tried to prohibit the reading and distribution of the Word of God. In fact, the Scriptures were listed under the "Index of Prohibited Books" by Pope Paul IV in 1599 and Archbishop Adolphus in 1462 broke up the printing establishments of Gutenberg and Schoeffer in order to prevent their circulation.¹²

When banning the Bible could not quench the Word, then the Word was made void through the doctrines of higher criticism or by relying on the authority of "**Tradition**" over Scripture. Tradition is used to cover up the myriads of teachings that are in direct opposition to the plain "thus sayeth the Lord." Rome has not changed this stance, since even after Vatican II, she states:

The fact that Scripture and Tradition belong together accounts for two rules that direct the way the Church approaches God's revelation. The first of these rules is stated very simply by Vatican II in these words: It follows from what has been said that the Church does not draw its knowledge of all that God has revealed from holy Scripture alone. That is why both (Tradition and Scripture) must be accepted and respected with equal affection and honour ... Secondly, the unbreak-

*able bond between Scripture and Tradition accounts for the fact that for Catholics, Tradition is the context within which the Scriptures are interpreted, just as Tradition itself has to be understood and lived with reference to Scripture.*¹³

Papal infallibility and absolute authority is a further issue questioned by the Reformers. Father Bonaventure Hinwood, spokesman for the Catholic Church confirms this doctrine as follows:

...It is obvious that the Church cannot fall into error in carrying out this service towards divine revelation. But if the Pope is the centre and guarantee of this unity, and if he enjoys full authority in matters of faith and morals, then it follows that he, too, cannot lead the Church into error in matters concerning divine revelation. ...

*There is only one body that carries the supreme apostolic authority in the church, and that is the College of Bishops in union with its head, the Pope. Thus whenever the Pope makes full use of his power as visible head of the Church, he acts as head of the Apostolic College. This is why Vatican I insisted that when the Pope exercises his supreme teaching authority, he is protected from error by that same infallibility which Christ willed for His Church. The Cardinals designate the new Pope. On the new Pope's acceptance of this designation, he receives directly from Christ all the power necessary for the exercise of the papal ministry. These include the charisma of infallibility.*¹⁴

That is akin to making the Pope God, which is indeed a claim that the popes have made, and being infallible, it cannot be rescinded. Pope Boniface VIII in his BULL UNAM SANCTAM stated:

The Roman Pontiff judges all men, but is judged by no one. We declare, assert, define and pronounce: To be subject to the Roman Pontiff is to every creature alto-

gether necessary for salvation...that which was spoken of Christ "thou has subdued all things under his feet" may well seem verified of me...I have the authority of the King of kings. I am all and above all so that God himself and I, the vicar of God, have but one consistency, and I am able to do all that God can do. What therefore, can you make of me but God?

When reading statements such as these, the warning in the Bible comes to mind:

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for [that day will not come] until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.
2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

In spite of this warning, many are drinking deeply of the wine of Babylon. The false teachings of Rome have permeated through the religious systems of the world and Protestant churches are often in the forefront of not only accepting these teaching, but propagating them in their own seminaries and churches. For instance, virtually the entire Christian world has accepted either Preterism, the doctrine that the antichrist has come, or Futurism, the doctrine that he still is to come. The doctrine on the **immortality of the soul** is one of the most misleading doctrines of all, which has been promulgated by Rome. This doctrine has opened the floodgates for spurious doctrines to enter the church, and has opened the way for **Spiritism** and false manifestations whereby the inhabitants of the world are to be deceived in the last days (see chapter *The Mystic Realm of Death*). By accepting these teachings, or by being willing to compromise on them, and even worse, to accept papal primacy, Protestantism has fallen and become part of Babylon.

There was a time when Protestantism had the courage to say that the little horn of Daniel 7 is the papacy, the antichrist. They even hewed it in stone above the portals of the Rathaus in Nürnberg (see

figures 4.4 & 4.5 on p.108), but today they are silent. There was a time when Protestants believed that God created the earth in six literal days, but they have changed and adopted the theory of evolution like Rome. The majority of Protestant churches have rejected the flood and creation accounts as recorded in the first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis, calling them myths. When the truth of God's holy Sabbath was brought to the Protestant world and its leaders, they rejected it and clung to the tradition of Sunday worship, a tradition of the Catholic Church. And through the ages, the churches of the world kept rejecting the truth of God's Sabbath. Nevertheless, in spite of the rejection of truth by the formal churches, God has a special invitation for His honest, sincere children in Babylon. God does not want these sincere and honest children to remain in this fallen state of Babylon, and so He appeals to them in Revelation 18:4 "...Come out of her, my people, so that you will not receive any of her plagues."

The final confederacy of Babylon under the leadership of the Pope will consist of three components, namely the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. (Revelation 16:13,19)

*And the great city was divided into **three parts**, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*
Revelation 16:19

*And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the **dragon**, and out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.* Revelation 16:13

Ancient Babylon served as a type of the modern Babylon. Just as the warning to separate from typical Babylon, so the warning will be repeated at the end of time to anti-typical Babylon:

Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Jeremiah 51:6-7

A rule in typology is that the antitype is always greater than the type. For example, the lamb in the sacrificial system was a type of Jesus, so Jesus is the great antitype (in the place of the type). Obviously Jesus represents the fulfilment of the lamb that was slain; He is much greater than the lamb, and since He fulfils the promise of redemption typified by the lamb, the sacrificial system ended with Jesus. In the same way, Jerusalem was a type of the New Jerusalem, the home of all the redeemed of all ages. Some modern interpretations tend to break this rule by equating the antitype with the literal type. For example, they are waiting for literal Jerusalem to become the capital of the Lord's kingdom, when the Bible clearly states that the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven dressed as a bride, and that it will be a city not built by man, but by God (Revelation 21:2,10). In the same way, spiritual Babylon cannot find its fulfilment in the ancient ruins of Babylon, even if the city should be restored, but represents the greater worldwide apostasy that exists at the end of time. The three components of Babylon represent Satan's counterfeit system of worship and his counterfeit trinity.

The dragon is identified as Satan, and represents the hidden God, a counterfeit of God the Father. His workings amongst men are in the disguised non-visible form, and his power is made manifest through spiritualism in all its forms. Demonic forces are obviously behind all three components of Babylon, but in spiritualism, Satan conceals himself. The modern new age movement is one of the manifestations of the dragon component. The beast represents the false son. It is the counterfeit of Jesus Christ. The beast we have already identified as Roman Catholicism, which makes the claim of being the representative of Christ on earth. Just as Christ received a mortal wound at the cross, so the beast received a mortal wound yet lived. Just as Christ was raised

from the dead, so the mortal wound of the beast was healed. Just as Christ is to receive all homage, so the whole world will wonder after the beast, and pay it homage. Just as at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, so the Papacy today demands acknowledgement of its supremacy.

The final component of Babylon is the false prophet, and must therefore represent the false Holy Spirit. It is the false prophet, which performs great miracles, signs and wonders (Revelation 19:20), and in Revelation 13, these are also connected with the second beast, which we identified as the United States of America. Protestant America is today the country that exports the revival movements and Pentecostal form of religion to the world. In some modern Christian circles, the Holy Spirit is regarded as feminine, and it is enlightening that in ancient religions, as in Catholicism, the miracle-working power of the gods manifested itself largely in the female deities such as Rhea, Ishtar, Astarte, Isis, and now in Catholic Mary. “Manifestations of the Spirit” are also very common in the Protestant world, but the Spirit leads to unity with Rome. When Christ prayed for unity within His church, He never meant unity in apostasy, but always unity in truth. The fallen Protestant churches who join themselves to Rome by accepting Papal supremacy become part of Babylon and thus form this third component of end-time Babylon, the final confederacy to challenge the authority of God and His law (see chapter *The Spirit of Unity*). The dragon component will be discussed further in *The New Age Movement*, and the false prophet will be discussed in *Strange Fire*.

The description of the woman (church) of Revelation 17 fits all the aspects of Rome. Besides “having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication,” we are told in Revelation 17:1 that she “*sits on many waters*” and in Revelation 17:4, that “*the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls.*” Since waters represent the nations of the world:

*And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest,
where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes,
and nations, and tongues. Revelation 17:15*

The church, represented by the woman, must therefore be a Uni-

versal Church. The word "Catholic" actually means "Universal". So the Roman Catholic Church claims to be the Universal or Worldwide Church and, as we have seen, she claims to have authority over all nations.

*And the woman which thou sawest is that great city,
which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

Revelation 17:18

Regarding the colour of her robes, a distinctive shade of bright orange-red designated officially by the Church as "scarlet" is frequently worn by Cardinals of the Catholic Church. Priests of the Catholic Church wear red vestments on Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Pentecost, Birthday Feasts of the Apostles and Evangelists, and the Feasts of Martyrs. They wear purple vestments on Advent, Lent, and at Funerals, although other colors are optional on some of those days. Other approved colors are white, green, black, rose and gold. A visit to the Vatican will confirm that untold riches are lavished on the icons of Catholicism. Gold and precious stones and pearls deck the statues of Mary and the saints, and the official vestments worn by the popes on special occasions are richer in gold and jewellery than any earthly crown. The golden tiara (Triple Crown), on display in the Vatican Museum and worn by the Pope on his inauguration is valuable beyond comprehension. The riches and treasures lavished on the stately buildings of the Roman Catholic Church are also beyond description.

On her forehead was a name written: "**Mystery**, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." Revelation 17:5 Does Rome apply the term "Mystery" to its institution and teachings? Indeed she does.

Pope John Paul II referred to the "mystery of the Church" in a release from the Vatican Information Service (September 17, 1997). "Mystery" is also the term used by the Roman Catholic Church to refer to the Mass, or the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. In the liturgy of the mass, the priest refers to the "Mystery of the Faith." The Catholic rosary is also associated with the mysteries of the faith. There are 15 decades of prayer (150 recitations) and during each of these decades, one of the "mysteries" of the church is recalled. The Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary are divided into three

groups: the Joyful, the Sorrowful and the Glorious. The 5 Joyful Mysteries are: the *Mystery* of the Annunciation, the *Mystery* of the Visitation, the *Mystery* of the Birth of the Lord, the *Mystery* of the Presentation in the Temple and the *Mystery* of Finding Jesus in the Temple. The 5 Sorrowful Mysteries are: the *Mystery* of the Agony in the Garden, the *Mystery* of the Scourging at the Pillar, the *Mystery* of the Crowning with Thorns, the *Mystery* of Jesus carrying his cross and the *Mystery* of the Crucifixion. The 5 Glorious Mysteries are: the *Mystery* of the Resurrection, the *Mystery* of the Ascension of Our Lord, the *Mystery* of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the *Mystery* of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin and the *Mystery* of the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin as Queen of Heaven. A further description of the woman in Revelation 17 reads:

And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.
Revelation 17:6

As discussed in the chapter *The Man Behind the Mask*, Rome has certainly persecuted those throughout history who clung to the Word of God as the only source of their inspiration. Many of the great Reformers were martyred for their faith and millions died in the religious wars fought on behalf of the Papacy and in the fires of the Inquisition. The woman of Revelation 17 sits on seven hills or mountains:

And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. Revelation 17:9

There is more than one interpretation for this text, but in a literal sense Rome is also known as the city of seven hills, or seven mountains. The seven hills are the Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Celian (Coelian), Aventine and Palatine. Hills or high places in ancient times served as places of worship and sacrifices. The gods that were worshipped in these places were manifestations of the sun god who was androgenic in that he/she could manifest himself/herself in the male

or the female form. Moreover, the system of worship was based on salvation by works, but included a saviour or counterfeit Messiah, and mediators of both sexes. One further reason why the end-time religious confederacy, under the leadership of the Papacy, is called 'Babylon' is because the Babylonian system of worship is enshrined in its mysteries, as it is also enshrined in religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, earth religions, and even Islam.

The Pagan System of Sun Worship

The Babylonian system of worship has essentially been maintained to this day. The ancient Chaldeans worshipped a pantheon of male and female gods representing the sun god. There were largely three aspects to this system of sun worship, representing the father, mother, and the son. These were the god Bel or Merodach, Ninus the son, who was also worshipped as Tammuz, and the female goddess Rhea, who was also worshipped as Ishtar, Astarte, or Beltis representing the mother. She was also referred to as the 'queen of heaven', and the 'wrath subduer'. Mother and child worship was the basis of the ancient religions. And in the various religions of the world, the same system of worship was perpetuated under different names. In Egypt, they were worshipped as Isis and Osiris or Horus; in India as Isi and Iswara; in China and Japan as the mother goddess Shing-moo with child; in Greece as Ceres or Irene and Plutus; in Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer, or Venus and Adurnis; and in Scandinavia as Frigga and Balder. The mother and child were worshipped in Babylon as Ishtar and Tammuz, and in Phoenicia, as Ashtoreth and Baal. Moreover, the child was worshipped as both husband and son of the mother goddess.

The son, or male component of the mother-child deities, is the counterfeit Saviour, and thus the counterfeit of Jesus Christ. All the titles pertaining to Jesus were also used for the child in ancient religions. Examples: Zoroaster was also referred to as the 'seed' of the woman, Mitras (the Persian sun god) was referred to as the Saviour, Dionysus as the sin-bearer, Bacchus as the branch, Vishna as the victim-man, Osiris as the king of kings.

The system of worship has its origin in the legend of Nimrod,

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and his wife Semiramus. Nimrod was an apostate and rebelled against God, like his father Cush. Eventually Nimrod was put to death for his evil deeds, and according to the ancient patriarchal system, parts of his body were sent to various cities as a warning. His wife Semiramus fled, but spread the rumour that he had ascended to heaven, where he had become one with the sun. When Semiramus later gave birth to a son, she claimed that it was the reincarnation of her deified husband, and that he had returned as Saviour of the human race. She was later deified as the mother of god who had ascended into heaven as the queen of heaven. In the various cultures, the same basic deities were then worshipped under different names.

	NIMROD, THE LORD OF HEAVEN	TAMMUZ, THE SON OR MESSIAH	SEMIRAMIS, THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN
ISRAELITES PHOENICIANS BABYLON ASSYRIA GREECE ROME EGYPT INDIA CHINA MEXICO SCANDINAVIA	BAAL EL BELUS NINUS ZEUS JUPITER RA VISHNU PAN-KU TEOTL ODIN	TAMMUZ BACCHUS TAMMUZ HERCULES DIONYSIUS ATTIS OSIRIS, HORUS KRISHNA YI QUETZALCOATL BALDER	ASHTORETH ASTARTE RHEA, ISHTAR BELTIS APHRODITE CYBELE, DIANA ISIS, HATHOR ISI, DEVAKI HENG-O, MATSOPO COATTLICUE FRIIG, FREYDA

Figure 9.2

Sun worship is often seen as primitive, but is in fact a sophisticated, awe-inspiring system of worship that appeals to the senses and captivates the mind with its grandiose ceremonies. This system of worship has been perpetuated throughout generations, and in our day forms the basis of all the religions such as Earth Religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Catholicism. In the mysteries of Catholicism, sun worship reaches its highest form. The names of the gods have changed, but the system of worship is the same.

As the sungod (Nimrod) plunged into the waters of the river (Euphrates), so the reincarnated son plunged into the waters of the womb

to be worshipped as the saviour. The cycle of the sun represents this ancient cycle of the sun rising (Brahma), the sun at the meridian (Siva) and the sun setting (Vishnu). At night, the sun rests in the womb of the ocean in the darkness of the underworld (representing the death and suffering of the sun god). As god of the ocean (Poseidon, Neptune), he was also worshipped as the fish god Dagon (Dag = fish, On = the name of sungod as he was called in Egypt) who had plunged into the waters of the womb to be reborn. The most prominent form of worship in Babylon was dedicated to Dagon, later known as Ichthys, or the fish. In Chaldean times, the head of the church was the representative of Dagon. He was considered to be infallible and was addressed as 'Your Holiness'. Nations subdued by Babylon had to kiss the ring and slipper of the Babylonian god-king. The same powers and the same titles are claimed to this day by the Dalai Lama of Buddhism, and the Pope. Moreover, the vestments of paganism - the fish mitre and robes of the priests of Dagon - are worn by the Catholic bishops, cardinals and popes.

The Papacy claims the right to apostolic succession, and claims that its system of worship has been handed down through tradition. Yet the traditions are the traditions of Babylon, and have nothing to do with the teachings of Jesus. Roman Catholic doctrines such as infant baptism, sprinkling of babies during baptism, teachings on death and immortality, prayers to the dead and to relics, repetitive prayers by the use of beads, doctrines on forgiveness of sins, teachings on hell, the mass, and Sunday worship, are doctrines derived directly from ancient Babylon. When Constantine married paganism and Christianity, the door was opened for false doctrines to creep into the church, and they were gradually introduced into the system.

FALSE DOCTRINES

DATE

Sunday	321-364 A.D. Council of Laodicea
Relic Worship	337 A.D.
Rosary	366 A.D.
Mass	394 A.D.
Eternal Torment	590 A.D.
Indulgences	799 A.D.

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Mary Worship	850 A.D.
Confessional	1198 A.D.
Bible Forbidden	1299 A.D.
Infant Baptism	1311 A.D.
Tradition above Scripture	1563 (reaffirmed)
Transubstantiation	1563 (reaffirmed)
Purgatory	1563 (reaffirmed)
Justification by Faith & Works	1563 (reaffirmed)
Indulgences	1563 (reaffirmed)
Preterism / Futurism	1585
Immaculate Conception	1854
Papal Infallibility	1870
Pope sovereign ruler	1929
Assumption of Mary	1951
Mary as Mediatrix	still pending final Vatican declaration

*Like the successive strata of the earth covering one another, so layer after layer of forgeries and fabrications was piled up in the church.*¹⁵

The church historian Philip Schaff says,

*No church . . . in Christendom ever sank so low as the Latin Church in the tenth century.*¹⁶

In the Roman Catholic mass, the Eucharist or “host” (the round wafer) is derived from the Latin meaning the 'victim' or 'sacrifice'. It is round because it is a symbol of the sun. It is normally placed during ceremonial masses on a monstrance with a crescent moon, symbolizing the plunging of the sun into the womb of the goddess. Some monstrances bear the letters ‘SFS,’ which in the Mysteries represents 666, as S was the sixth letter in the ancient Greek alphabet and F is the sixth letter in our alphabet. The round disc in the crescent moon was a symbol of ancient Babylon, and is found in all the ancient religions. In Catholic cathedrals, these symbols are very prominent, often depicting a round form of mother and child within the crescent moon. The rebirth of the

sun god was celebrated by the eating of round bread in Babylonian times, and was common in the worship of Mithraism, Osiris worship, and is the same as that being practised in Catholicism today. Historian Bishop says:

*The round wafer, whose 'roundness' is so important in the Romish Mystery, is only another symbol of Baal, or the sun.*¹⁷

The sun in the crescent was also depicted as a star in ancient religious symbols, and this symbol is used in Islam to represent its religion. Islamic beliefs are in essence no different from Catholicism. Islam is a system of salvation by works. The practice of relic veneration is deeply entrenched in Islamic tradition with veneration of numerous Biblical prophets such as Elijah and John the Baptist. As in the case of Catholicism, these revered dead are housed in 'holy sites' of worship, examples including the remains of Mohammed in Mecca and the head of John the Baptist in the Omayyad Mosque in Damascus, Syria. Significantly, Archbishop Isodore Battikha announced in March 2001 that precisely this mosque was to form the center of the first ever Papal visit to a mosque. Islam, like Catholicism, encourages pilgrimages to holy sites. Both practice repetitive prayers and use beads to guide them through the process, and have Mary as the highest woman in heaven. Moreover, Islamic art is also steeped in the ancient traditions of sun worship, with the mythical birds of the sun forming a common feature.

The papal title 'Pontifex Maximus' can be traced back in different forms to the ancient Chaldean pontiffs. When Medo-Persia conquered Babylon, the Babylonian religion was maintained, but after a revolt of the priesthood, the priests of Babylon were driven out of Medo-Persia, and established themselves at Pergamum, taking with them their titles and vestures. The last pontiff king of Pergamum was Attalus III, who bequeathed his title to the emperor of Rome in 133 B.C. In the year 375 A.D., emperor Gratian refused the title, and in the year 431 A.D., the title was taken over by Damasus, bishop of Rome. The present-day college of cardinals with the pope at the head is identical to the college of pontiffs with the Pontifex Maximus at the head. The keys are not the keys of Peter, but date back from Babylonian times, as

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it was supposed that this representative of God had the power to unlock heaven or hell. A statement about the pope's position is found in *The Papal Monarchy*:

*The Pax Romana has ceased, it is universal confusion, but wherever a bishop holds court, religion protects all that is left of the ancient order. The emperor is no more, but the pontifex maximus abides. He is the vicar of Christ, offering the old civilization to the tribes of the north. He converts them to his creed, and they serve him as father and judge supreme.*¹⁸

Pagan Sunday worship, by their own admission, was also introduced from paganism, and this is confirmed by standard dictionary definitions.

*The church took the pagan philosophy, and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan Sunday, and made it the Christian Sunday. There is in truth something royal, something kingly about the sun, making it a fit emblem of Jesus, the son of justice. Hence the church in these countries would seem to have said, 'keep the old pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.' And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus.*¹⁹

*Sunday - so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship. The first day of the week.*²⁰

Pagan priests were celibate, tonsured, and received the power of sacrificing for the living and the dead. The same power is given to Roman Catholic priests. As celibate priests, they are dedicated to the mother goddess or Mary the mediatrix. In 1854, the papacy declared Mary immaculate, and in 1951, they declared that she had ascended unto heaven, where she was crowned as the queen of heaven. Since 1951, the complete system of Babylonian worship, with Mary taking the role of the mediatrix, has thus been established within Catholicism.

The goddess in ancient religions was worshipped as the life giver and nurturer and, as such, this religion was imbued with sexual undertones. The breasts of the goddess formed a prominent part of the goddess cult - goddesses often being depicted with many breasts to nurture the world. Even the sun god was found nurturing at her breast, and, as such, he was depicted as drinking from the breast or he was represented by his symbol, the serpent, finding sustenance at the breast of the goddess.

In Bethlehem, Israel, there is the famous “Milk Grotto” where Catholic tradition has it that Mary spilt milk from her breast whilst feeding the baby Jesus. This milk supposedly squirted onto the walls of the cave and formed white markings that are revered today as places of pilgrimage for healing and fertility. The same basic cult worship is practiced today under another guise. Phallic symbols, as well as symbols of femininity and divine intercourse, were common in ancient temples (as they are in modern temples, particularly in India), and are equally common in Roman Catholic cathedrals. Virtually all symbols of sun worship are present in present-day Roman Catholic cathedrals. St. Peter’s in Rome has one of the greatest collection of pagan symbols in the world. The main altar at St. Peter’s (Bernini’s Canopy) has the symbols of the serpent, sun and moon worship, male and female forms of sun rays and the altar has Pope Joane (the only female pope in history) depicted in pains of childbirth representing the birth of the sun god.

Other symbols of sun worship found in Catholicism include the solar wheel dating back to the Chaldeans, found on virtually all cathedrals today. The square of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome consists of the largest solar wheel in the world. The square is circular and the wheel has eight spokes. Moreover, in St. Peter’s square, there is a wheel within a wheel, which is a counterfeit of the mobile throne of God, as described by the prophet Ezekiel. As such, it represents the throne of the Dragon who gives the beast his seat and great authority. In the center of the square, there is an obelisk, which once again is a phallic symbol dedicated to the worship of the sun. The Vatican is built on the hill where the temple of Janus the sun god stood. Alongside St. John’s Lateran, which is the church where the pope is crowned and where he speaks infallibly, there is the obelisk of Tutmoses III, which was dedicated to Reharakti, the sun god. Tutmoses IV had placed this obelisk in the

temple of Amun at Karnak (Luxor). This pagan sun worship symbol has been erected next to St. John's Lateran as the symbol of sun worship.

There are many more symbols of sun worship that are used in Catholicism, such as halos, various pagan crosses, lightning bolts, hand-signals from sun worship cults, tridents, fleur-de-lis, sexagesimal triangles with the eye of Hathor, coptic shells, which in paganism served as a symbol of the cosmos, astrological signs, globes as symbols of rulership of the universe (pagan gods carried the globe just as Catholic icons do, and the largest globe in the world is on top of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome), sacred hearts as used in many sun cults, sacred animals (many of them mythological such as dragons, the serpent, unicorn and the phoenix), fertility symbols such as pine cones (pagan deities wore the pine cone on their crosier just as the popes do today), sacred trees (symbols of the suffering and resurrected sun god) and prayer beads for repetitive prayers even though the Bible admonishes:

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Matthew 6:7

Pagan Feasts and Traditions

All the ancient feasts pertaining to sun worship have been introduced into Christendom by the Papacy. Even the ancient modes of worship are subtly introduced and disguised as Christian practices. The practice is even more widespread, in that most human festivals, folklores and sports are based on activities dedicated to the sungod. The card games we play are based on the cosmic rituals of sun worship. There are fifty two cards in a pack (52 weeks in a year), four suits (four seasons or corners of the earth), twelve picture cards (twelve houses of the sun), 36 numbered cards (36 rooms in the cosmic houses of the sun's path) and the A (alpha) or ace is the highest card but also counts as one (which is the lowest card, thus designating the Alpha and the Omega).

The days of the week are dedicated to solar deities, and the number seven was associated with the eye of Osiris, and the seven rays of Mithra as they occur on many pagan gods and goddesses. In this

regard, the statue of liberty represents the female form of the sun deity, as she has the seven rays of Mithra on her head and carries the torch, a symbol of the light-bearer or Lucifer. The seven sun rays emanating from Mithra's halo symbolise his triumph over the forces of darkness.

Monday was the moon's day, and with the assimilation of the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian pagan gods, Tyr, one of the oldest gods of Norse mythology, became identified with Mars and thus we have Tys dagr or Tuesday; Wednesday is derived from Woden, also known as Odin; and Thor, the thunder god of the early Germanic peoples became synonymous with Thursday equated as he was with the Roman god Jupiter; while Friday is named after Frigg, the wife of Odin and the mother of another pagan god, Balder. The day of Saturn or Saturday was followed by Sunday, the day of rest and recreation, as it is observed today.

The Romans identified the seven planets with the sun's rays emanating from Mithra's halo and thus elevated the sanctity of the number seven to the level of other auspicious numbers such as the sun's one eye of Truth and Justice, the two horizons, the three worlds, and the four directions.

The head of the Statue of Liberty is adorned with Mithra's seven rays and the flame she holds is also a sun symbol.²¹

Sport

The carrying of the torch in the Olympic games is a symbol of the sun. Sport from ancient times was associated with sun worship and the symbolism employed at the modern games re-enact the victories of the solar deities. The sun, moon, and other planets floating overhead at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic games reminded us that the sun's association with sports predates the deities Herakles and Apollo in Greece, as is evident from the epic tale of the Sumerian hero Gilgamesh.

The Sumerian Gilgamesh story inscribed in cuneiform tablets narrates how the sporting equipment - a stick and a ring or a ball - which Gilgamesh had carved out of an uprooted tree, had fallen into the netherworld as he began oppressing his people by repeated athletic competitions, and how eventually it was the sun god who opened a hole in the ground in order to recover them. The Olympic torch which the runner carries to mark the sun's cyclic movement throughout the "Olympiad", the four-year period until the next games, is also related to the sun's cyclic rhythm.... First celebrated in Greece, the games were ceremonial contests in honor of Zeus. Scoring a goal with the sun ball was equated with the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil. ..The ball is a sun symbol in all such sports as football, hockey, basketball, and cricket.... Baseball is related to the sun in the sundial shape and pattern of the field, as well as its rules of play and scoring. Like all sports, baseball also embodies the sun's seasonal cycles in much the same way as ancient ceremonial contests were held as part of fertility rites.²²

Religious festivals

Catholicism bears all the marks of Mithraism. In the secret societies and rituals of the mysteries, initiates can belong to a number of societies and advance up the ranks. The initiation ceremonies of freemasonry, numerous cult organizations, and of the orders of Catholicism have many things in common. For example, the death and resurrection of the sun god is symbolized by lying in a coffin and being called forth in the ritual of rebirth. Thereafter, one can rise in the ranks until one reaches the levels of the higher initiates. Moreover, Catholic priests and initiates can belong to different orders within the same system. Catholicism has taken over many pagan sun worship sites and given them Christian names. For example, the sun god Helios in the pagan tomb discovered in 1574 beneath St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican is now known as Cristo Sole.

The Catholic Basilica of San Clemente in Rome is embellished with sun motifs and was originally a second-century Mithra shrine. In Mithraism the sequence of initiation was as follows:

The structure of the cult was hierarchical. Members went through a series of seven grades, each of which had a special symbol and a tutelary planet. From lowest to highest these grades were Corax (raven, under Mercury), Nymphus (a made-up word meaning male bride, under Venus), Miles (the soldier, under Mars), Leo (the lion, under Jupiter), Perses (the Persian, under Luna, the moon), Heliodromus (the Sun's courier, under Sol, the sun), and finally Pater (father, under Saturn). Those who reached the highest grade, Pater, could become the head of a congregation. Because mithraea were so small, new congregations were probably founded on a regular basis when one or more members reached the highest grade. Two aspects of mithraic initiation offer important insight into the cult. First, it was possible for a mithraic initiate to be a member of more than one cult, and second, women were not permitted to become members.²³

It is noteworthy that Catholic monasteries and Cathedrals are often built on pagan sites of worship and caves, and their domes represent the sun domes of pagan sun worship cultures. Apparitions of Mary and Catholic saints are also mostly associated with caves. In the Shinto culture, the sun goddess Amaterasu emerges out of the cave and in their Shinto ritual dance called Takachiho-Kagura, she emerges with her face painted white as we find in many pagan initiation ceremonies. In Catholicism, Mary appears out of the cave (Lourdes) and the grotto or cave is the place where one will find Catholic icons either in gardens (The gods were gods of the gardens and the trees) or in the basements of Cathedrals and monasteries

Sun doors are a further feature of sun worship. They represent the Gateway of Heavenly Deities or the universal sun door of life and death. These doors form an important part of sun worship rituals, par-

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ticularly at the commencement of holy days and eras. They are still in use and revered as holy in eastern religions today, and in Catholicism they likewise form an important component of their rituals. The Vatican contains a 'Holy Door' which the pope opens on jubilees, and on New Year's day he blesses various holy doors in different locations. Special Catholic feasts also coincide with pagan holy days, and are celebrated in one form or another by most cultures.

Christmas

The 25th of December, which we celebrate as Christmas, was the commemorative day of the birth of the sun god. The birth of Osiris was celebrated on this day, which was the birth of the unborn sun. When Nimrod was destroyed, he was symbolized as the tree that was cut off. To this day, his rebirth is celebrated as the new branch (Christmas tree) that sprouts from the sawn-off stump through the life-giving power of the serpent. In England, Christmas is celebrated by throwing the Jule log into the fire, representing the destruction of Nimrod, and the Christmas tree is the symbol of the branch that had sprouted. The tree was then decorated, symbolizing the rebirth of the sun god. The ancient practice of celebrating the birth of the sun god through the fir tree is found in most ancient religions, even those of the ancient Indian cultures of South America. The sacrificial animals on this day were the unclean animals such as the pig and the goose. Both these animals are the main Christmas meal in European countries. The goose on the mainland of Europe, and the Christmas gammon (pork) largely in Britain. Different birds were sometimes substituted for the goose, such as different trees were substituted for the fir tree if they were not readily available in the countries concerned.

The birth of Osiris coincided with the day of the summer and winter solstice, depending on the hemisphere, and on this day the sun god would ride through the heavens in his chariot. The sun god Helios would ride through the sky in his sun chariot drawn by horses as depicted in the great fountain of Versailles. In the Hindu culture, it is the Sûrya, and his horse-drawn sun chariot, driven by his charioteer Aruna, who rides across the sky, and in other cultures the chariot is drawn by other animals such as the goat (Zeus) or the reindeer. This same pagan practice

is held in high esteem to this day, and has virtually successfully supplanted Jesus Christ as the main feature of Christmas. On the 25th of December, Santa rides across the skies in his reindeer-drawn chariot. He is made acceptable by his friendly, rotund appearance as introduced by Walt Disney, but he has the same characteristics as the ancient sun deities.

Origin of Santa Claus: 4th century: Historical evidence shows that St. Nicholas never existed as a human. He was rather a Christianized version of various Pagan sea gods —the Greek god Poseidon, the Roman god Neptune, and the Teutonic god Hold Nickar. In the early centuries of the Christian church, many Pagan gods and goddesses were humanized and converted to Christian saints. When the church created the persona of St. Nicholas, they adopted Poseidon's title "the Sailor." They picked up his last name from Nickar. Various temples of Poseidon became shrines of St. Nicholas.²⁴

The theology of Santa is also in line with this thinking, since Santa, as taught to most children, has the attributes of God.

1. He is virtually omnipresent. He can visit hundreds of millions of homes in one night.
2. He is omniscient. He monitors each child; he is all-seeing and all-knowing; he knows when they are bad and good. He can manufacture gifts for hundreds of millions of children, and deliver them in one night — each to the correct child.
3. He is all good and all just. He judges which children have shown good behaviour and rewards them appropriately. Bad children are bypassed or receive a lump of coal.
4. He is eternal.

Lady Day

Lady Day is a Catholic feast celebrated on the 25th of March. This is the feast held in honor of the goddess of Cybele in ancient times.

Easter and Lent

Easter was celebrated on that day in honor of the goddess of Ishtar (thence the name). The forty day fast was to commemorate the death and resurrection of Tammuz (a forty day fast is also a feature of Islam). Lent was introduced into the Catholic calendar by Hormisdas, bishop of Rome in 519 A.D. In order to introduce the feast of Easter into the Roman Catholic calendar, the dates were changed by Dionysius, so that Easter was celebrated a month later than the original Jewish Pash feast. This was to bring it in line with the ancient pagan dates for this feast, and the new date for Easter was then introduced by force. On this day, the ancients lit fires and baked cakes to the queen of heaven with the ancient pagan even-sided cross in a circle representing the sun as decoration on these round cakes. To this day, the hot cross bun is an Easter delicacy. The egg is also a pagan symbol representing rebirth, and decorated eggs were traditionally eaten on this feast day. Ancient Israel already fell to the spell of the ancient Babylonian religion. In Jeremiah 7:18, we read:

The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven; and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.

*The ecclesiastical historian, Socrates, attributes the introduction of the festival of Easter into the church to the perpetuation of an old usage, 'just as many other customs have been established.'*²⁵

*The Easter fire is lit on top of mountains...this is a custom of pagan origin. The church adopted the observance into the Easter ceremony.*²⁶

Feast of the Nativity of St. John _

This is a Roman Catholic feast celebrated on the 24th of June, representing the summer solstice. In ancient times it was the feast of Bel or Tammuz, celebrated by jumping through the fire or burning a tower of wood, a practice still performed today in some countries. God warns against this:

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. Deuteronomy 18:10

Babylon is indeed a fitting symbol for the end-time apostate system that will bring on the final apostasy against God and His law.

Therefore is the name of it [the tower] called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. Genesis 11:9

The new world order is an attempt to recreate a form of the tower of Babel and to once again unite all peoples in apostasy against God. Babel means confusion, and we are told that the kings of the earth will commit fornication with Babylon. (Revelation 17:2)

Anyone who accepts the authority of the bishop of Rome is acknowledging the authority of the king of Babylon, whether it be a government or a religious system. As such, they become subject to Babylon, and pay homage to it rather than to God. The choice is ours.

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Paganism and the “New World Religion”

The New World Religion will combine all the world religions under one roof, but in order to achieve this, these religions have to find unity in their commonality and in their leadership. The Vatican II Council opened the door for this great world ecumenical drive, and only the Vatican has the stature and resources to drive this process to completion. The great world religions can all trace their roots to the religious system of Babylon, and we find its most perfect modern counterpart in Roman Catholicism (See *The Wine of Babylon*). Catholicism is the key to uniting Christianity with paganism and thus bringing about the final apostasy foretold in the book of Revelation. The religion of Christ is to be replaced with the religion of Babylon. Mary (a substitute for the pagan Isis) will be venerated and for the Christian world, the “Cosmic Christ” or pagan Maitreya will take the place of Jesus Christ (See *The New Age Movement*). In the form of a revived Mithraism, the ancient Osiris cult will once again become the dominant religion of the world. Below follows a pictorial guide to this ancient religion and its modern counterpart.



The birth of the sun



The solar disc in the half moon as worshipped in Babylon, Mesopotamia, and Egypt



The fish



a symbol of Dagon



a symbol of Dagon as seen in Hinduism (British Museum London)



the priests of Dagon (Osiris) wore fish mitres and used holy water in Babylon (Pergamon Museum Berlin)

The Papacy is characterised by the same head dress and uses the same symbols.



The Mitre of Osiris

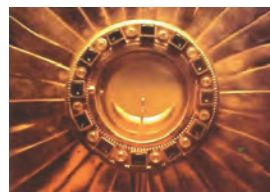
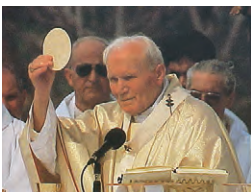


The Mitre of Pope John Paul II



The Mitres of Catholic bishops

The round wafer host as symbol of the sun. Note the sun symbol in the venerated host and the half moon monstrance (a symbol of the moon goddess) into which the host is placed during mass.



The pine cone was a fertility symbol used in pagan religions and it is still in use today. Pagan gods of Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome were associated with this symbol, and the staffs of the gods were often adorned with the pine cone. The high priests of paganism also used this symbol to identify themselves with these fertility cults.



the pine cone in the hand of a Babylonian winged cherub and the pine cone on the staff of Osiris

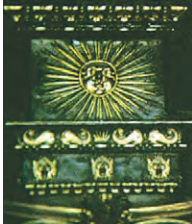


the pine cone in the Vatican square with the two peacocks which are also a symbol of the pagan sun god



the pine cone on the staff of the Pope, identifying him as the high priest of paganism.

The face of **Apollo** and other **sun worship symbols on Bernini's canopy** and dome in the Vatican.



Pagan sun worship symbols in the architecture and art of Catholic Cathedrals:



door in the chapel of St. Ignatius in San Francisco showing the peacock, phoenix, dragon-fish, unicorn, pagan mitre and staff and P with crossed feathers (a 666 symbol also used in freemasonry)



Original triple Ying-yang with sun blasé on floor of the Catholic cathedral in London



Original triple Ying-yang with sun blasé on ceiling of a Catholic cathedral in Germany



phoenix rising in Catholic cathedral in Germany



(left) Phoenix rising from the ashes (symbol of resurrection of the sun god, note the black and white squares - symbol of the good and evil used also in freemasonry) in the London cathedral.

Janus the two headed one



(left) the dragon bird and the goat (symbols of Lucifer) on the same cathedral



(above) the god Pan as "statue of David" (Notice the pan flute), actual depiction of Pan



(left) Ying-yang on door of a Catholic cathedral in Germany



(above) the symbol of Hermes in a Jesuit church in Germany

Mary and the **Madonna and child** take the place of the ancient worship of Isis and Horus. Mary becomes the queen of heaven and the mediatrix as were the pagan goddesses.



Isis



(left) pagan goddess nurturing the serpent, standing on the serpent's head



(right) Mary on the serpent in a church in Bethlehem

Madonna and child:



in Catholicism



in Hinduism



in Buddhism



in ancient Egypt



in the Hittite religion



in the Mexican Indian religion with the Lady of Guadalupe as present day manifestation



Truth Matters

The pagan goddesses were also worshiped in **fertility cults** and Mary receives similar veneration today. The following pictures are of the milk grotto in Bethlehem where women today seek fertility blessings.



The white patches against the walls of the cave are supposedly preserved milk, from the breasts of Mary, which squirted against the walls as she nursed the baby Jesus.

Mary also takes the place of the pagan goddesses as **queen of heaven**:



(left) on this relief on a Catholic church in Germany, Mary is being crowned queen of heaven by God the Father and the Son whilst receiving veneration from mortals



(above) Mary is crowned by angels whilst God the Son watches



Mary is crowned by Pope John Paul II



Mary's image is venerated by the pope and the disciples



(left) Mary becomes the new mediator as she bears the marks of the crucifixion and the crown of thorns is transferred to her by Jesus Himself (picture in monastery in Rome)

Paganism and the New World Religion

In pagan cultures, the gods and goddesses were normally worshipped in grottos (caves) and groves. Ancient high places were also associated with sacrifices to the gods and grotto shrines were often associated with these high places. In Catholicism today, Mary veneration is also associated with **caves, groves, and ancient high places**:



Mary in grove and grotto in Catholic monastery in Germany



the Pope prays in the grotto at Lourdes (above)



Mary takes the place of Jesus and the crucifix is the hidden portrayal of Lucifer's so-called victory over Christ. In this crucifix from a Catholic church in Germany, the hidden meaning becomes clear as it is the broken cross as used in the peace sign. The broken cross is also used in Satanism, and there the cross is upside down. Should the cross be turned round, then Jesus would be hanging upside down on Satan's symbol.



The statue of Mary seen here is a landmark in Saydanaya in Syria where there is a Marian monastery built on an ancient pagan high place with the original pagan grotto shrines in place.

The monastery of Saydanaya and the pagan worship cave sealed with the black iron door. **Triple arches** were common in pagan worship and are



also used in Marian veneration as can be seen in the cave and grove scene in the previous set of pictures.

Truth Matters

In the monastery of Saydanaya, there is an icon of a painting of Mary and Jesus which was supposedly painted by the apostle Luke. The icon weeps oil and a spilt oil droplet formed the image of Mary and is venerated to this day.



copy of icon



locked image formed by
oil droplet



enlargement of the
same image

The **veneration or consultation of the dead** is prohibited in the Scriptures:

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Deuteronomy 18:10-12

Also, anyone who came into contact with a dead person or a grave was considered unclean and could not take part in the temple worship.

And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. Numbers 19:16

And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people. Leviticus 21:1

Osiris was the god of the dead. In pagan worship, the dead were venerated and buried in sites of worship. The God of Israel, however, is the

Paganism and the New World Religion

God of the living and not of the dead and that is why God made such a strict distinction between the worship practiced in Israel and amongst the pagan nations. In Catholicism, the worship of the dead is continued in the veneration of the saints, and Catholic and Anglican churches are shrines for the dead. In fact, the sacrifice of the mass is for the living and the dead and cannot proceed if there is not a relic of the dead associated with the altar. This is pagan **necromancy**, which the Bible strictly forbids.



Tomb in St. Auburn's Cathedral in England



a relic of a saint under the altar of the Catholic cathedral in London



entrance to the tomb under the altar of a Catholic church in Germany (left)



an enlargement of the tomb (right)



the bones of monks in a monastery in Rome (left)



the shrine of the head of John the Baptist in the Omayyad Mosque in Damascus (right)

Truth Matters

Protestantism used to pride itself on its Bible-based heritage of “*Sola Scriptura*” and “*Sola Gracia*” – the Bible alone and salvation by grace alone. However, the Counter Reformation has succeeded in corroding the pillars of Protestantism, and through the ecumenical movement, reconciliation with and subjection to Rome has become a reality. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in changes undertaken at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. This Protestant cathedral has been rebuilt as a copy of the Vatican to reflect unification with Rome, although outside the Cathedral there is a statue of John Wesley, which serves as a reminder of the Protestant heritage.

St. Paul's:



St. Paul's with its new design emulating the Vatican



Models of the old and the new St. Paul's



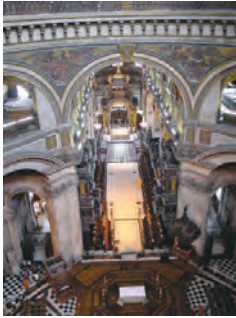
*Statue of Wesley
outside the Cathedral*



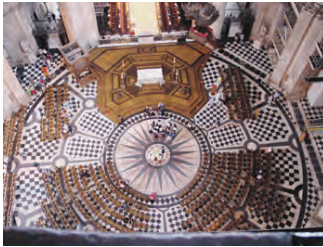
symbols of Catholicism inside (Peter holding the keys on the gate surrounding the altar and the Masonic symbols of the eye of Osiris and the compass and set square, which are symbols of pagan sun worship) on the ceiling

Paganism and the New World Religion

Inside the Cathedral, pagan occult symbols are portrayed on the walls, ceiling and its statues. Just a few of the obvious ones are portrayed here.

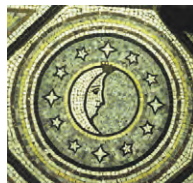


The main altar of St. Paul's is a copy of Bernini's altar in Rome (left and right)



The main floor of St. Paul's also emulates the sun worship solar symbols of the Vatican, being circular with solar images and black and white Masonic patterns.

Images of the sun, moon, and stars (pagan symbols of the principle deities – male and female) and Occult Masonic hexagrams, pentagrams and triangles within circles adorn the floors. The peacocks surrounding the square and triangle in a circle are also symbols of the sun god or Lucifer.





In the sepulchral vault below the Cathedral, there are tombs and displays of vestments and articles bearing the pagan inscription IHS (Isis Horus Seb) surrounded by solar blazes as well as embroideries of mythical birds feeding their flesh to their young, all of which are symbols of Osiris worship.



The pope is the **present day high priest** of the ancient pagan religion (see *Wine of Babylon*). He bears the same title, wears the same vestments, and follows the same **pagan rituals** as practiced in the pagan cultures. The pagan high priest was the one that opened the **sun door** to grant access to the souls of the departed. The same practice is enacted by the Pope:

winged sun door on Hindu mosque



Paganism and the New World Religion



(left) the Pope opens the “holy door” at the commencement of the jubilee

(right) the sun pillar outside the Pantheon in Rome is borne by the elephant or the bull of the east (a symbol of the sun god).



The Pantheon inside



the papal title “Pontifex Maximus” here on the floor of the Vatican is the same pagan title that was passed down from the Babylonian priesthood (note the lion with eagle’s wings, the symbol for Babylon)



the papal triple crown

the papal triple crown stems from paganism as can be seen in the Babylonian winged bull cherub that wears the triple crown (British Museum).



Truth Matters

The **occult hand sign** used in Buddhism (British Museum) and by the Papacy is also derived from paganism.

Halos:



The halo seen here on a Catholic figure (Catholic Cathedral London) and the serpent crosier are also derived from paganism.



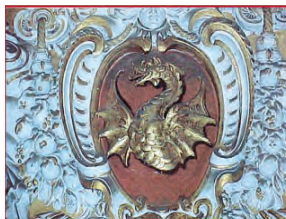
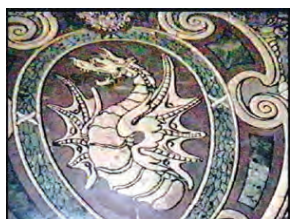
(both pictures left) The halos are here also seen in Buddhism and Hinduism (British Museum London).

Assyrian king (British Museum, London) wearing a Maltese cross and surrounded by pagan symbols of sun worship: the solar wheel, compass, half moon with solar disc, sun disc and triple tiara all of which are also symbols of the Papacy as seen in the wheel from a Catholic altar and the wheel within a wheel (the throne of the sun god) in the Vatican square with the solar obelisk (a phallic symbol) in the center.





The **winged dragon** was the symbol of pagan Rome, and Catholicism has made it its own. Revelation 13 tells us that the dragon gives the Papacy its seat and authority. Here are the pagan Roman crest and the dragon on the papal crest in the Vatican Museum. Vatis = diviner, can = serpent, Vatican = Divining serpent.



Rome is today the personification of the ancient Babylonian religion and God is calling His people out of her. In Revelation chapter 18 we read:

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is

fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

Revelation 18:1-5

10

THE MYSTIC REALM OF DEATH

One of the most deceptive doctrines of Babylon is the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. This doctrine more than any other opens the door to spurious views regarding the afterlife, and it has permeated the religious world with its false promises and claims. Moreover, it offers promises of multiple choices that can be made in terms of one's salvation and multiple chances in terms of qualifying for salvation. Spiritism, reincarnation, and necromancy (the worship and consulting of the dead) are only possible in the light of this doctrine. The Word of God is very clear on this issue. None of these doctrines and practices were to be tolerated by the people of God because they were all rooted in a false perception of death.

The opposite of death is life. The study of life is one of the great themes of modern scientific endeavour. Scientists are able to describe the processes of life, but are unable to discern or duplicate its origin. Definitions of life include the functions of living organisms, but cannot be described accurately other than in negative terms as a "state of non-death". Similarly, the term "death" suffers similar constraints, and dead objects or organisms can only be described as non-living. The origin of life and death, however, remains a mystery for which the scientific world can at best provide speculative answers. The Scriptures, on the

other hand, provide clear-cut answers, not only on the origin of life, but also on the origin and state of death.

According to the Creation account, man received the gift of life from God:

*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life**; and man became a living **soul**.* Genesis 2:7 Emphasis supplied

God thus formed man of the dust of the ground, and then He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This union then became a living soul.

The Hebrew word for "breath" in Genesis 2:7 is "neshamah" or the life-giving principle. The breath is equivalent to life itself (Isaiah 2:22). Another Hebrew word which is translated 28 times as "breath" in the KJV is "rûach" which can also mean "wind", "disposition" or "Spirit". It is translated 237 times as "Spirit" in the KJV. In Genesis 2:7, it is the breath of life from God that makes the inanimate material come to life, and transforms it into a living soul. The Hebrew for soul is "nephesh", and both the terms "rûach" and "nephesh" have frequently been misapplied to suit doctrinal positions not inherent in the Scriptures. Both the concepts of soul and spirit are used to describe spirit entities, which can exist independently of the body. Indeed, most religions in the world today teach that death is the transition of one state of consciousness to another state of consciousness. They propose that physical man is subject to death, but that the "soul" continues to live, and is indeed immortal. According to this doctrine, the soul is a separate entity, and resides in the body of the living. To make matters even more confusing, most Christian denominations believe that this dichotomy is to be found only in humans, and that animals do not have souls.

The text of Genesis 2:7 clearly states that God breathed into the formed man the "breath of life" and man *became* a living soul. He did not *receive* a living soul; he *became* one. The New King James Bible states that "man became a living being". Of the 1700 references to soul and spirit in the Bible, never once is either the soul or the Spirit declared to be immortal, imperishable, or eternal. Indeed only God has

immortality (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16). The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a doctrine of false hope which negates the message of death. Moreover, if man continues to live, albeit in an altered state, then there is no need for a Saviour, or indeed the atoning death of Christ. Christ died to restore life to those who had forfeited it through sin. Job correlates the usage of breath and the spirit, saying:

*All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God
is in my nostrils. Job 27:3*

Moses reported that the breath of life was in Adam's nostrils, whereas Job refers to both terms and says that the spirit of the Lord is "in my nostrils." Hence, the Hebrew terms of "neshamah" and "rûach" are used here in a similar context - namely life itself! According to the Scriptures, all living creatures received life in the same way from God, and are subject to the same fate.

*And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast
of the field . . . wherein is the breath of life.
Genesis 2:19; 7:15*

Both man and beast

*...have all one breath, so that a man hath no
pre-eminence above the beast. Ecclesiastes 3:19*

Since man and beast have one breath, they also die the same way.

*For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth
beasts; ... as the one dieth, so dieth the other.
Ecclesiastes 3:19*

Both man and animals were created from dust. So, when they die they then return again to dust; just the reverse of creation.

*...for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.
Genesis 3:19*

The second thing which happens when a man dies, is that the spirit, or breath of life, returns to God;

...and the spirit shall return unto God, who gave it.
Ecclesiastes 12:7

Man was never meant to die, but death came into the world as a consequence of sin.

For the wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23

As death is non-life, it merely means that God takes the life ("rûach" spirit, breath) that He granted on condition of obedience back and man ceases to live. It is the life that was given that returns to God, and not a transformed version of man in the form of a spirit being. When God said that man would "surely die" (Genesis 2:17) if he transgressed God's requirements, He meant that man would cease to live, and would return to dust. Far from being a conscious state, death is thus the ultimate state of non-being or unconsciousness, and is described as such in the Scriptures.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Psalms 146:4

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything. Ecclesiastes 9:5

The dead are oblivious to what is happening on earth - they know nothing. The next verse states:

Also their love, and their hatred and their envy is now perished. Ecclesiastes 9:6

For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who will give you thanks? Psalm 6:5 NKJV

So their feelings perish also.

The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. Psalms 115:17

This state of unconsciousness is equated with sleep. Job says,

*So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their **sleep**.* Job 14:12 (Emphasis supplied).

Man lies in the sleep of death until the resurrection at the end of time. Then, and only then, will he awake and be raised out of sleep. David called it the “sleep of death” (Psalms 13:3).

The Resurrection of Lazarus

This is further illustrated in the story of the resurrection of Lazarus. While speaking to His disciples about Lazarus, Jesus said:

*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, if he sleep he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spoke of his death; but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, **Lazarus is dead**.* John 11:11-14 (Emphasis supplied)

The disciples were confused and thought Christ meant natural sleep, but He meant the sleep of death. Verse 17 of the chapter says:

On His arrival Jesus found that Lazarus had already been four days in the tomb. NEB

While conversing with Martha, He tried to comfort her by saying,

*'Thy brother shall rise again.' Martha saith unto him,
'I know that He shall rise again in the resurrection at
the last day.'* John 11:23-24

Martha knew that life would be restored to Lazarus only in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus demonstrated through the resurrection of Lazarus that He was the One who could resurrect the dead according to His claim:

I am the resurrection and the life. John 11:25

The Scriptures in both Old and New Testaments are very clear on this issue. Life to the dead will be restored in the resurrection on the last day. (1 Corinthians 15:51-55, Job 19:25-26; Job 14:10-15; Psalm 17:15; Daniel 12:13) There will be separate resurrections for the righteous and for the wicked. John 5:28-29 states:

*Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which
all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and
shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the
resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto
the resurrection of damnation.*

*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with
a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the
trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.* 1
Thessalonians 4:16 NKJV

*But the rest of the dead did not live again until
the thousand years were finished. This is the first
resurrection.* Revelation 20:5 NKJV

That same voice that raised Lazarus from the grave will be heard on that last day of this world's history, calling forth those who have slept in the graves of the earth. Christ will recreate the righteous dead, or "dead in Christ", and breathe into them the breath of eternal life, and they shall enter Heaven. Revelation 20:6:

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. NKJV

The rest of the wicked dead remain as dust, to be raised after the Millennium in the resurrection of damnation. (See *The Long-Awaited Millennium* and *History's Coming Climax*). When Jesus called Lazarus from the tomb,

...he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth'.
John 11:43

That voice raised dead Lazarus to life. "*He that was dead came forth*", and Jesus said:

Loose him, and let him go. John 11:44

Nothing at all is stated about what transpired during those four days in which Lazarus was dead. Christ made no statement, neither did Martha or even Lazarus himself. The fact, of course, is that there was nothing to report about what happened after he died, or about the realm of the dead, simply because he had experienced the sleep of death which is a state of absolute silence and oblivion.

Spiritism

If the dead are in a state of unconsciousness or sleep awaiting the resurrection, how does one then explain the apparent communication with the dead that is commonplace in many modern religious movements of the past and the present? The worship of ancestors is common in many cultures, particularly African cultures, and the New Age Movement claims communion with spirit beings. In Biblical times, there is the story of King Saul, who consulted the witch of Endor, and supposedly communicated with Samuel who had been dead for some time. These issues need clarification.

Firstly, can the dead communicate with the living or return to

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their house to haunt it? We have seen in the previous section that the dead know nothing (Ecclesiastes 9:5) and that upon death the "thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). Job gives the assurance:

As the cloud disappears and vanishes away, so he who goes down to the grave shall not come up. He shall never return to his house, nor shall his place know him anymore. Job 7:9-10 NKJV

Also he states:

His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not. Job 14:21

Finally, Solomon writes about the dead:

Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. Ecclesiastes 9:6

God, upon penalty of death, denounced the consulting of mediums or communication with the dead. (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,27; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 2 Kings 21:6; 23:24; Jeremiah 27:9-10). God has clearly defined the means of communication with Him. He communicates through His Word and through His prophets.

To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah 8:20

The Scriptures (the law) are the inspired Word of God. (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; John 10:35; Matthew 24:35; Luke 24:44; Psalm 119:89,100-101) and testimony is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10)

If the spirits that are called up by mediums or channels are not the spirits of the dead, then they must be spirits of demons who would

deceive man and rob him of salvation. God admonishes through the prophet Isaiah:

And when they say to you, 'Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter, should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?' Isaiah 8:19 NKJV

Saul's Encounter with Samuel

A passage often quoted in support of communication with the dead is 1 Samuel 28:3-25 where Saul consults the medium at Endor who supposedly calls up Samuel to advise the King. The King had been troubled by spirits himself, and had through his own actions severed his connection with God. (Verse 25) Saul, however, remembered that Samuel's predictions regarding his life had all been fulfilled. In his panic, he asked for Samuel to advise him. In verse 14 he asks the medium "what form is he of?" indicating that he did not see Samuel himself. Moreover, the spirit taunted Saul by telling him that his crown would go to his rival. The messages of the spirit did not require visionary powers. David had already been anointed, and Israel had not humbled itself before the Lord, making it more than likely that they would be defeated by the Philistines. As the dead are in a state of unconsciousness, it is evident that the spirit of Samuel did not communicate with Saul. According to the Scriptures, Satan can communicate with man and present himself as an angel of light. (Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 11:13)

Modern Spiritism

Whenever God has worked with power to call people back to Him, Satan has counterfeited the message with miracle-working power.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. 1 Timothy 4:1 NKJV

The modern manifestation of spiritism began with the Fox sisters in 1848 who experienced the mysterious rapping in the home of a farmer named Fox in Hydesville, New York. From these humble beginnings, spiritism has grown into a worldwide movement with its modern thrust concentrated in the New Age Movement.

Even early spiritistic leaders admitted that their communication was with Satan himself. In *Spritten*, a Norwegian Spirits periodical the following statement is made:

*Spiritism is the serpent in Paradise offering man to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*¹

Moses Hull, a leading spirit lecturer of that early time makes the following statement:

*A Truthful Snake.... In answer to the question, 'who then, are we to believe - God or Satan?' I answer, 'The facts, in every case in the Bible, justify us in believing Satan, he has ever been truthful, that is more than can be said of the other one... It was not the devil, but God who made the mistake in the Garden of Eden... It was God, and not the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning.'*²

This blasphemous statement reveals the true nature of spiritism.

The Doctrine of Hell and Purgatory

The doctrines of hell and purgatory are of pagan origin, and were adopted into the Christian culture by the Roman Catholic Church fathers. Cardinal Gibbons writes about purgatory:

There exists in the next life a middle state of temporary punishment, allotted for those who have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already forgiven. The existence of purgatory naturally implies the correlative

*dogma, the utility of praying for the dead.*³

Hell is generally defined as a place or state where those who died in enmity with God suffer eternal torment, whereas the souls of the righteous go to heaven upon death.

The Hebrew "she'ol" and the Greek "Hades" are both translated as "hell", and refer to the world of the dead. The Greek word "geenna" denotes the "hell" of fiery punishment. The Biblical terminology is often used in a metaphoric sense and confusion can arise as to whether the terms are referring to a place or state in which the dead find themselves.

The Greek term "geenna" is used 12 times in the New Testament and is derived from the Hebrew "Ge Hinnom," the "Valley of Hinnom," where heathen rites of sacrificing and burning children to Molech were practiced. Jeremiah called this valley "the valley of slaughter". The valley of Hinnom or Gehenna became a place for burning rubbish and, with the development of a doctrine of a fiery hell where the wicked were punished, the valley served as a type of the fires of the last days.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus refers to "geena" three times. He warned the Pharisees of the damnation of "geena". The nature and effect of the fire is described in the Bible as "unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 3:9) or "everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41). This fire cleanses the earth (2 Peter 3:10-12; Luke 3:17) after the second resurrection (Revelation 20:5).

The word "everlasting" ("aiónios") is used to describe the fate of the righteous as well as the wicked. If the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) then the punishment of the wicked is everlasting death. The final consequence of the fire is everlasting, not the fire itself. This principle is clearly demonstrated in the usage of the concept "everlasting" in the Scriptures. Jeremiah prophesied that God would kindle a fire in Jerusalem that "would not be quenched" (Jeremiah 17:27). When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, the city was burnt to the ground, and the fire could not be quenched until it had accomplished the destruction of the city, yet it is not burning today. Similarly, in Jude 1:7, we read:

Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in a like manner giving themselves over to

fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

This issue is also referred to in 2 Peter 2:5-6. The fires are no longer burning, but the consequences of the fires are everlasting.

The doctrine that the wicked dead are tormented forever and ever is repugnant and inconsistent with the character of God who demonstrated infinite love for the fallen race in the sacrifice of His Son. Pagan views had influenced the Jewish scholars in their thinking with regard to the afterlife. Josephus believed that the dead went either to heaven or to hell, whilst they awaited the resurrection. The righteous were assigned to a place which was called the "bosom of Abraham", whilst the wicked were separated from them by a deep chasm and were confined to a place where they could hear and see the fires of hell. These views are inconsistent with the clear teachings of Scriptures that the "dead know not anything". (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

Modern Christian scholars likewise cling to the doctrine of an immediate afterlife in heaven or in hell, and they cite as evidence a number of Bible passages, particularly the promise of Jesus to the thief on the cross and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, who upon their death went to hell and "Abraham's bosom" respectively. These texts need clarification if their teachings are to be in harmony with the rest of Scripture regarding the state of the dead.

Nowhere in the Scriptures is there a doctrinal teaching of an immediate afterlife. The Lazarus that Jesus raised from the dead did certainly not go to heaven or "Abraham's bosom" when he died. The New Testament teachings on this issue are plain. At Pentecost, Peter said:

*Men and brethren; let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with you until this day, for **David is not ascended into the heavens.*** Acts 2:29, 34

The Thief on the Cross

Did not the thief on the cross pass into Heaven when he died?

The thief addressed Christ on the cross:

...Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. Luke 23:42

He was looking at a future event, asking to be remembered on the day of final rewards. He was looking forward to the Second Coming. Matthew 16:28 refers to Christ "coming in His Kingdom" and in John 14:3 Christ Himself said: "I will come again." Jesus' reply to the thief on the cross was:

Verily I say unto thee today shalt thou be with me in paradise. Luke 23:43

Was the thief in Paradise with Christ "today" on Friday afternoon or evening? The answer is no, as Christ Himself had not even ascended into Heaven by that time, as he states on Sunday morning.

Touch Me not for I am not ascended to My Father.
John 20:17

If Christ had not ascended to Heaven by Sunday (resurrection morning), neither had the thief.

The reason for this confusion is to be sought in the fact that the original New Testament was written in Greek unicals which had each word running into the next without spacing or stops or verses as we now have. It was only after 1557 that verse divisions were introduced to the Biblical writings. The correct placing of the comma in Luke 23:43 is vital to our understanding of the text. Placing the comma after the "today" renders the text as follows:

Verily, I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.

Harmony then exists between this text and the statement in John 20:17 that Jesus had not yet ascended to heaven. The thief merely received the promise on the day of his crucifixion that he would be in heaven

when the Lord set up His Kingdom.

Several Bibles do place the comma in this position to give the correct sense. These are the *Lamson Version*, the *Emphasized Bible*, (by Joseph B. Rotherham of the disciples of Christ), and the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (Jehovah's Witnesses). The Methodist commentary by Adam Clarke also discusses the incorrect position of the comma.

Lazarus and Hell (*Luke 16:19-31*)

The position is often taken that the teaching of Jesus in these passages is to be taken literally. However, the language and setting are highly figurative and the story must be seen as a parable. Virtually every scene in the story contradicts the teachings of Scriptures, and the parable was therefore intended to convey spiritual truths to the leaders of Israel. The Jewish nation had been highly favoured by God as the depository of His truth. They were to serve as a light to the Gentiles, and lead the heathen nations to the only source of living water. For this reason, they had been placed at the crossroads between the great nations and trade routes of that time. Instead of fulfilling their mission, they had become bigoted and self-centered, claiming salvation only for themselves. Whilst priding themselves in their exclusivity, they had nevertheless embraced the heathen teachings regarding the afterworld, but always with the provision that their status qualified them for heaven. Jesus rebukes the hypocrisy of these views, and in the story of the rich man and Lazarus shatters the mold of this world view.

In the parable, the rich man represents the Jewish nation which was rich in spiritual truth, and the poor man represents the Gentiles. The rich man was "dressed" with the knowledge of the King of kings (purple is the colour of royalty) (Luke 16:19), and the means to attaining righteousness (white linen - Revelation 19:8) . The Gentile was covered in sores which represent sin (Isaiah 1:6) but no solution for his malady was offered him. Indeed, he was denied the very crumbs which fell from the spiritual table of the rich man. Jesus shattered this mold of Jewish thinking in his dealings with the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28) who also requested crumbs from the "rich man's table". In that encounter,

dogs were also mentioned and serve as a further type of the Gentiles, or those not favoured by God. Even the disciples requested Jesus to send the woman away, demonstrating the extent to which the teachings of the scribes had influenced their judgment.

As the parable unfolds, Jesus turns the viewpoint of the Jewish leaders on its head by placing the rich man in "hell" and the poor man in "Abraham's bosom". The whole of Matthew 23 laments the bigoted views of the scribes and Pharisees, and supplies the answers as to why the condition of the rich and the poor man are seemingly reversed. Moreover, the lesson is driven home to the disciples that case and status are no guarantee for salvation. The road is thus paved enabling the disciples to break with tradition and preach the gospel with power to the Jews and the Gentiles alike. Selfishness was at the root of Jewish beliefs, but God requires self to be lost and to "love thy neighbour as thyself".

The reliance on lineage was the next point addressed in the parable. The Jews claimed Abraham as their father (John 8:39), but in the parable "Father Abraham" was unable to help the rich man. The New Testament states that those who are in Christ are Abraham's seed (Galatians 3:29), and Christ came to restore the wounded and broken-hearted. It is only those who realize their own spiritual poverty and need for Christ who can attain the blessings of Christ. In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12), it is the poor in spirit, those who mourn, are meek, hunger and thirst after righteousness that can be filled and obtain mercy. In other words, one must acknowledge one's spiritual poverty, feel sorrow for one's sins, undergo a change of character with longing for the righteousness of Christ, to be filled.

Teachings based on tradition are next rebuked by Jesus. In Matthew 15:1-9, Jesus warns the scribes and the Pharisees that they nullify the Word of God by their traditions. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, no room is left for a second chance after death. A great gulf is fixed, and the rich man is denied the request to send warning to his brothers. The reason given is that they have Moses and the prophets or the Word of God. If we do not accept the teachings of Scriptures, then even a message from the dead would be useless for our salvation.

Each scene, as it unfolds in the parable, conveys a spiritual truth contrary to the mindset of the Jewish leaders. The modern trend

of literalizing the parable to support the doctrine of hell does great injustice to the intent of the story, and would negate the beautiful message it holds.

Thus, according to the Bible, death is a state of unconscious sleep. This does not mean that there is no record in heaven of the sleeping saints. God has a perfect record of our being, our very nature, and when He calls forth the sleeping saints, they rise with imperishable bodies and the characters which they have formed under the guidance of His sanctifying power. The Biblical record of death, far from being disturbing, is comforting. Our ancestors are not watching our every mistake and feeling the pain of our wrong choices. They are blissfully unaware of unfolding events as they sleep till the day of the resurrection. If we are fortified with these Biblical truths, then the deceptive power of false miracles and apparitions can have no hold over us and we will be better prepared to stand in the last days.

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¹ Spritten (December 15, 1889): 2.

² Moses Hull, *The Devil and the Adventists* (Chicago, 1899): 15-16, as quoted in Christian Edwardson, *Facts of Faith* (TEACH Services, Inc., 2001): 308.

³ Cardinal James Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers* (Ayers Publishing, 1978): 173.

11

THE ‘SPIRIT’ OF UNITY

We are living in a time where there is an unprecedented drive toward unity and conformity of religious thought. It is argued that all people serve the same God and thus tolerance for different viewpoints is an essential ingredient for peace amongst all peoples and nations of different persuasions. After all, Christ did pray for unity and it seems as if unity will have to come about before there can be any talk of real peace on this strife-torn planet of ours. When Jesus prayed in His High Priestly prayer:

*And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them,
that they may be one, even as we are one. John 17:22*

What type of unity did He have in mind? Was it a unity of the world so that world peace could finally come about? Did He not say:

*Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I
came not to send peace, but a sword. Matthew 10:34*

Jesus never advocated physical violence, so the sword He had in mind was the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God:

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the

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Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6:17

The spiritual battle to be fought was to be the battle over the Word. With this in mind, we can take a fresh look at Christ's prayer for unity. Firstly, Jesus is clearly not praying for world unity but for Word- based unity:

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest Me **out of the world**; thine they were, and thou gavest them Me; and **they have kept Thy word**. ... I pray for them. **I pray not for the world**, but for them which thou hast given Me, for they are thine. ... I have given them **thy Word**, and **the world hath hated them because they are not of the world**, even as I am not of the world. ... **Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy Word is truth.** John 17:6,9, 14,17*

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is beautifully simple, but it does require the surrender of the heart to His sanctifying power. There can only be one Jesus and that is the Word made flesh. The true can only be separated from the spurious on the basis of the Word.

*For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from **the simplicity that is in Christ**. For if he that cometh preacheth **another Jesus**, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive **another spirit**, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. 2 Corinthians 11:2-4*

Besides the Word being the key ingredient to true unity, there must also be fruits in accordance with the Word.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath

appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:11-14

God's people need earnest confession of sins. They need to come up to the standard of the Word and not compromise to meet the standards of the world. They need to stand together in humility of spirit and meekness. Where there are wrongs they need to be corrected. They need to restore the erring gently knowing that he that thinks he stands should take heed lest he also falls. They need to support and sustain each other. God can and will use an obedient church.

True Christianity and Christian unity is thus Word based - "*Thy Word is truth*", and such unity, according to Christ's words, will bring about hatred rather than peace. In light of this, how are we to interpret the drive towards Christian unity in the ecumenical movement, on the one hand, and the wider goal of a unity of religions culminating in a one-world religion, on the other? This unity can only be achieved at the expense of truth and has to be achieved through compromise. To the ecumenically minded theologian, unity at all cost is the driving force of his religious endeavors. If the Word cannot be the unifying force, then unity must be based on other criteria that can take its place, and for the Christian world these criteria fall into two main categories:

1. **Dogmatic unity** is the basis on which many theologians strive for unity. The dogmas bind them, what the church fathers said, the sacraments, the liturgies, and the social interactions.
2. **Experiential unity** where that which one experiences and feels - the moving of the Spirit, the signs and wonders, become the unifying factor. The experience is normative. This type of unity can cross

Biblical, doctrinal, as well as cultural barriers and bring diverse persuasions together in a common bond of praise. The question is, however, how do we know which ‘Spirit’ is leading, particularly in the light of the warning regarding the deceptions of the last days.

Take heed that no man deceive you For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Matthew 24:4, 24

Christian Unity and the Ecumenical Movement

How can the ecumenical spirit be squared with the stand of the Reformation on the Papacy and the doctrines of the Catholic Church?

The Reformation had based its separation from Rome on the Word of God, and had placed the gospel of Jesus Christ at the disposal of the common man. The striving of the Reformers was to make the Word of God available to everyone seeking knowledge of the plan of salvation. The free availability of the Scriptures severely challenged the doctrines and supremacy of Rome, and restored truths that had been lost through centuries of suppression of religious liberty. It is not here the intention to repeat what has been said in the previous chapters on the question of papal dogmas, but a brief summary is necessary to set the stage for events pertaining to the restoration of lost “Christian unity.”

The Reformation had restored many Biblical truths that had been lost or suppressed. The Reformers had clearly identified the papal system with the antichrist system. In the twelfth century, the Waldenses gave clear witness of the Antichrist, who they claimed was reigning in the church. Joachim, however, was one of the first to interpret prophecy pertaining to the Antichrist. Wycliffe, Jerome, Luther, Knox, Calvin, Baxter and the other leaders of the Reformation were united on the identity of the Antichrist. H. Grattan Guinness says:

LOST TRUTHS RESTORED			
1370 AD	John Wycliffe	Bible Restored	
16th Century	Martin Luther John Calvin	Faith Free Grace God's Law Bible Baptism	Lutheran Presbyterian Anabaptists
17th Century	John Smyth John James	Bible Baptism Sabbath	Baptists 7th Day Baptists
18th Century	John Wesley	Law & Grace, Con- version, Sanctification	Methodist
19th Century		Bible Prophecy	Advent Movement Mission Movement

Figure 11.1

And the views of the reformers were shared by thousands, by hundreds of thousands. They were adopted by princes and peoples. Under their influence, nations abjured their allegiance to the false priest of Rome. In the reaction that followed, all the powers of hell seemed to be let loose ...Yet the reformation stood undefeated and unconquerable. God's word upheld it...¹

Even the foreword of the old King James Bible refers to the Papacy as the man of sin, and warns against malignment from what it calls Popish persons.

Concerning the Antichrist (the Greek meaning of 'anti' being "in the place of"), the Bible says:

Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is

called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

Such claims have been made by the Papacy when Pope Boniface VIII, in his *Bull Unam Sanctam*, stated:

The Roman Pontiff judges all men, but is judged by no one. We declare, assert, define and pronounce: To be subject to the Roman Pontiff is to every creature altogether necessary for salvation...that which was spoken of Christ 'thou has subdued all things under his feet', may well seem verified of me...I have the authority of the King of kings. I am all and above all, so that God Himself and I, the Vicar of God, have but one consistency, and I am able to do all that God can do. What therefore, can you make of me but God?

Pope Leo XIII also claimed he was God in his encyclical letters and it is interesting that *Time Magazine*, on the incidence of Pope John Paul II's assassination attempt, wrote: "It's like shooting God."²

Rome was not willing to compromise on issues of doctrine with the Reformers, and Pope Paul III called the Council of Trent, which met in three sessions between 1545 and 1563. Protestants were present during the second meeting. The Council reaffirmed most of the doctrines disputed by the Reformists, including:

1. Transubstantiation
2. Justification by faith *and* works
3. The medieval mass
4. The seven sacraments
5. Celibacy
6. The doctrine of Purgatory
7. Indulgences
8. Papal power increased by giving the Pope the authority to enforce the decrees of the Council, and requiring church officials to promise him obedience.³

The Council of Trent (1545), which had been called by Pope Paul III to counter the reformation and to clarify the Roman Catholic doctrinal position had, instead of reforming the church, entrenched the Catholic doctrinal position and teaching so abhorrent to the reformers. The Council reaffirmed the Church's position on the doctrines of transubstantiation, faith and works, the mass, the seven sacraments, celibacy, purgatory and indulgences, and increased the Papal power.⁴

The Counter Reformation

In spite of the separation of the Reformed churches from Roman Catholicism, Scripture predicts that at the end of time the whole world would follow the beast. This includes the churches of today. The Reformation would grind to a halt, and the principles, which lead to separation from Rome, would not be considered obstacles at the end of time. As discussed in the chapter *The Wine of Babylon*, Rome considers herself the mother of all the churches, and her strivings have been to bring about the return of her separated children to her.

Preterism and Futurism

To meet the challenge and exposure of the Papacy as the Antichrist and the Pope as the “son of perdition”, the Jesuits were summoned to counter the Reformers’ teachings, and here two Jesuit scholars stand out in particular. They are Alcasar and Ribera, and they developed the preterist and futurist systems of prophetic interpretation. The preterist interpretation puts all prophecy pertaining to the Antichrist into the past (persecutors outside the Jewish or Christian religion), and the futurist interpretation puts them into the future - after the Christian dispensation and the Secret Rapture. Ribera published his futurist views in 1585.

According to the futurist view, the Antichrist was to come from the tribe of Dan, and would make his appearance after the secret rapture. He was to rebuild the temple, abolish the Christian faith, pretend to be God and then conquer the world in the space of three-and-a-half

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years. Furthermore, futurism teaches that, instead of coming with the clouds with great power and great glory, our Saviour will come secretly and silently to take away his Church - a teaching foreign to that of the apostles.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

The apostles referred to the spirit of antichrist already working in their time, to be fully revealed at the end of time. There is no question of referring to the antichrist power in the past. Jesus in Matthew 24 speaks of this great apostasy as a future event, not a past occurrence.

In the nineteenth century, the Protestant world, starting with the Anglican priest Samuel R. Maitland, accepted the futurist teachings and saw in it an opportunity to cease hostilities with Rome.

The prophetic interpretation of futurism was further refined, when, according to S.P. Tregelles, dispensationalism originated in an “utterance” by means of tongues in Edward Irving’s church in England. The futurist dispensationalistic mode of prophetic interpretation has been accepted by most Protestant churches today, and is the form of interpretation employed in the Scofield Reference Bible.⁵ Dispensationalism is a product of futurism and it teaches that history is divided into seven dispensations:

HUMAN

Figure 11.2

Innocence Kingdom	Conscience	Government	Promise	Law	Grace	Millenium
Before Eternity sin (Eden)	Antediluvial civilisation	Postdiluvial period	Abraham to exodus	Levitical era	Church period	Era of Peace

During the dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom, the Jews will preach the Gospel after the rapture of the Christians. The Jews will be suppressed by the Antichrist and the visible appearing of Christ will save them at the end of seven years. According to futurists, the Church is concerned with grace, and the Jews are concerned with the Kingdom. The Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come" can therefore have no meaning to the Christian. Furthermore, Scofield allows for no continuity between the Old Testament believer and the New Testament church. Not even Christ spoke to us (because he taught under the old dispensation); only the epistles speak to us.

Most men who subscribe to dispensationalism are of Calvinistic creed, with a deep-rooted belief in predestination. According to this doctrine, man has so far fallen in sin that he is unable to choose for himself. Salvation is therefore not conditional but unconditional, and one is either predestined to eternal salvation or to eternal damnation. All promises of Scripture are also unconditional, and the Jews were God's chosen people whether they wanted to be or not.

This is not a Biblical teaching: it destroys man's freedom of choice, relegates him to the position of a pawn, and renders the teaching of the Gospel obsolete. This teaching is in clear violation of the Biblical teaching of conditionalism (Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 28:1,15; Jeremiah 18:7-10 and many other texts in both the Old and the New Testament). It is the doctrine of predestination, which opened the way to the acceptance of dispensationalism by the Calvinistic churches. Without the uttering in tongues in Irving's church, this system of interpretation would never have arisen, because no one taking the Bible alone (*sola scriptura*) would have accepted it. Scripture warns against deceptive teachings of spirits. Paul writes:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. 1 Timothy 4:1

Paul admonishes all to make the Word of God our standard and to come into harmony with the teachings of Christ so that we would be protected from false doctrines.

And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. For the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.
Ephesians 4:11-14

Higher Criticism and Rationalism

A further attack on Protestant teachings was introduced through the Roman Catholic scholars, Richard Simon and Dr. Alexander Geddes in 1678, whereby most of the Biblical stories pertaining to the flood, the virgin birth and the resurrection were slated as myths. Higher criticism and German rationalism have destroyed fundamental beliefs in Biblical truths and, unfortunately, scholars of the Reformed churches have adopted these teachings. There is hardly a Protestant church that has not officially endorsed the teachings of Darwinism on origins.

A further rift between Protestantism and Catholicism should have occurred when Pope Pius IX, in 1854, proclaimed the immaculate conception of Mary, thus laying the foundation for Mary veneration. He also enthroned tradition as being of greater value than the Scriptures. (He once rebuked a dissenting bishop with the words: “*Tradition, I am tradition.*”) In 1869, he called the Vatican I Council.

Vatican I

The peak of papal power under Pius IX was reached with the opening of Vatican I where the Ultramontanists, under Jesuit leadership, gained a resounding victory, and the result of this victory was the publication on 13 July 1870 of the dogma of Papal Infallibility.

Pope Pius IX also issued an encyclical “The Syllabus of Errors” which condemned liberal theology, and condemned the Bible Society

and Scripture distributors as heralds of infidelity and heresy. Furthermore, the Pope issued a strong attack on the separation of church and state.⁶

Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley and other Reformers were ordained by God to do a great work but, unfortunately, the church which arose after them, having restored lost Bible truths, was not willing to search for other lost truths or to include those found by others into their creeds. John Robinson summed it up in these words, as he charged the Pilgrim Fathers:

*If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth of my ministry; for I am very confident the Lord hath **more truth** and light yet, to break forth out of His holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instrument of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther says; . . . and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their time, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received.... take heed, I beseech you, what you receive for truth, and compare it and weigh it with other scriptures of truth before you accept it; for it is not possible the Christian would come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.⁷*

The consistent rejection of truth can grieve away the Holy Spirit whose task it is to lead us into 'all truth'.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will

guide you into all truth... John 16:13

Sad to say that apart from the Papacy following false doctrine, the Protestant Churches, by not accepting all the lost truths, began to sip the wine of Roman Babylon.

The Sunday error is adhered to by almost all Protestantism. Infant baptism is practised, and there are Protestants who preach purgatory. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are rejected. Says Dr. R. L. Elson (Presbyterian):

What is needed today is to finish the Reformation, which reached its apex in the sixteenth century through the ministry of Luther, Calvin and Knox.

Unification with Rome

Prior to 1960, the Catholic Church was still regarded by many with suspicion, and the ideas of the Reformers had not yet been obliterated from the minds of many Protestants. Furthermore, the Roman attitude was still believed to be that salvation was only to be found within the Catholic Church. The Reformed churches, however, had moved towards ecumenism, and in 1948, the World Council of Churches was formed, embracing most of the Protestant Churches, but excluding the Orthodox and Catholic churches.

The Impact of Vatican II

Pope Pius XII, in 1950, defined and enforced the doctrine of the Bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which should further have increased the distance between Catholics and Protestants on questions of doctrine. His successor, Pope John XXII, called the Vatican II Council, which did not revoke a single doctrinal position of the Catholic Church. In 1962, it declared that salvation was not only restricted to Roman Catholics, but could henceforth be found by all who live according to their conscience.

The theologian most associated with the pro-Vatican spirit is the Jesuit, Karl Rahner. Rahner endorses traditional Catholic doctrine

and its claim to universal truth, and asserts that salvation comes through Christ and the church on the one hand, but on the other hand, he believes that the people of God extend outside the Catholic Church and the other churches, to include the whole of humanity.⁸

The principles of the ecumenical movement were spelled out at Vatican II and it was asserted that the main aim of the entire ecumenical effort was to bring about the recognition of the supremacy of the bishop of Rome. In order for churches to unite, all churches must recognize the primacy of the Papal See. Pope John Paul II, in September 1995, issued a similar statement in which he claimed that recognition of the primacy of the Pope is essential for church unity. The headline of the article in the Catholic newspaper, *Southern Cross*, September 17, 1995, read:

For unity, all churches must accept papal authority.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church also states:

Christ bestowed unity on his Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time. Article 820

The final object of ecumenism, as Catholics conceive it, is unity in Faith, worship, and the acknowledgement of supreme spiritual authority of the Bishop of Rome.
Priest J. Cornell

For the Catholic Church, this unity that must be achieved, does not only apply to the separated Reformation Churches, but includes all the people of the world:

All Men are called to this catholic unity of the People of God... And to it, in different ways, belong or are ordered: the Catholic faithful, others who believe in Christ, and finally all mankind, called by God's grace of salvation. Article 836, Catechism of the Catholic

Church

It is surprising to see how rapidly the world community of churches has accepted the idea of the universal primacy of the Papacy. Prior to Vatican II, there was still a noticeable rift between Catholics and Protestants, but moves towards dialogue between Reformed churches were well under way. By 1958, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the International Missionary Council (IMC) had joined forces, and in 1961 the Orthodox churches and some Pentecostals were also represented at the meeting of the Council. In 1963 the All-Africa Church Conference resolved that:

Church unity was a Unity, which we seek among ourselves, between ourselves and the independent churches, and between ourselves and the Roman Catholic Church.

Time Magazine, November 25, 1966 stated that the brand new Lutheran council in the United States sent cordial greetings to the Washington meeting of Roman Catholics. This was stated “as evidence that the spirit of unity is reciprocal.” A Lutheran theologian has urged Protestants to focus their attention on a return to their ecclesiastical homeland - the Roman Catholic Church. In 1969, the Pope visited the headquarters of the World Council of Churches, and *Time Magazine*, June 20, 1969 reported this to be: “The real event of the trip.” In the 1968 Uppsala meeting of the WCC, the Roman Catholic Church sent observers and again in 1975 to the Nairobi meeting.

In 1975, the growing partnership between Protestantism and Catholicism was demonstrated by the release of a joint common catechism. This 720-page book offers comprehensive statements of the Christian faith and, according to the editors, was written:

to help ensure that Christians cooperate within their own communities in the common growth of the churches towards that unity in variety, which is the goal of all ecumenical effort.

This document encourages many compromises, and brushes aside basic Biblical precepts with impunity. The following are a few extracts to

illustrate this point:

1. The moral directives we might find in the Decalogue, as well as in the Sermon on the Mount are, *“to a large extent conditioned by their age and their cultural environment.”*
2. Many New Testament passages are described as interpretations rather than historic events, and some statements of Jesus were, *“put in the mouth of Jesus”* by his apostles; sayings which *“the historical Jesus never uttered.”*
3. Subjects such as the physical resurrection of Jesus are regarded as a *“permanent problem”* for modern man, *“full of difficulties.”*

Its message needs to be reinterpreted in a more meaningful manner since the raising of Jesus from the dead is a concept formulated ‘in the language of the Jewish apocalyptic’ which has hardly any relevancy in our modern socio-cultural context.

Has the Roman Church perhaps changed its attitude and moved closer to the Protestant faith? The Vatican II Council did not change one doctrine of faith, and since then the Vatican has become even more austere in its policy regarding the preservation of traditional Catholic doctrine.

Pope John Paul II revived the “Congregation for Doctrine and Faith”, a new name for the organization of the Inquisition, presided over by German-born Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. The Pope has appointed tough disciplinarians to the hierarchy and stated that he is not running a democracy: “It is an institution governed by Jesus Christ, a theocratic one”; run, of course, by His Vicar, the Pope. Also, he has issued an encyclical *A Refinement of Evil*, in which Catholic doctrines are strongly supported. In spite of this, he expressed his confidence that the ecumenical movement would succeed in uniting the churches once again. Pope John Paul II In his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* states:

Pope John XXIII, who was moved by God to summon the

council used to say: 'What separates us as believers in Christ is much less than what unites us.' In this statement we find the heart of ecumenical thinking.... By the year 2000 we need to be more united, more willing to advance along the path toward the unity for which Christ prayed on the eve of His Passion. This unity is enormously precious. In a certain sense, the future of the world is at stake. pp.146, 151

Vatican II emphasized the importance of the Sunday assembly in Catholicism and by extrapolation in the whole world. Vatican II documents state:

Moreover, any endeavour to make Sunday a genuine 'day of joy and rest from work' should be encouraged ... celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday, from the outset of their Christian formation 'Sunday should be presented as the primordial feast day,' on which, assembled together, they are to hear the Word of God and take part in the Paschal Mystery.⁹

Beside Sunday being the first day of the week, no Bible believing Christian can celebrate the Eucharist and take part in the Paschal Mystery, as these are of pagan origin. Moreover, the Catholic idea of Sunday is diametrically opposed to the Protestant concept of worship as it is a day founded on tradition, 'the day of the sun', and dedicated to the veneration of Mary as clearly stated by Pope John Paul II himself in his encyclical *Dies Domini*:

DIES DIERUM: Sunday: the Primordial Feast, Revealing the Meaning of Time. ... The spiritual and pastoral riches of Sunday, as it has been handed on to us by tradition, are truly great. ... Significantly, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life...As they listen to the word proclaimed in the Sunday assembly, the faithful

look to the Virgin Mary, learning from her to keep it and ponder it in their hearts (cf. Lk 2:19). With Mary, they learn to stand at the foot of the Cross, offering to the Father the sacrifice of Christ and joining to it the offering of their own lives. With Mary, they experience the joy of the Resurrection, making their own the words of the Magnificat which extol the inexhaustible gift of divine mercy in the inexorable flow of time: "His mercy is from age to age upon those who fear him" (Lk 1:50). From Sunday to Sunday, the pilgrim people follow in the footsteps of Mary, and her maternal intercession gives special power and fervour to the prayer which rises from the Church to the Most Holy Trinity."

How far removed from the simplicity of Christ. Yet Protestantism seems blissfully unaware of the compromise of faith they will have to contend with if they accept papal authority and unity of churches and religions under his leadership. How far have the Protestant churches moved towards this unity?

The Anglican Church

In 1966, Archbishop Dr. Michael Ramsay predicted the reunification of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. His successor, Dr. Donald Coggan, declared that, in such a union, the Pope would be Primate. In 1969, the joint Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission (ARCIC) investigated doctrinal differences, and in 1977 issued the following statement.

It seems appropriate that in any future union, a universal primacy, such as has been described, should be held by [the Roman] See.¹⁰

In 1989, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Robert Runcie, went to Rome and urged Christians to reconsider the Pope's primacy as spiritual leader. He wore a ring given to one of his predecessors by Pope Paul VI, and told John Paul II that,

... it was a sign not unlike an engagement ring.¹¹

The successor of Robert Runcie is Michael Carey. Carey is a committed ecumenist, and chairman of the important Faith and Order Advisory Group, which deals with church doctrinal issues. According to *Time Magazine*, he has been closely associated with the charismatic movement, which practices speaking in tongues. He has encouraged parishioners to visit shrines of Mary and has rejected literal interpretations of Biblical events such as the creation and the flood. He has publicly gone on record as a supporter of reunification of Rome.

In June 1999 the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches issued a joint statement "The Gift of Authority". *The Daily Telegraph* June 1999 responded with the headlines:

Churches agree Pope has overall authority. *The joint document states that the Pope was to be recognized as the overall authority in the Christian world, and described him as a "gift to be received by all the Churches." The commission concluded that the Bishop of Rome had a "specific ministry concerning the discernment of truth" and accepted that only the Pope had the moral authority to unite the various Christian denominations.*

With this statement, the Anglican Church has surrendered its Protestant heritage and has subjected itself to the papal hierarchy. If, as we have seen in the chapter *The Wine of Babylon*, Rome is the visible head of the end-time Babylon, then sadly, there can be no other conclusion than that the Protestant Anglican Church has officially made itself part of Babylon.

The Lutheran Church

The Rev. Dr. Carl E. Braaten has said,

If Luther were here today he would sound a different call, especially if he knew that his reformation would, in the long run, turn out so many illegitimate offspring.

The noted Dr. Alexander Campbell said,

The worshipping establishments now in operation throughout Christendom, encased and cemented by their respective voluminous confessions of faith, and their ecclesiastical constitutions, are not churches of Jesus Christ but the illegitimate daughters of that mother of harlots - the Church of Rome.

The Roman Catholics and the Lutherans have held communal masses, and in 1974 the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the United States published the *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, 1974, Vol. V. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press)

On December 31 1994, *The Telegraph* of London carried the stunning article with the headline. "Germany calls to ask: forgive Luther." In 1995, the Lutherans sent a delegation to Rome and newspaper articles appeared in Germany and England stating that the Protestant churches were seeking forgiveness from Rome for the Reformation. In 1998, the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation issued their 'Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification' and the world press heralded it as a healing of the rift. The synod of the Lutheran Church (Evangelische Kirche) has also adopted the resolution that the Pope should no longer be regarded as the Antichrist.

At the main Lutheran cathedral 'Der Dom' in Berlin, Catholics and Lutherans hold communal mass. Services are alternated between Roman Catholic and Lutheran theologians. Pictures of Mary have been reintroduced, and the ritual of candle lighting for favours from the virgin is once again common practice. Sadly, the Lutheran Church has followed the same road as the Anglican Church.

The Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists

In South Africa, these churches are negotiating reunification with the Anglican Church, whilst the latter is grabbing the hand of Rome.¹² In 1969, during Pope Paul's visit to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches, the Presbyterian, Eugene Carson Blake,

general secretary of the World Council, acknowledged the historic import of the meeting in his welcome, telling the Pope that his visit “proclaims to the whole world that the ecumenical movement flows on ever wider, ever deeper toward the unity and renewal of Christ’s church”.

Bishop Stanley Mogoba, chairman of the Methodist Church in South Africa, said that the great challenge of the different churches is to speak with one prophetic voice to the State. He said that a strong, common base still existed between the churches.¹³

The Dutch Reformed Church

Dr. Bam of the Dutch Reformed Church made the following statement:

The time is more than ripe to look at what we have in common, and not only at what separates us.

The assassinated Professor Heyns, erstwhile head of the Synod, supported him in this. Pastor Justice du Plessis, known as Mr. Pentecost, and one-time leader of the World Council for Charismatic Churches, also urged the churches to join forces with the Roman Catholic Church.

In South Africa, the ecumenical movement has since progressed, and besides the South African Council of Churches, the Church Alliance of South Africa (CASA) was formed in June 1988 with the expressed aim of encouraging Church unity and acting as the conscience to the government. In their newsletter of 1st January 1990 they write:

The time has come for the children of God in South Africa to realize that they are all - in spite of differences in denomination, language and culture - part of the body of Christ in this beautiful country.

Just what is causing this wave of reunification? *The Argus*, 12 August 1972 under the banner heading “Charismatic wave of unity among South African churches”, writes:

An unprecedented spirit of unity between Roman Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal churches in South Africa was said this week by churchmen to be spreading. On our own doorstep there has been a tremendous response from Roman Catholics and Anglicans far beyond our thinking and asking. Suddenly there has appeared an open door at which members from two different poles - the Pentecostals and Orthodox churches - are finding a point of meeting.

The Orthodox Church

Both the Russian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox churches have held extensive ecumenical discussions with Rome, and the patriarchs of these churches have sought reconciliation with Rome. Pope John Paul II has visited Turkey and made a speech in the Orthodox Cathedral wherein he alluded to the primacy of the Papacy, without a word of remonstrance from the patriarch. In May 2001, he visited Greece on his famous 'Following in the Footsteps of Paul' crusade to demonstrate to the world his reconciliatory spirit.

Relations with the Russian Orthodox Church have also been normalized. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new patriarch was chosen as the head of the Russian Orthodox Church - a longtime enemy of Roman Catholicism. The new patriarch was, to the surprise of the world, not a Russian, and also had strong associations with the ecumenical movement. *Time Magazine* reported:

The pope may no longer be an Italian, but it goes without saying, that the patriarch of Moscow and all Russia must be a Russian. Until last week that is, when yet another unbreakable rule was broken in the Soviet Union. At the resplendently gilded Trinity - St. Sergius Monastery in Zagorsk, the election of an Estonian of German stock, Metropolitan Aleksy of Leningrad, was elected as the patriarch of Moscow.

The article continues to say that the choice of an anti-Catholic prelate

would have sent anti-Catholic signals to the Vatican.

The widely travelled Aleksy, in contrast, is a committed ecumenist who for 22 years served as president of the Conference of European Churches, a continent-wide Orthodox and Protestant body.

Subsequent to these thunderous events, Pope John Paul II called upon the Jesuit Order to oversee events in Russia, and take personal care of the retraining of priests for this assignment. This was recorded in an article titled “Making up with the Jesuits” in *Time Magazine*, Dec. 10, 1990.

American Evangelicals

Billy Graham is probably the greatest Protestant evangelist of recent time. Yet even he has become a supporter of the ecumenical movement seeking reunification with Rome. *The Religious News Service*, January 13, 1981 reported:

Pope John Paul II was closeted for almost 2 hours with the Reverend Billy Graham, the world’s best-known Protestant evangelist.

The Star, June 26, 1979 quotes Billy Graham as saying that the Pope is almost an evangelist. He praised the Pope for pushing forward the religious revival worldwide. On receiving an honorary degree from the Roman Catholic Belmont College, Billy Graham told his audience, “*The gospel that founded this college is the same gospel which I preach today.*”

Evangelicals in the United States have subsequently accepted reunification with Rome. Thirty-nine leading evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics affirmed each other as Christians and vowed to reduce conflict between the groups. A twenty-five page document was signed by such prestigious leaders as Charles Colson, Pat Robertson, John Cardinal O’Connor of the Southern Baptist’s Home Mission Board, as well as other distinguished archbishops, bishops, and scholars. The

drafters of the document included Catholic Richard John Neuhaus, head of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship, Catholic George Weigel, director of the Ethics and Policy Centre, and Kent Hill, president of Eastern Nazarene College. The document accepts that Protestants and Catholics alike who accept Christ as Lord and Saviour are fellow Christians and members of the one church of Christ. It also recognizes that:

Our communal and ecclesial separations are deep and longstanding, and that they may never be resolved short of the Kingdom come.

Nevertheless they promise to work together for Christ. It also calls for a strengthening of the relationship of trust. Robert Schuller is reported to have said:

*It is time for us Protestants to go to the Holy Father in Rome and ask him how we can come home.*¹⁴

The *Chattanooga Free Press* reported a stunning summary of statements by the Episcopal Church:

*When the Most Rev Randolph Adler, Archbishop of the International Communion of the Charismatic Episcopal Church spoke in Chattanooga recently, those who heard him were shocked . . . He preached a message about the failure of Protestantism and its forthcoming destruction . . . "God's church is Catholic!" he declared. "It was Catholic in the beginning, and it will be Catholic in the end." Dr. Ben Ohnson, a professor at Columbia Theological Seminary: "We are seeing the ending of Protestantism as it is known . . ." Dr. John Hall of the United Church of Canada: "We are witnessing the demise of Protestantism."*¹⁵

In giving up its principles and compromising faith and doctrine, Protestantism has opened the door to a flood of evils. Conforming to the

world, spiritism, the consulting of the dead, and ancestral worship have become part and parcel of the religious experience. At the 1961 WCC meeting in New Delhi, the slogan was: "The church must be converted to the world of today" and in 1966, the WCC adopted the resolution of "Unity of all Peoples". At the WCC's Seventh Assembly, held in Canberra, Australia, from February 7-20, 1991, the overall theme was: "*Come Holy Spirit - Renew the Whole Creation*". Ms. Chung Hyung Kyung, a theology professor and minister of the Presbyterian Church, South Korea, gave the second key-note address. She arrived on the stage dancing with two Aboriginal men in loincloths, and 16 Korean men with gongs, drums and banners. She invited the audience to "*get on holy ground with me by taking off your shoes while we are dancing to prepare the way of the spirit*". Then with candles burning on either side of her, she invoked the spirits of the dead by reading the names from a printed list. Among the departed spirits she invoked were Hagar, Uriah, male babies killed by Herod, Joan of Arc, Jewish people killed in the gas chambers, Mahatma Gandhi, Steve Biko, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and finally "*the spirit of the Liberator, our brother Jesus, tortured and killed on the cross*". She then burned the list and scattered the ashes into the air.

At the fifth "Christian Parapsychology" conference (patrons include the Archbishop of York, Dr. David Hope), at Christ Church College, Canterbury, calls were made to hold seances in the churches to assist deceased atheists in their spiritual transition.¹⁶

Rome and World Religions

It is not only Christians that need to unite with Rome, but all religions need to recognize the Pope as the spiritual leader of the world. The Vatican has repeatedly made it clear that the Pope was to be seen as the "Father of the whole human family." Malachi Martin wrote about Pope John Paul II:

*For in the final analysis, John Paul II as the claimant Vicar of Christ does claim to be the ultimate court of judgment on the society of states as a society.*¹⁷

In 1986, a meeting of world religions was held in Assisi, where the Pope acted as host. The meeting was televised worldwide, and present were the leaders of Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu religions as well as leaders of most other minor religious organizations. At this meeting, and at subsequent meetings in “the spirit of Assisi”, the Pope is the spokesman and central figure. This annual forum is celebrated with great pomp, and leaders of all religions parade their solidarity with the Pope. A further forum is the Parliament of World Religions, which propagates the theme that all religions serve the same God. It is noteworthy that the United Nations is the forum of many of these high level discussions, and that the Pope has used this forum as the representative of all the religions of the world.

After the events pertaining to the Gulf Crisis, Israel came to establish diplomatic relations with the Roman See. The longtime animosities between Rome and the Jewish religion are matters of the past. In his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, Pope John Paul II states that it had ever been his intention to establish links with Israel. He also states that in one of their discussions, a Jewish leader thanked the Church of Rome for all it had done for God over the past 2000 years. During the Pope's 1999 visit to the United States, Rabbi Robert Jacobs praised the Pope for being the first Pope to acknowledge Judaism.

The visible relations between Islam and Catholicism have also been astounding. On the occasion of the Pope's May 2001 visit to Syria, *Reuters International Press* featured the following report:

DAMASCUS (Reuters) - Pope John Paul made history on Sunday by becoming the first Pontiff ever to enter a mosque, and urged Christians and Muslims to forgive each other for the past. Speaking inside the Great Umayyad mosque, a splendid testimonial to Syrian history, he also said religious conviction was never a justification for violence. “Never more communities in conflict,” he said in the mosque, which contains a memorial to St. John the Baptist. Outside lies the tomb of Saladin, who drove the Crusaders from the East. The Pope, who revolutionized ties with the Jews by visiting Rome’s synagogue in 1985, said it was now time to

turn the page with Islam too. "For all the times that Muslims and Christians have offended one another, we need to seek forgiveness from the Almighty and to offer each other forgiveness," he said in his address to Muslim leaders, including the Grand Mufti of Syria. "Better mutual understanding will surely lead... to a new way of presenting our two religions, not in opposition as has happened too often in the past, but in partnership for the good of the human family." The Pope, respecting Muslim tradition, took off his shoes before stepping into the worship site, to the cheers and claps of scores of people waiting outside. "These are great historical moments. The Pope...is entering the mosque," Syrian state television announcer said. "It is the meeting of Islam and Christianity." The call for mutual forgiveness was the continuation of a theme begun Friday in Greece, where the Pontiff sought God's forgiveness for the wrongs committed by Catholics against Orthodox faithful in the past 1,000 years.

The Pope is the world's highest religious authority. However, this status has clearly not been achieved on the basis of truth but on the basis of compromise. Moreover, the religious principles and doctrines of the Papacy are the revival of pagan sun worship (see *Wine of Babylon*) and constitute what the Bible calls the Babylon of the end times. Confederacy with Rome and submission to its authority makes one part of Babylon. By acknowledging his leadership, they also acknowledge his doctrines:

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?
Romans 6:16

Clearly, Protestantism, by its own admission, has returned to the Mother Church and the other world religions are also in confederacy with her. The Bible warns about this threefold confederacy of the Dragon, the Beast, and the false prophet. The false prophet is the component of

Babylon that will produce the false signs and wonders whereby the people will be deceived to follow the Beast and to receive its mark.

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. Revelation 19:20

Slighting truth is dangerous and opens the door to deception.

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

God never tempts or deludes anyone, therefore the delusion refers to God's permissive will. God permits that the devil deludes and deceives the people because He has given them ample instruction and opportunity to accept the truth. Eventually God will be the victor when He finally destroys spiritual Babylon who has deceived the nations:

And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. Revelation 18:23

Ecumenism is just another movement toward the establishment of that super-church, Babylon the Great, who will eventually persecute those who do not conform themselves with her. How true are the words of

Truth Matters

John Knox in 1547 with reference to the Papacy:

Flee from Babel, if you do not want to partake in her destruction"¹⁸

The second angel's message declares,

Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Revelation 14:8

Revelation 18 repeats the message of the second angel with the added admonition to separate from her.

*Babylon the Great is Fallen, is Fallen And I heard another voice from heaven saying, **come out of her my people**, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Revelation 18:2,4 (Emphasis supplied)*

The second angel's message is a message of separation from Babylon, whereas the ecumenical movement is a message of uniting with Babylon. Compromise is impossible. God is calling a people to make a stand for His truth. There are only three definitions of truth in the Bible: Jesus is the truth, His Word is the truth, and His law is the truth. (John 14:6, 17:17, Psalm 119:142) God is gathering a people. The Reformers were willing to die for what they believed. They had studied the prophecies that clearly identified the Papacy as the Antichrist. Let us not reject the prophets and may the following words of Jesus not apply to us:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not. Matthew 23:37

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12

STRANGE FIRE

Why has the Counter Reformation been so successful? How is it possible that all that the Reformation stood for could be brushed aside so readily? The Bible clearly gives its own answer. Delusion and deception have played a major role. The spirit of unity that controls the churches is based on emotion rather than truth and it will require careful study to distinguish truth from error. Revealing error is a painful exercise, and it is not the intention here to belittle any avenue of faith, but since souls are at stake, it is vital that we study the Scriptures and seek to come into harmony with them.

Prior to Vatican II, most Protestants were weary of Rome, but Vatican II changed that. In real terms, Vatican II did not change the position of Rome, but the perceptions of Rome were changed. The question is, how was this achieved? The only way to lead people away from concentrating on doctrinal issues is to introduce them to experiential religion. To this end, Vatican II also issued directives for the style of worship to be adopted by churches. Henceforth, the church community should participate more in church services and become involved in worship procedures. There should be a shift away from traditional sermons and more concentration on the reading of Psalms and extracts of the Gospels. Popular music should be introduced into services, and physical movement of the congregation during singing should be encouraged. Modern musical instruments should be brought

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into the service, and popular songs should replace the more traditional hymns. The style of worship should be adapted to suit the culture of the nations. The Liturgical section of the Vatican II document, Vol. 1. on this issue can be summarized as follows:

Get the churches accustomed to celebration terminology and the celebration concept. Every function of the church becomes a celebration. . . .Get the churches accustomed to a revitalized style of celebration service . . . Reduction of inhibition . . . Lots of physical gestures, bodily attitudes and movement. Set forth song and musical celebration services as the most effective celebrations. Utilizing popular religious songs and relating music to the various cultures and the temperaments of the people. ¹

The Vatican II document in the section on Music in the Liturgy states:

In order that the faithful may actively participate more willingly and with greater benefit, it is fitting that the format of the celebration and the degree of participation in it should be varied as much as possible, according to the solemnity of the day and the nature of the congregation present...The participation in the Celebration should be internal, but must be, on the other hand external also, that is, such as to show the internal participation by gestures and bodily attitudes. By acclamations, responses and singing. ²

Emotionalism is a vital ingredient of this type of worship. Not that there is anything wrong with emotions, but it is when they take the place of truth and rational thinking that they cannot be trusted. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* adds to the above statements of Vatican II.

1157. Song and music fulfil their function as signs in a manner all the more significant when they are more closely connected... with the liturgical action,

according to three principle criteria: beauty expressive of prayer, the unanimous participation of the assembly at the designated moments, and the solemn character of the celebration. In this way they participate in the purpose of the liturgical words and actions: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful: "How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs and the voices that echoed through your Church! What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears, distilling the truth in my heart. A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face - tears that did me good." 1158 The harmony of signs (song, music, words and actions) is all the more expressive and fruitful when expressed in the cultural richness of the people of God who celebrate.³

The word 'celebration' is repeated over and over again in these documents and emotionalism has a high priority. The danger is that liturgy (church format and activities other than preaching of the Word) can become so all-engrossing that it can replace the Word. Singing, responsive readings, music and praise activities can take the place of Word-based religion, thus offering a form of godliness without the sustenance of the heavenly bread.

In the same decade that Vatican II changed ecumenical thinking, the Christian world experienced a dramatic 'revival.' The charismatic movement, which had its first appearance at the turn of the century, spread like wildfire throughout the US and the rest of the world. The Pentecostal movement, however, still regarded the Roman Catholics with suspicion, as they had not been blessed by this spirit of renewal. However, by 1965 Erwin Prange wrote:

...recently I attended a Roman Catholic, Episcopalian and Lutheran retreat ... I am convinced that the basic meaning of the charismatic renewal is the reunion of the churches.⁴

In 1967, the faculty and students of the Catholic Notre Dame University,

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, (run by The Holy Ghost Fathers), prayed for the gifts of the “Holy Spirit”, and during one of their gatherings, hundreds of adherents to the Catholic faith received what they had asked for, and the Catholic Charismatic Movement was born.

Pope Paul VI was first under pressure to condemn the charismatic movement in the Catholic Church, but in 1975, at a mass gathering of 25 000 people, of which 10 000 were foreigners, he praised the spiritual renewal at St. Peter's in Rome. The journal, *Christianity Today*, June 6, 1975 writes:

Bishops, archbishops and cardinals, struggling to keep their hats in place, sang and danced in ecstasy, embracing one another, raising their arms to heaven. Pope Paul VI's address was punctuated with ecstasies.

Since the establishment of the charismatic movement within the Roman Catholic church, the Protestant and Orthodox churches have changed their stance towards Catholic acceptance. Colin Buchanin writes that:

The emergence of the Church of Rome as a partner in ecumenical discussions, and the impact of the charismatic movement, has totally changed ecumenical relationships.⁵

David du Plessis, in the early 1950s, believed that God was calling him as secretary of the Pentecostal World Conference to make contact with the World Council of Churches. Subsequently, he played a leading role in ecumenical circles. Since the 1960s, the penetration of Pentecostalism into older Protestant and Orthodox denominations has been dramatic. James Dunn writes:

The acceptance of Pentecostalism by the leaders of the World Council marks the first time that more traditional Christianity has genuinely welcomed this enthusiastic brand of faith and worship as a valid and important expression of Christianity. Previously,

such forms of Christianity were either persecuted or only able to flourish outside the organized church. Now the charismatic movement has increasingly broken down many of the barriers and misconceptions on both sides. It has spread across all the traditional classes of society and churchmanship, and Catholic Pentecostalism, particularly, has drawn in a calibre of scholarship, and a respect for authority, sacraments and tradition which was missing from classic Pentecostalism. . . . many leaders of national churches have moved from a cautious “No comment” to the view that the charismatic movement is the best hope for a renewal of the church in the closing decades of this century.⁶

It is interesting to note that Catholic Pentecostalism has led to increased reverence of Papal authority, increased exaltation of Mary and entrenchment of Catholic doctrine. The revival and phenomenal growth of the Church in the last few decades is, according to Padilla, part of a much wider revival of religion that is taking place all over the world.

Evidence of this revival includes the way occultism and Asian religions have come to flourish in the West, the resurgence of Islam in some areas of Africa, Malaysia and Pakistan, together with the revival of Buddhism in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma and Sri Lanka, of Hinduism in India and of Shintoism in Japan, the vitality of Spiritism in Brazil and of Sokka Gakkai in Japan.⁷

Professor Hollenweger of Birmingham University states:

The Charismatic movement had a tremendous potential to create trust and destroy suspicion between conflicting groups to provide a platform on which people could talk honestly and openly without being polarized . . . Already by bringing together Roman Catholics and Protestants, the Charismatic movement

*has worked 'miracles.'*⁸

Pentecostalism spread across the globe like wildfire and by 1996 the religious reports on this phenomenon had this to say:

*Ten thousand Charismatics and Pentecostals prayed, sang, danced, clapped and cheered under the common bond of the Holy Spirit during a four-day ecumenical convention last summer . . . About half the participants at the congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization, held July 26 to 29 in Orlando, Florida, were Catholics . . . "The Holy Spirit wants to break down walls between Catholics and Protestants," said Vinson Synan, theological dean of Pat Robertson's Regent University, who chaired the congress.*⁹

Since the Holy Spirit leads into all truth, there can be no compromise with error. It is therefore imperative that we study the function of the Holy Spirit carefully as well as the phenomena, such as healings and speaking in tongues that are ascribed to the Spirit. Does the Pentecostal movement satisfy the Biblical criteria with regard to the manifestations of the Spirit?

The Charismatic Movement and the Gifts of the Spirit

Charismatic churches largely subscribe to the futuristic dispensationalist view of prophetic interpretation and the gifts of the Spirit play an important part in their worship, particularly the gift of speaking in tongues, which is emphasized in many charismatic groups. In fact, this gift of tongues is often regarded as a special manifestation of the working of the Holy Spirit in one's life and is earnestly sought for. Extreme manifestations of this experience can be accompanied by other manifestations such as being '*slain in the Spirit*', and this can be coupled with healing experiences. Thousands of believers and unbelievers are attracted to healing ceremonies and can experience this power even if they have had no prior religious experience or come from an atheistic

background. It is true that lives are often changed by these experiences, and that alcoholics and drug addicts can walk away as transformed people. This leads to more and more conversions and accounts for the rapid growth of the movement.

What are the Biblical criteria for the workings of the Spirit and how do these compare to what is happening in the charismatic movement?

The Holy Spirit in Scripture

Jesus said to His disciples:

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John 14:15-17

Love for God produces fruits of obedience; *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* The Holy Spirit is promised to those who seek to live in harmony with God's Word, and the Spirit will comfort and reveal truth. God wishes to save all mankind, but we need to walk in the light revealed and to accept that salvation lies in Jesus Christ.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

Again we have the conditionalist aspect of salvation coming to the fore: *"if" we walk in the light.* The Holy Spirit that empowers for service is granted on the condition of obedience:

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*And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given **to them that obey him**. Acts 5:32*

Conversion means to turn around, to no longer live the life that one lived before, to turn from sin, which is the transgression of the law. In order to be used by God and to be filled by the Spirit, we must first be convicted of our sinfulness and need of salvation. This conviction is also brought about by the workings of the Holy Spirit:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: John 16:7-8

We need to be aware of our sinful condition so that we may seek the solution to the sin problem in the only One who can save us from our sins and cover us with His righteousness so that we will not come into the final judgment. This is the gospel in a nutshell. How surprising that the popular teachings of today seek to remove this obligation and teach another gospel of popular humanism whereby one's self esteem need not be convicted of its sinfulness. Contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture, Robert Shuler had this to say on the issue:

I don't think anything has been done in the name of Christ and under the banner of Christianity that has proven more destructive to human personality and, hence, counterproductive to the evangelism enterprise than the often crude, uncouth, and unchristian strategy of attempting to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition.¹⁰

We need to know what is wrong before we can correct it in His power and come back into an obedient relationship. Christ strengthens us against temptation.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the

things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Hebrews 5:8-9

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 1 Samuel 15:22

The Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of the Word of God so that we can be effective examples and witnesses for Him.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John 14:26

The gifts of the Spirit were thus given to bring us back into harmony with God and to further the Gospel.

1. The Holy Spirit would bring individuals to repentance of sin, guiding them in a fuller understanding of the truth about God and Jesus Christ. (Luke 24:46-49; John 14-16; Acts 4).

2. The fulfilment is to benefit those brought into the Church by the gospel witness. (John 17:20; Acts 2:38-39,46-47).

3. The gift of tongues was given to communicate the gospel to different language groups. (Acts 2:2-11, 43). In both Acts 2 and Acts 19, we see that tongues and prophecy are associated, and thus serve to communicate the Gospel.

4. The gifts were to promote unity within the church. (1 Cor 12: 18-27).

5. In the lists of spiritual gifts, (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-11,28-31; Eph. 4:11), only the gift of prophecy (communicating the Gospel) is presented in all four cases, and tongues only in 1 Corinthians, where it is at the end of the list.

Historicity of Speaking in Tongues

Ecstatic language was a common form of worship in pagan temples. It was well established in Ancient Byblos (1100 B.C.) and Plato (429- 347 B.C.) mentions it as a phenomenon in his time. Plato tells us that a person under divine possession received utterances accompanied with visions not understood by the receiver, which required interpreters. These utterances were sometimes accompanied by physical healing of people present. Virgil (70-19 B.C.) tells us that the Sibylline priestess, when in prayer, united her spirit with the god Apollo and spoke in strange tongues.¹¹

Glossolalia is mentioned during the early church period, and Irenaeus (114-202 A.D.), in his work *Against Heresies*, speaks out against the abuse of the prophetic gift which often lead to violent emotions and loss of chastity. In early times, the gift of tongues was regarded as the gift to speak languages with which to communicate the gospel. Origen (185-254 A.D.) writes of Paul's gift of tongues mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:18 and clearly refers to the gift as the ability to speak a known language in order to preach the gospel to others. He writes:

Since then anyone received the knowledge of languages, not for himself but for their sake to whom the gospel is to be preached, he is made debtor to all those whose language he received the knowledge from God.

By the fourth century, there is no record of glossolalia in the Church. The Reformists believed that tongues referred to known languages. Luther referred to translation as the ability to translate one known language into another known language. Calvin's study on

tongues is also exhaustive and in line with the Reformist view.¹² Wesley also believed that tongues were foreign languages.

Modern glossolalia has its origin among the Irvingites (after Edward Irving, 1792-1834). During the Civil War years, religious emotionalism was strong, and the “Inner Light of the Spirit” was considered to be the supreme standard, making the Bible subordinate to the witness of the Spirit. However, the Bible clearly teaches that the Word is the standard whereby truth must be measured and that the Spirit must be in harmony with the Word. The movement thought that the Age of Law had passed and the Age of the Spirit had come. Faith became a matter of feeling, power and enjoyment, and various interpretations of the Gospel such as dispensationalism crept into the Church.

Supernaturalism became supreme, and superseded the logic and the will. These preachers describe in their diaries how they would sing and dance and utter ecstasies while under the influence of the Spirit. George Tarter writes:

I was taken in a most pleasant manner, and was forced to lie singing and whistling; and then to rise out of my bed between one and two o' clock for to dance; and so continued singing and dancing near upon two hours by the clock.... and why I counted singing, is because I did (as being overpowered with joy) crie ha ha tall; toll lall derab la loll; la dero tall derall tall toll dero tall aroll atoll loll loll dero in such a way I did breake [sic] forth....I desired my brother that lay with me to lie upon me, and so he did, to try whether I should then shake, and I did tatter him up and down and shake so much, that he could not make me lie still... I shoke [sic] him as if he had been in a cradle.¹³

When the Irvingites experienced glossolalia in England, the Mormons under Joseph Smith, also spoke in tongues in the United States.

Father Smith would call upon some illiterate brother to rise and speak in tongues in the name of Jesus Christ. The order was given...Arise upon your feet, speak or make some

*sound, continue to make sounds of some kind, and the Lord will make a tongue or language of it.*¹⁴

Brigham Young also spoke in tongues and interpreted his own messages.¹⁵

The modern Pentecostal movement grew out of the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth century. The Kentucky Revival was characterized by falling, jerking, rolling, running, whining, whooping, holy laughter and barking exercises. The same manifestations are also experienced in the pagan religious rituals and ancestral worship. In Voodoo rituals and many African rituals, the beating of the drums induce a type of hypnotic trance enabling the “lesser god” to take control of the person, and this event is accompanied by the uttering of ecstatic languages. In some rituals, hallucinogens are taken to assist individuals to reach the state of altered consciousness required to induce the manifestations. How in the light of this does one distinguish between true gifts of the Spirit and false gifts of the Spirit? Moreover, in the light of the warnings regarding false manifestations of the “Spirit” at the end of time, surely the only safe recourse is to study the Scriptures. The “Power of God” is a theme that is also central to the charismatic revival. In their writings and reports they often refer to themselves as “People of Power” and in E. W. Kenyon’s book *In His Presence*, we find a glimpse of what this means. He writes:

To know that that defeat was administered to him by our Substitute, and set to our credit, so that in the records of the supreme court of the universe we are the masters of Satan, and that Satan recognizes that in the name of Jesus we are his rulers - when the heart knows this as the body knows heat and cold, then faith is unnecessary. . . We know that God Himself put Satan and all his ability beneath our feet, and we are looked upon by the Father, and by Satan, as masters of the dominion of darkness. . . . We are taking Jesus’ place....He came to destroy the works of the adversary. We are completing the work that He began.... You are a victor; He made you one; get used to it, so you can

*play the part.*¹⁶

This is a half-truth, since only Christ can obtain this victory. The power belongs only to Him and only through Him is it made manifest in His people. The Scriptures state that Christ will be this victor and that the crushing of Satan will take place only after Christ has obtained this victory:

For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 1 Corinthians 15:25

What is man that thou art mindful of him....Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet....but now we see not yet all things put under him....but we see Jesus. Hebrews 2:6-9

And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. Romans 16:20 NIV

The ‘shortly’ refers to the time when the controversy is ended at the Second Coming of Christ. Kenyon continues his analysis:

*He made us to sit with Him in the heavenlies; so representatively, we are seated on the throne with God. . . . So if the head is exalted, the body is exalted with it. . . . If He conquered all the forces of darkness and left them paralyzed and broken before He arose from the dead, it is as though we had accomplished that mighty work. . . . That authority and that ability belongs to the believer. . . The recreated man is supernatural. . . He is superman.*¹⁷

Before we can sit on the throne, there is a work of overcoming to done.

To him who overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am sat down with My Father in His throne. Revelation 3:21

Clearly there is a shift in emphasis from Christ to the believers and this can open the door for greater and greater manifestations of the “Spirit” in order to satisfy the soul. This has indeed happened, and on the evening of January 20, 1994, when a congregation of some 450 people were assembled in the small airport Vineyard church in Toronto, they burst into uncontrollable laughter. This brand of worship spread within months to churches all over the world, even as far as the Czech Republic, Cambodia, and Indonesia. In Britain alone, 3500 churches were “laughing in the Lord.” The laughing in the Lord phenomenon led to a state of drunkenness in which outward physical manifestations were common. Drunkenness, trembling, deep sobbing, as well as healings are common at such meetings. These events have been hailed as the great outpouring of the Spirit, yet the Bible admonishes:

Let all things be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:40

Since the Bible warns that the final exaltation of the man of sin will be made possible through false signs and wonders, then the charismatic revival needs careful evaluation, since this movement is one of the means whereby the barriers between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism are being broken down.

And then shall the wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. 2 Thessalonians 2: 8-10

Again it must be reiterated that the powerful delusion is ‘sent’ by God in the sense that He does not prevent it. It is His permissive will, since God does not tempt anyone.

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James 1:13-17

Signs and wonders are occurring across all religious boundaries ranging from milk drinking icons in Hinduism, light manifestations in Buddhism, apparitions and heavenly writings in Islam to Eucharist signs, apparitions and physical manifestations in Catholicism.

In Roman Catholic churches and areas, there is a mighty resurgence of signs and wonders. Statues are weeping blood, oil or tears, Eucharistic miracles are taking place (hosts turning to flesh or blood), apparitions of Mary are becoming more and more frequent and prophets and stigmatists (people who have the marks of Jesus' crucifixion) are becoming a prominent feature in Catholic churches. Some of these astounding occurrences have been recently highlighted in the book *The Thunder of Justice*, which has a foreword by the prominent Catholic theologian Malachi Martin, thus giving the book official backing. In this publication, "Mary" reaffirms the prominence of the Papacy and confirms that the great events of the last days are upon us. The position of Mary and her role in the plan of salvation are made very prominent as can be seen in the various titles, which are attributed to her:

Titles of Mary in Our Age

Prophetess of These Last Times
The Immaculate Conception
Mother Of the Church
Mary as the New Eve
Queen of Heaven and Earth/Queen of Peace
The Assumption

Queen of the Holy Rosary
Queen and Mother of Families
Mary as Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate
Our Lady of all Nations
Ark of the New Covenant
Mother of the Second Advent

The title of *Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate* alone tells us that these apparitions do not emanate from the throne of God, and the Bible is quite clear on this issue since they are not in harmony with the Word of God.

...to the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah 8:20

Marian apparitions have indeed become more frequent and universal and interestingly, they are often associated with glossolalia or speaking in tongues. In this regard, a CNN News Flash (Monday 9:12 am, 19 December, 1996) reported that a figure of the Virgin Mary appeared on the front windows on a building in Florida. It showed the rainbow-coloured stain of the window on TV of Mary holding the Jesus child as is often depicted in Catholic cathedrals. The report said “It was frightening to see it. Masses joined the worship of this phenomenon in front of this building, praying with rosary and crucifix in hand, while others broke out in ecstasies of tongues or glossolalia.”

Pentecost and Speaking in Tongues

Jesus promised that the disciples would receive power from on high, which would equip them for the work of the Gospel.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. Mark 16:17

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. Luke 24:49

The Greek word for power is “*dunamis*”, which means strength or ability or skill. This ability was to be used for a purpose, and the early Church received it at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit imbued them with this power or ability. We read about it in Acts 2:

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Acts 2:4

The empowering gifts were given at Pentecost, 50 days after the Passover. Pentecost was a commemoration of the giving of the law which spelt out the terms of the covenant relationship of Israel with God. After the sacrifice of the true Passover lamb, Jesus Christ, the people of God were now empowered to preach the gospel. The event transformed the disciples from fearful believers to true soldiers of Christ and they proclaimed the Gospel with power. Devout Jews of every nation were present when the gift of tongues was given to the disciples.

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. Acts 2:6

And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Acts 2:8

Acts 2 reveals that 17 languages were represented in Jerusalem and all the people heard them speak in their own language (Gr. “*idios dialektos*”), their own mother tongue “wherein we were born”. This implies more than just being able to speak the language, they even experienced the ambiance of the cultural background. After reiterating the multinational nature of the listeners, the Bible also states what they were talking about - the wonderful works of God.

Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues (Gr. "hemeteros glossa = in our languages") the wonderful works of God. Acts 2:11

This event was to bring about the fulfilment of Is. 56:3-6 where God promised that not only Israel would come into a covenant relationship with Him, but people of all nations that would obey Him, honour His Sabbaths, and keep His covenant.

Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. Isaiah 56:3-7

The gift of tongues was thus clearly a gift of communication; the disciples could communicate in the languages of the other nations, and the gift was intended to facilitate the spreading of the Gospel to those who had previously been excluded by the Jews. When Peter received the vision of the sheet filled with unclean animals, recorded in Acts 10, he was wondering as to the meaning when he was called to the house of Cornelius who, not being a Jew, would have been considered unclean by Jews. The vision was given Peter to show him that he should not

consider any man unclean.

And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Acts 10:28

Whilst Peter was speaking to the men, The Holy Spirit came upon them and they received the gift of tongues in the same manner as the disciples had. There was therefore no difference in the way that the gift manifested itself in Jews or Gentiles.

And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (BBE as we have) Acts 10:45-47

The gift of tongues was not always among the gifts granted by the Spirit, as it is God who determines who receives which gift.

How the Gifts Work

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 1 Corinthians 12:1

Since paganism is largely an experiential religion of rituals and repetitions of actions, there was not much cognitive function involved. One did whatever was required by the ritual. Paul, however, wants the newly converted Christians to understand the function of the gifts of the

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Spirit. Moreover, in paganism one sought favour from different gods according to the circumstances surrounding the request. Paul wants to make it clear that there are different gifts, but that they are all given by the same Spirit of God. Moreover, the gifts are distributed in such a fashion that the body as a whole benefits - not all receive the same gifts.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:9-10

Also, the gifts are distributed as God wills and not as man wills.

But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:11-12

In the light of these texts, it is not man's place to dictate to God which gift he or she would like to receive. Clearly, the gift of tongues (languages) was given to some and not to others and it is not man's prerogative to bend the arm of God in this regard, let alone make the receiving of the gift of tongues a test of acceptance by God. The body forms a harmonious whole, and no one portion is of greater significance than another. God decides who does what.

*But now hath **God set the members** every one of them in the body, **as it hath pleased him**....And the eye cannot*

*say unto the hand, I have no need of thee....And **God hath set** some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

1 Corinthians 12:18-21, 28-30

The underlying principle that pulses through everything that God grants His children is love. Love supersedes all and love is never selfish. The gifts of God are therefore also not granted for selfish purposes, but are granted to benefit others. Of course, benefiting others is a doubled-edged sword, and if we seek to benefit others, we will be filled ourselves also. This principle of love will lead to humility and not self-importance.

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil. 1 Corinthians 13:1-5 NIV

To summarize the principles as presented in 1 Corinthians, we can thus say:

1. *Worship is not mindless.* 1 Cor 12:1-3

2. *There is the principle of usefulness to the whole body of Christ.* 1 Cor 12:7

3. *There is unity and yet diverse gifts.* 1 Cor 12:10
4. *God distributes gifts.* 1 Cor 12:11
5. *There is equality and co-dependence.* 1 Cor 12:12-23
6. *The principle of selfless love applies to all gifts.*
1 Cor 13
7. *The Power of God constitutes the granting of the ability to spread the gospel.* Romans 1:16

Understanding Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is not as straightforward as it might seem at first glance, and it requires careful exegesis in order to unravel its various elements. The letter contains references to various documents and testimonies, none of which are available to the reader, and the information must therefore be gleaned from what is available. These elements include:

- a) Paul's first lost letter to the Corinthians, which he reminds them of
- b) The Corinthians' letter to Paul, which is also not available to the reader
- c) Chloe's verbal testimony to Paul concerning the state of the church
- d) Quotes from the literature and "knowledge" of the time

The relevant references to these components of the epistle are:

- a) *I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.* 1 Corinthians 5:9
- b) *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me.* 1 Corinthians 7:1
- c) *For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.* 1 Corinthians 1:11
- d) *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats,* (Epicu-

rian saying) *but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.* 1 Corinthians 6:13

Paul was a well-read intellectual of his day and he quotes from Philo, Epicurus, Menander and also pre-Gnostic thinkers. A further example of Paul's analysis of the thinking of his time is found in 1 Corinthians 15:32-33:

With no more than human hopes, what would have been the point of my fighting those wild beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are never raised to life, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.' Make no mistake: 'Bad company ruins good character.' NIV

Paul's argument only makes sense if we see the quotations, first of Epicurus, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die' [this is definitely not Paul's opinion, it is Epicurus talking!] and second Menander, 'Bad company ruins good character' [with this Paul would agree].

Paul tackles the elements of the letter that the Corinthians wrote to him one by one. They had been influenced by the thinking and philosophy of their time, and he had to rectify their misconceptions. The Epicurian dictum noted above is a prime example. Since the philosophers of the time also believed in the immortality of the soul, they argued that the body was merely a vessel for the much more important soul, which it housed. They further argued that because of the insignificance of the physical body, it did not matter what one ate or drank or how one used or misused the body, because the body would be discarded in any case. The Corinthians must have written something to this effect in their letter, and Paul, after quoting their dictum, shows his strong disagreement with the sentiments expressed - **"but"** God will destroy both this and these. **But** the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

In this first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul is dealing with some very delicate issues. The church had slipped off the rails and some urgent matters had to be rectified. False doctrines and practices had crept in and Paul voiced his displeasure regarding these activities. The letter is

thus a letter of rebuke and it is surprising that many use this epistle of rebuke to justify doctrines, which Paul actually condemns. Let us take a brief look at some of the issues that Paul was dissatisfied with, and for which he rebukes the Corinthians, before addressing his handling of the speaking in tongues issue.

*... **there are contentions among you.** Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. **Is Christ divided?** was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 1 Corinthians 1:11-13*
Emphasis supplied

*For **ye are yet carnal:** for whereas **there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions,** are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 1 Corinthians 3:3-4*
Emphasis supplied

*For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall **bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ,** as I teach every where in every church. Now **some are puffed up,** as though I would not come to you. 1 Corinthians 4:17-18*
Emphasis supplied

*It is reported commonly that **there is fornication among you,** and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And **ye are puffed up,** and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 1 Corinthians 5:1-2*
Emphasis supplied

*But **brother goeth to law with brother,** and that before the unbelievers. Now **therefore there is utterly a fault among you,** because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather*

*suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, **ye do wrong**, and defraud, and that your brethren. 1 Corinthians 6:6-8 Emphasis supplied*

*For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and **one is hungry**, and **another is drunken**. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or **despise ye the church of God**, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? **I praise you not**. 1 Corinthians 11:21-22 Emphasis supplied*

One of the classic misconceptions regarding Paul is that he was anti-marriage and anti-women. Nothing could be further from the truth. Paul speaks fondly of the women who supported his ministry, and he never said that it was good for a man not to touch a woman. It was the Corinthians who said it in their letter to Paul. Again this was part of the confusion of philosophies in the Corinthian Church. On the one hand, there was the group that believed that it did not matter what one did in the body, and on the other, there was the group that professed that dedication to the Lord meant abstinence from sexual relations with women even in marriage - an idea borrowed from celibacy vows in paganistic religions. After quoting what the Corinthians wrote in their letter, note the use of the word “but” in Paul’s response, indicating his disapproval of their statement. He then continues to state exactly the opposite to what their dictum inferred.

*Now concerning **what you wrote to me**: 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman.' **But**, nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to the husband. Do not deprive one another, except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer. And come together again so that Satan does not tempt you for your lack of self control.*

1 Corinthians 7:1-3,5 NKJV

1 Corinthians 14 – Dealing with Speaking in Tongues

Having addressed the issue of the general wrongs within the Corinthian Church, the nature and granting of Spiritual gifts and the principle of selfless love as the central theme to all Christian endeavors, Paul is now ready to address the misuse of the gift of tongues among the Corinthians. This chapter is written as an antithetical parallelism, which means that the issue is addressed in parallel in the form of positives and negatives or contrasting ideas. The exegesis of 1 Corinthians 14, as well as the book of Corinthians in general, presented here, was worked out by P. Gey van Pittius and the full analysis will shortly appear in book form.¹⁸ For the purpose of this discussion we shall merely look at the basic structure of the chapter.

We do not have all the details of the questions that Paul is answering from the Corinthians' letter, which they wrote. Neither do we know in full detail the assumptions and ideas on which they based their thinking. We therefore have to deduce from the style and dialogue itself whether Paul agrees or disagrees with the sentiments expressed. It helps to follow Paul's argument if we keep in mind that we have a statement followed by a contradicting statement. Paul also uses the conjunction "but", or a similar conjunction to signal that he does not agree with the previous statement.

ORGANIZATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14

HOW IT SHOULD BE

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual "gifts", but rather that ye may prophesy.
1 Corinthians 14:1

Love dictates preaching of the gospel. Not all are prophets who receive visions from God, and since only very few are called as God's prophets, the word prophecy here means to speak for as in the case of preaching or proclaiming the gospel.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

For he that speaketh in an "unknown" tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth "him"; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 1 Corinthians 14:2

Paul is quoting a saying or assumption from the Corinthians. The Bible has only one definition of tongues, and that is spelt out in Acts 2, where it is defined as a gift of languages. Paul does not agree with this position as is clear from his subsequent use of the conjunction "But."

HOW IT SHOULD BE

***But** he that prophesieth speaketh unto men "to" edification, and exhortation, and comfort.* 1 Corinthians 14:3

If men don't understand what is being said, then their speaking is of no value to others, and this violates the selfless principle of love. Prophecy, and preach the gospel, so that others may be edified and comforted.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself. 1 Corinthians 14:4a

Those that speak in tongues for themselves violate the principle of love. Love is not self-seeking, and Paul does not approve, as is seen again

Truth Matters

by the use of the conjunction “But.” Preaching the gospel edifies the church and thus speaks for God.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 1 Corinthians 14:4b

Do all speak in tongues? Obviously not, since Paul had already explained that God distributes the gifts as He wills and not as man wills.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

I would that ye all spake with tongues...
1 Corinthians 14:5a

If God distributes the Gifts, and all do not receive the same gifts, why would Paul want all to speak in tongues? Paul is not saying that all must speak or wish to speak in tongues. That was most probably a Corinthian heresy in any case. In the same words, Paul is also saying here that he does not prohibit the true gift of tongues. If God does give them the gift, then he wants them to have it, by all means! Paul however, does not agree with this statement as the Corinthians want it. This can again be seen by the use of the conjunction “but.” Moreover, the contradicting arrangement of statements in the argument helps us to place the statement in perspective, as the negative is followed by the positive.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. 1 Corinthians 14:5b

“But rather” shows real intent. No gift is greater than another (1 Cor 12:4-26), and the purpose of the gifts is to further the aims of the Gospel. The word “interpret” can also have two meanings and both are used in Scripture. The first is to translate, and the second is to expound or explain. Also noteworthy

is that the individual himself must interpret (translate or explain).

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you. 1 Corinthians 14:6a

Paul is saying that it would be of no value to speak in tongues if no one else would benefit from it, and his following statement is thus again followed by a negative conjunction.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?... Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual "gifts", seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaketh in an "unknown" tongue pray that he may interpret. 1 Corinthians 14:6b, 12-13

Useful information to build up the church is what is needed, and someone should impart information in a tongue (language), then he should interpret (translate). Note that the word “unknown” in verse 13 does not occur in the original text (that is why it is printed in italics in the KJV and here in quotes). There must have been two problems regarding tongues in the Corinthian Church - firstly, the incorrect usage of the correct gift (people were “puffed up” by their gift and used it in the wrong setting), and secondly, the use of incoherent utterances which could not edify others and were thus of no benefit to the church.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

For if I pray in an "unknown" tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 1 Corinthians 14:14

Truth Matters

Paul does not agree with this statement as can again be seen by his following statement, and he is thus here quoting from the philosophies of the time. “What is it then” shows his disagreement with the previous statement. Verse 15 is his opinion, verse 16 elaborates.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

***What is it then?** I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. (16) Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?*

1 Corinthians 14:15-16

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

*For thou verily givest thanks well, **but** the other is not edified.*

1 Corinthians 14:17

Without edification of others all the thanksgiving in other languages benefits no one.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that "by my voice" I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an "unknown" tongue.

1 Corinthians 14:18-19

Paul is grateful for his own gift of tongues (not unknown languages, the word “unknown” is not in the original text), but he would not wish to abuse it.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

1 Corinthians 14:20

Paul is reminding them of his previous exposition:

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 1 Corinthians 13:11

HOW IT SHOULD BE

*In the law it is written, with "men" of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. **wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not:** but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*
1 Corinthians 14:21-22

The ability to speak in tongues (languages) is a gift to reach unbelievers of other nations. To prophesy (to preach) is of value to those who believe. If tongues were for believers, it would not satisfy the principle of unselfish love.

HOW IT SHOULD **NOT** BE

If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in "those that are" unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad.
1 Corinthians 14:23

A confusion of tongues of any nature, would be detrimental to the Gospel and deter rather than win unbelievers to the truth. Incoherent utterances would be of no value to anyone. The negative conjunction "but" again emphasizes the correct manner of worship.

HOW IT SHOULD BE

But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or "one" unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on "his" face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. 1 Corinthians 14:24-25

Hearing real words of import will convict souls and lead to real conversions.

SUMMARY

*How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you that hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. **Let all things be done unto edifying.** If any man speak in an "unknown" tongue, "let it be" by two, or at the most "by" three, and "that" by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If "any thing" be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 1 Corinthians 14:26-32*

Here is the recipe for proper church order. In church there should be activities which edify. In a multilingual meeting speaking in tongues (different languages, the word ‘unknown’ is again not in the original) is permissible if conducted in an orderly fashion with proper translation. Incomprehensible utterances are contrary to the Spirit of God, as God would not bless some to the exclusion of others through a “gift”, which is not for the benefit of others. It is contrary to His nature of unselfish love. The phenomenon of speaking in tongues is today a world wide phenomenon,¹⁹ but the fact that it has such a wide appeal does not mean that it is in harmony with Scripture.

*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace,
as in all churches of the saints.* 1 Corinthians 14:33

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and
fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by
the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby
they lie in wait to deceive.* Ephesians 4:14

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13

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT & THE MAITREYA

The term 'New Age' is derived from astrology. The zodiac which originated in ancient Babylon consists of twelve signs and it takes about 25,000 years for our solar system to move through these star signs. The New Age movement essentially teaches that mankind is moving into an Age of Enlightenment. The Age of Pisces the fish with its emphasis on formal religion is to be replaced by the Age of Aquarius, or the Age of Enlightenment. Each age covers a period of supposedly two thousand years, and has its own zodiacal sign and planetary force.

When a transition takes place from one Age to another and hence from one sign to another, certain Adepts who for centuries may have been preparing for their office by meditation and study, take over the work of inspiring the new cycle. For nearly two thousand years the earth has been under the watery sign Pisces ruled by Neptune, the main features of which have been the establishing of Christianity and the conquest of the ocean. Now the new cycle has begun, Aquarius, an airy sign, is influencing men's minds along scientific lines in every direction, especially towards the conquest of the air.¹

In the Age of Enlightenment, mankind is to experience a new birth and to be initiated into a higher state of consciousness reflecting the godhood within humanity. Essentially, the doctrines of the New Age imply that man is inherently divine in a pantheistic sense. Moreover, it is implied that the material human element has evolved over successive lives, and that the spiritual element is immortal and coexists with God since time began.

According to new age philosophy, the change from one phase to another occurs under the mediation of enlightened ones who have accumulated the wisdom of the ages. World affairs have ever been run by Ascended Masters who periodically intervene in the earth's affairs. The New Age is awaiting the Maitreya, or the Christ, who will assist mankind in its rebirth. To the Christians, he is to appear as Christ, to Hindus as the Krishna, to Islam as the Iman Madhi, and to the Orient as the Bodhi-sattva. His office is that of World Teacher, and he presides over the destiny of great religions.

The Ascended Masters, speaking through earthly channels, claim to have influenced mankind for thousands of years, and with each millennium, there is a change in approach. It is taught that essentially nine world teachers or masters have influenced age transitions over the ages and that numerous spirit entities have assisted in bringing mankind to the Age of Enlightenment. These enlightened ones can exist in ethereal form or as incarnations. The nine masters are:

The Master Hilarion who claims to have been St. Paul in a previous incarnation. According to new age insiders, he maintains a Cretan body and spends much of his time in Egypt. **The Master Morya** who is a Rujput Prince residing in Shigatse, who occupied Akbar's body in a previous incarnation. **The Master Koot Hoomi Lal Singh** who is of Kashmiri origin and was supposedly Pythagoras in one of his previous incarnations, also resides at Shigatse. **The Master Jesus**, whose previous incarnations include Joshua, son of Nun and Jesus of Nazareth, lives in disguise somewhere in the Holy Land. According to New Age theology, "The Master Jesus" did not act on his own behalf when he resided on earth as Jesus of Nazareth, but was then overshadowed (a type of possession) by the Maitreya, or by the Christ. **The Venetian Master** who claims to have been the reincarnation of the painter Paul Veronese. **The Master Mahachohan's** work is to gauge correctly and

counteract if necessary, the conflicting forces in space. **The Master Serapis** is known for his work with Deva Evolution, and his dwelling place may not be revealed.

The nine so-called Great Ones who have inspired the cycles of mankind are so advanced in their thinking and approach that their teachings supposedly fall like music on the ears of mankind.

The combined notes of these nine Great Ones create a chord of harmonious sound in heaven, yet within the aura of the earth for its helping. He who has learnt to hear this exquisite music has done so by first listening to the note of his own Master, on the inner planes and during meditation. Aspire towards Him Whom you feel to be your own Master if you would hear on earth, albeit faintly at first, that note which shall ultimately harmonize your heart with His.²

There are also other Ascended Masters significant to the New Age - each one with a particular message for a particular time period or situation. The teachings of the New Age are steeped in eastern mysticism and in the occult. It forms part of the revival of the ancient Babylonian hierarchy where enchanters, astrologers and mystics would work alongside Chaldean priests in religious and state matters. When Nebuchadnezzar had his dream he consulted these “wise men” to seek an interpretation:

Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. Daniel 2:2

This system of pagan hierarchy was not only confined to Babylon, but was the all pervading system of most pagan cultures. It is appealing to man to have a religion steeped in mysticism and to have diviners and fortune tellers revealing the unknown. This deceptive system even crept into the ranks of the Israelites and this thinking contaminated their own religion. This prompted the prophet Jeremiah to warn his people:

Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon. Jeremiah 27:9

The Age of Enlightenment in which we live today will yet prove to be an age of great spiritual darkness. The same systems exist today in modern cloaks. Governments consult mediums and astrologers and even the most respected politicians of the day make use of the same list of consultants, as did the king of Babylon.

The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death, and that God had made it perfectly clear in Eden, that if Adam and Eve were to transgress the law of God, they would have to suffer the consequences - the consequences being the forfeiture of immortality. It is the serpent that beguiled Eve to transgress the law of God by partaking of the forbidden fruit. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a test of obedience to the Edenic pair. There was no virtue in abstinence from the tree itself. The virtue lay in obedience to God's requirements.

According to the Biblical account, Satan questioned God's intent with the placing of the tree of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Yea, hath God said, "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden"?' Genesis 3:1

In her answer to the serpent (the serpent being the medium through which Satan spoke), Eve makes it quite clear that she fully understood what God had said.

And the woman said unto the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' Genesis 3:2-3

Satan counters with the first two lies spoken to mankind, namely: “You shall not surely die”, and “You will be like God”.

And the serpent said unto the woman, ‘Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods; knowing good and evil.’ Genesis 3:4-5

The twin lies of human immortality and innate divinity have ever been Satan’s foundation for his counterfeit religion throughout the ages. It is through these twin lies that Satan can divert the importance of seeking salvation in Christ from the minds of men. With immortality, we do not need Christ to regain something we have not lost. With divinity, we become His equal and capable of saving ourselves. With this masterpiece of Satan, the plan of salvation becomes futile. The success he achieved in Eden is a success he has enjoyed throughout the ages, and particularly at the end of time, his strategy that proved to be so successful in Eden would ensnare the great majority of men before the great and terrible day of the Lord. The Biblical account shows us that the very character of Satan was transferred to mankind.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat... Genesis 3:6

By desiring to be like God, it is not only the Tenth Commandment which is broken, but the first as well. Coveting the position of God and desiring to place yourself in the place of God will eventually culminate in breaking all the commandments of God, thus making the law of God null and void. This has been demonstrated amply in the history of mankind.

The pure teachings of the Scriptures stood as a bulwark against satanic delusions, but over time, the great truths have been buried under the rubble of counterfeit doctrines. The twentieth century, in many ways an age of great advancement and scientific wonders, is also an age of terrible spiritual declension. Prophetically, we are living in the last days of the final conflict between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Satan, and

the New Age movement is Satan's master plan to counteract truth.

The modern New Age has its origin in spiritism and the communication with spirit beings. As the Bible teaches that the dead are in a state of unconsciousness (See *The Mystic Realm of Death*), these spirit beings must represent demonic forces masquerading as men. Indeed, the Bible teaches that in the last days, people will be studying the doctrines of devils, and we should have no dealings with demonic forces.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. 1 Timothy 4:1

But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God. And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of a table of devils. 1 Corinthians 10:20-21

A more refined form of spiritism tending to combine Christian concepts is a feature of New Age theology, commencing in the mid-19th century. The founder of the Christian Science movement, Mary Baker Eddy, was one of the first to teach the immortality of the soul and the innate deity of man. In her book *Science and Health with a Key to the Scripture*, the age old principles of gnosticism, pantheism, Hinduism, and dualism are once again mingled with Christian concepts. The twin Satanic lies spoken in Eden are reiterated in her writings. A few statements from her book should suffice to demonstrate her position:

Evil has no reality. It is neither person, place nor thing but is simply a belief, an illusion of material sense.³

Let us remember that harmonious and immortal man has existed for ever.⁴

Death. An illusion, the lie of life in matter...Any

material evidence of death is false, for it contradicts the spiritual fact of being.⁵

Man and woman as co-existent and eternal with God forever reflect in glorified equality the infinite Father-Mother God.⁶

Soul is the divine principle of man, and never sins, hence the immortality of the soul.⁷

The Mormons maintain similar concepts. The *Mormon Doctrine of Covenants* states:

Ye were also in the beginning with the Father. Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

Brigham Young, the great Mormon leader, reportedly said,

The devil told the truth about godhead. I do not blame mother Eve. I would not have her miss eating the forbidden fruit for anything. Through the gift of sin, humanity can achieve godhood.

Modern New Age channels and books reiterate the same concept. Virginia Essene, a modern channel states that “Jesus” said through her:

Death is the Creation of humanity, not of God. This is the simple truth.

The forerunner of the New Age movement is the Hindu reformation movement (1830-1870). A central teaching of this movement is Bahti, the teaching that the divine nature is approached by directed meditational concentration and visualisation. Hindu gurus fall under the control of a secret organisation called the Visha Hindu Parishad. Such groups include Rama Krishna, Vedanta movements, Hare Krishna,

ISKON, 3HO, the Theosophical Society, and many Yoga groups. Their stated aim is to unify all religions. The history of this apostasy can be traced back to Babylon, and has been maintained throughout the ages. In the time of Christ, the Essenes adhered to occultic teachings and later they were initiated into a brotherhood, called Sufis. Those in charge of these mystical organisations are known as the Masters of Wisdom. Currently the Great White Brotherhood, with its headquarters in Tibet, is the source to which most occultic organisations can be traced, including the Order of the Rosy Cross, Ordo Templi Orientis, The Bavarian Illuminati, and even the Jesuits. According to a prominent occultist, Elisabeth van Buren, the Great White Brotherhood is led by Sanat Kumara ('Sanat' being a scrambling of the word 'Satan').

Symbols used by the New Age Movement are essentially the same as those used by the Jesuit Order and Freemasonry, and we can trace their origin to Babylon and Egypt. Freemasonry uses the acronym "Solomon" and Solomon's temple to give legitimacy to their rituals, but the rituals are essentially the same as found in all pagan secret societies. Sol – om – on are the names of the solar deity in Latin, Eastern mysticism and ancient Egyptian mysticism. The "born again" experience of Freemasonry and many other secret societies and religious bodies cannot be equated with the Biblical concept of conversion, since they entail rituals such as lying in a coffin and being raised to a life of enlightenment by a master. Moreover, the temple rituals are precisely those that God instructed His people not to follow since they involve the glorification of celestial bodies. Temple terminology, Mithraism, Eastern Religions, and modern Christianity are all equated in the New Age and placed in the context of Babylonian mysteries – the new religion for the New Age. Their own writing illustrate this point:

... the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz... came into being approximately eight thousand years ago. Then came Taurus, the Bull, wherein Mithra came as the world Teacher and instituted the Mysteries of Mithras with an (apparent) worship of the Bull. Next followed Aries the Ram, which saw the start of the Jewish Dispensation which is of importance to the Jews and unfortunately of importance to the Christian religion, but of no

importance to the untold millions in the other parts of the world; during this cycle came the Buddha, Shri Krishna and Sankaracharya; finally we have the age of Pisces the Fishes, which brought to us the Christ. The sequence of the Mysteries which each of the signs of the Zodiac embodies will be clarified for us by the Christ.⁸

Leading up to the final World Religion, a preparatory work was done by a number of mystics to pave the way for the acceptance of this mindset. The modern Theosophy Movement was spread largely through the efforts of Helen Petrovna Blavatsky, who stayed with Koot Hoomi, one of the Masters, and was instrumental in introducing the ancient occult ideas into Western civilization. Blavatsky's book *The Secret Doctrine* contains much channelled material, and the twin lies of Eden are once again reiterated.

The High Priestess of the modern new age movement is undoubtedly Alice A. Bailey (1880-1949) who received messages from the Tibetan Master Djwal Khul, also known as D.K., who was a pupil of Koot Hoomi. Her famous writings include *Problems of Humanity* and *The Reappearance of Christ*. These writings were to prepare the world for a one-world government, one world religion, and universal acceptance of the Christ (Satan masquerading as an angel of light). Djwal Khul claims those associated with him will know him through the office of Alice A. Bailey. He further claims that:

I am a brother of yours, who has travelled a little longer upon the Path than has the average student, and has therefore incurred greater responsibilities. I am one who has wrestled and fought his way into a greater measure of light than has the aspirant who will read this article, and I must therefore act as a transmitter of the light, no matter what the cost. I am not an old man, as age counts among the teachers, yet I am not young and inexperienced. My work is to teach and spread the knowledge of the Ageless Wisdom wherever I can find a response, and I have been doing this for many years.⁹

The essence of his message was that the new age mystic ideas

camouflaged by the outer symbols of amulets and talismans, as well as such New Age concepts as astrology, numerology, color work, card reading, palmistry, pyramid power, natural healing, and eco-consciousness should eventually infiltrate all religions, and fueled by the acceptance of the twin lies of immortality and innate godliness, all would eventually come to accept the false Christ who would lead the world in a millennium of peace.

Djwal Khul instructed his followers to spread these doctrines through every conceivable channel - the media, the entertainment world, institutes of learning, and medicine, and that this should commence after 1975. Secret societies such as the Free Masons, Illuminati, and those of religious orders would infiltrate the economies of the world and prepare the great religious movements for unification, with acceptance of the bishop of Rome as the supreme religious ruler of the 20th century. Information as to how this should be achieved would be channelled by the Masters through selected individuals who would keep governments informed and allow for the planning of strategies. The world is being prepared for the final conflict between Christ and Satan.

The great Catholic visionary, Don Bosco, predicted in 1862 that the Pope would succeed to anchor the “gospel” ship between the twin pillars of the faith at the end of the twentieth century. The twin pillars he envisaged were those of the Eucharist and the veneration of Mary. The Eucharist is the symbol of a defeated Christ (Christ sacrificed again and again) and Mary is the symbol of the Solar deity or the great female personification of that deity, Isis, Artemis, Venus, Astarte or whatever one may call her. In New Age thinking, the goddess concept (the great earth mother) is also very prominent. New Age proponent and psychologist Ken Wilber writes:

The great goddess Kali of India when viewed in her highest form as the wife of Shiva, is a perfect example of the assimilation of the old Great Mother image into a new and higher corpus of Great Goddess mythology ... which serves actual sacrifice in awareness, not substitute sacrifice in blood.... The ‘Fall’ was an evolutionary advance and perfect growth, but it was experienced as a fall because it necessarily carried

*an increase in guilt, vulnerability and knowledge of mortality and finitude. ... By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, not only did men and women realize their already mortal and finite state, they realized they had to leave Eden's subconscious's and begin the actual life of true self. . . . They did not get thrown out of the Garden of Eden; they grew up and walked out. (Incidentally, for this courageous act, we have to thank Eve, not blame).*¹⁰

In contrast, the Bible has its pillars of faith, which rest on an entirely different foundation, namely obedience to God and faith in Jesus Christ:

Here is the patience of the saints. Here are the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12

The final battle for supremacy is a battle for the mind, no wonder then that the entertainment and media world should be a prime target for the introduction of the New Age philosophy. The great Hollywood entertainers of the 20th century were to be a prime target, and today we know that Masters speak through numerous channels (a modern name for a spiritualistic medium) and have in their clientele the prominent stars of the music and theatre world, such as Ramtha who speaks through J.Z. Knight to Shirley Maclaine, Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood, Richard Chamberlain, the late Joan Hackett, Shelley Fabares, Mike Farrell, and Linda Evans, plus many others. Shirley Maclaine is closely associated with an Indian yoga expert known as Bikram, who also has in his clientele stars such as Michael Jackson and Quincy Jones. Actor Richard Gere has commitments to Tibet, and Patrick Duffy and Tina Turner are committed Buddhists, embracing New Age ideologies.

It is through these role models that the minds of the 20th century generation must be attuned to New Age concepts. A further avenue is that of computer technology. Computer games and software is largely produced by organisations which further the aims of occultism. The computer game Hexen has an occult overtone ridiculing the book of Revelation and having as heroes precisely that trilogy which is identi-

fied as Babylon in the book of Revelation. Occult games of this nature are a prominent feature of the New Age and the launch of Hexen was even planned for release on Devil's Night (Halloween), Oct. 31, 1994.

One of the first truly public advertisements for the New Age was introduced through the musical *Hair*, where the lead song introduces the New Age concept through the following words:

When the moon is in the seventh house
And Jupiter aligns with Mars —
Then Peace will guide the planets,
And love will steer the stars,
This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius;
Harmony and Understanding,
Sympathy and Trust abounding,
No more falsehood or division,
Golden living, dreams of visions,
Mystical crystal revelation,
And the mind's true liberation,
Aquarius! Aquarius! Aquarius!

The concepts of reincarnation, life after death, and the return of spirits to this earth are part and parcel of the entertainment world. Deceased stars are glorified or worshipped as gods (Elvis Presley) and miracles are attributed to others (Michael Landon). Modern TV shows are rife with after death experiences, second chance theology, communication with angels, angels that become men and have relations with women, and the list goes on and on. The world truly believes the twin lies of Eden.

The Western mind was open for Eastern mysticism, and from the worship of the dead to the worship of the living is merely a short step. Eastern gurus such as Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Ashram are worshipped as "Almighty God", and shrines are erected in Western cities and houses to his honor. The German nation in particular is very receptive to the worship of Sai Baba. His message again is "Love your neighbour, peace, and God is in us all." This is the false millennial teaching of peace and safety.

For the intellectuals, the New Age theology finds its modern

realisation in the writings of Helen Schucman, a psychologist from the psychiatry department at Columbia University. After first resisting the inaudible voice of an Ascended Master, she finally consented to writing the great New Age book for the modern mystic - a teacher's manual as to how to achieve godhood and to become like Christ, able to do all things that He could. The work is known as *A Course in Miracles*. In her own words, she describes the experience:

When I was first approached for this task, I had a constant questioning that demanded, 'But why me? Why me, when there are so many other good people available?' And the answer came, in gentle support, 'Because you wish to know the true me, are willing to serve, and have given me permission to enter your life.' Over and over again I was told that because this is a free will planet, all of us must ask to receive the spiritual ones — must agree to cooperate by our personal choice.¹¹

The evil hidden in this text is beyond description. Playing to the ego of man, Satan uses subtle lies to coerce man into cooperation with his schemes. It is gratifying however, that even Satan knows that man was created with the freedom of choice, and that by choosing the right side in the great conflict, he would have no right to control our minds.

In this channelled work, mankind, through a series of lessons, is initiated into the occultic mindset. Each lesson commences with a chant, reiterating the separateness of body and soul. "I am not a body. I am free". The twin lies of there being no death and our innate divinity are constantly repeated:

There is no death, because the Son of God is like his Father. Nothing you can do can change Eternal Love. Forget your dreams of sin and guilt, and come with me instead to share the resurrection of God's Son. And bring with you all those whom He has sent to you to care for as I care for you.¹²

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A further statement is: "I call upon God's Name and on my own." Thus making yourself equal with God.

*The Name of God is my deliverance
From every thought of evil and of sin.
Because it is my own as well as His.¹³*

It is Satan's strategy to divert the mind from sin and repentance so that salvation will become obsolete. The same lies as concealed in the New Age theology find their entrance in the so-called Christian churches of our day. After his 1000th telecast of his Hour of Power, Dr. Robert Schuler was congratulated by Mother Theresa, Billy Graham, C. Scott King (widow of Martin Luther King), all the living presidents of the US as well as entertainer Sammy Davis Jr. Dr. Schuler said the following:

*I believe the responsibility in this age is to positivise religion. (This does not have much bearing to you people being unity people, you are positive), but I speak about groups that are not positive even to what we would call fundamentalists who deal constantly with words like sin, salvation, repentance, guilt, and that sort of thing. I'm dealing with these people. What we need is to positivise the words that have only had a negative connotation.
There is no greater damage that can be done than to refer to the lost sinful condition of man.*

If sin is no longer an issue, then we certainly do not need a Saviour. The great religions of the world have been duped into accepting a counterfeit. In the Roman Catholic church, the New Age is being preached openly by the liberal Catholic church, which teaches reincarnation, the laws of karma, and refers to the Christianity of the Christ, rather than Jesus Christ. Catholic priests openly embrace Zen Buddhist ideas and Mother Theresa was a chief proponent of New Age ideologies. She was a stalwart of the unity idea, embracing the concept that all religions lead to salvation. The great global survival communion conference in Oxford, England had as its theme:

We must merge the ethical and the practical, the politician and the priest, the sacred and the secular.

Present at this meeting were the archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, Catholic Cardinal Franz Konig, the Dalai Lama, as well as senior Catholics, and Muslim, Jew, Hindu, Shinto, Sikh, Zoroastrian Jain, Hopi religions. They were “*merging a new partnership in response to a global crisis.*” Mother Theresa is on record of having said:

*Oh, I hope I am converting. I don't mean what you think... If in coming face to face with God, we accept Him in our lives, then we are converting. We become a better Hindu, a better Muslim, a better Catholic, a better whatever we are. What approach would I use? For me, naturally, it would be a Catholic one, for you it may be Hindu, for someone else, Buddhist, according to one's conscience. **What God is in your mind, you must accept.***

A gospel such as this negates the Gospel of Christ. Modern Christianity has become a form of occultism, apparently incapable of distinguishing the doctrines of the Bible from the doctrines of demons. No wonder that official requests for seances, to be held in churches in England, are being made by church leaders without a word of remonstrance from the church hierarchy. Church leaders openly endorse occultism. In the case of the Harry Potter books, no Church leader dare say anything negative, since the books apparently teach children good values. Does one need occult themes to teach children good values? One of the most quoted supporters of the Potter books is *Christianity Today* columnist Charles Colson, who, in his November 2, 2000 Breakpoint radio broadcast, noted that Harry and his friends “*develop courage, loyalty, and a willingness to sacrifice for one another—even at the risk of their lives. Not bad lessons in a self-centered world.*”

New Age theology is waiting for the Christ to return, but this Christ is not Jesus Christ. This Christ is the so-called world teacher whose teachings are not in harmony with the Scriptures, and who sets himself up as Christ, masquerading as Jesus Christ. The New Age theologian Matthew Fox describes the attributes of this New Age Christ:

This book is about the sacred and our response to it: reverence. The sacred what? The sacred everything. The sacred creation: stars, galaxies, whales, soil, water, trees, humans, thoughts, bodies, images, the holy omnipresence of the Divine One in all things, The Western term for this image of God present in all things is “the Cosmic Christ.” What creature dare deny that it is an immortal diamond? An original blessing/ an image of the Divine One? It is my experience that only the human species dares to deny its divinity, dares to deny the Cosmic Christ.¹⁴

The sentiment expressed is the same as that of the Serpent in Eden. Man is divine and the Cosmic Christ is the ultimate manifestation of this idea. Matthew Fox writes the historical Jesus out of the script of world events and replaces Him with the cosmic Christ:

If my thesis is correct that it is time to move from the quest for the historical Jesus to the quest for the Cosmic Christ, this would help to diffuse the distorted religion and pseudo-mystical movement of our time popularly known as fundamentalism and sometimes called Christofascism.... In this book I am calling for the dismantling of liberal religion and the regrounding of faith in a mystical, prophetic, cosmological worldview - a transformation and renewal, not merely a reformation of reshuffling of a tired agenda It needs the kind of renewal that John XXIII dreamed of when he launched his revolution in the Vatican in the 1960s. Perhaps a new “ecumenical council” will be forthcoming in our lifetime.” This one would be deeply ecumenical and would call forth the wisdom of all the world’s religions.¹⁵

Interestingly, Bible-believing Christians are called fascists in this statement, and it seems as if nothing is to stand in the way of the one world religion as propagated by Vatican II. According to Matthew Fox, this Cosmic Christ will make things happen, and will change the religion and mindset of the people.

This Cosmic Christ will make things happen, will effect a change of heart, a change of culture, a change of ways. This Cosmic Christ will lead to deep sexuality; deep communication between young and old; deep creativity in lifestyles, work and education; deep worship; deep ecumenism and interaction among all religions on the planet.¹⁶

Since Matthew Fox has his roots steeped in Roman Catholicism, he also propagates the twin pillars of Catholicism, the Eucharist and the veneration of the female deity.

The Eucharist There is a promise of maternal eros in all this ... Religion that represses and distorts the maternal will also repress the ancient tradition of God as Mother and of the goddess in every person.¹⁷

Pagan worship, particularly the worship associated with the female deity, was a form of fertility cult. The language of the above quote neatly encapsulates those age old pagan ideologies. New Age teaching is diametrically opposed to Bible teaching:

The Bible teaches that Jesus is the Son of God.

New Age teaches that Jesus is one of the Masters.

The Bible teaches that we are saved by grace.

New Age teaches that we achieve godhood through works.

The Bible teaches that Jesus is the only way (salvation outside oneself).

New Age teaches we must awake Christ consciousness within.

The Bible teaches that Lucifer is the devil.

New Age teaches that Lucifer (the light bringer) is the true son of God.

The Bible teaches we must worship God.

New Age teaches that we must worship creation.

The Bible teaches that man was created.

New Age teaches that physical man evolved, and spiritual man has always existed.

The Bible teaches that God is not part of creation.

New Age teaches that God is part of the creation (pantheism).

The Bible teaches resurrection.

New Age teaches reincarnation.

The Bible teaches that the Word is truth.

New Age teaches truth is within.

The Bible teaches us to wait for the Second Coming of Christ, which will be visible to all. His coming in glory is the blessed hope.

New Age waits for the Maitreya who will assist with the establishment of a one world government, monetary system and religion.

The Bible teaches us to turn from sin.

New Age teaches us to turn from ignorance because there is no sin.

The Bible teaches sanctification in Christ.

New Age teaches discovery of our own divinity.

The new religion is earth centered, and this type of religion was practiced in Babylon. It is an experiential religion focusing on trance states, dreams, visions, divination, spiritism, magic, sorcery, charms, amulets, solstice rites, serpent worship and even so-called sacred sexual rites.

The religious powers of the world are seeking unification. Through the ecumenical movement, churches are unifying on such points of doctrine as they hold in common, and the final objective of all ecumenism is acceptance of the bishop of Rome as the supreme religious leader. The great eastern religions such as Buddhism have already acknowledged that superiority, when Pope John Paul II spoke on behalf of all religions at the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The United Nations is the way to oneness as its Hindu Chaplain Sri Chimnoy reiterated:

*The United Nations is the way, the way to oneness, that leads to the Supreme Oneness. It is like a river flowing toward the source, the Ultimate Source. But the day will dawn when the vision of the United Nations will save the world. And when the reality of the United Nations starts bearing fruit, then the breath of immortality will be a living reality on Earth.*¹⁸

Hidden amongst noble agendas are the secret agendas of building a one-world government with a one-world religion. As *Time Magazine* put it in its commemorative article on November 6, 1995, “All together now: We Are the World”. The New Age movement has prepared the way for this final deception which is to sweep the world into Satan’s camp, namely the false coming of Christ.

In 1982, Benjamin Creme of the Tara Centre organization took out full page advertisements in major papers worldwide declaring that “The Christ Is Here Now.”

*Revitalized Christian churches as well as masonic lodges will be used for purposes of giving mass planetary initiations.*¹⁹

Since then he has become the channel overshadowed by the Christ (possessed), heralding his presence amongst mankind. In his book *The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*, channelled information about the imminent appearance of the Christ (Maitreya) was disclosed.

*Many of you will see Me soon. Share with your brothers this joyous expectation and tell them that Maitreya, their Friend, their Brother, their Teacher of old, has come.*²⁰

...the need for war is past; ...the instinct of man is to live and to love...hatred is begotten of separation... the Law of God lives in man and is fundamental to

*his nature. All of this shall I show you. Work with Me and prove this to be true. I am the conveyor of God's Love. I am the Administrator of God's Will. The Light of God dwells in Me and that Light do I turn on you. Grow therein, My friends, and shine with the Glory of God. My Plan is to reveal Myself in such a way that few, indeed, will know now who I am.*²¹

United apostasy against God was ever Satan's strategy. He attempted it in Babylon, and God separated the nations. He will attempt the same at the end of time, and his strategy will be to unite them all under the false moral code of Satan as manifested through the changed law of God placed into the world by the Papacy. When asked about the role of the Pope in Rome, the Maitreya answered:

The Master Jesus will take over the throne of St. Peter in Rome, and the true apostolic succession will begin. This event is now imminent, following the Declaration of the Christ. It could well be that the present pope will be the last.²²

A further note added to this quote in January 1979 and reads as follows:

*The decease of Pope Paul VI, and the sudden death of Pope John Paul after one month as Pontiff, makes it more than likely that the present Pope, John Paul II, will be the last.*²³

In April 1995, Benjamin Creme announced in Zurich, Switzerland, while being overshadowed by the Christ, that the "Master Jesus" had moved his seat to Rome. The Maitreya is using the "Master Jesus" as a decoy. Nevertheless, he elevates the papal seat to such a position of authority that he aligns himself with its principles. The law of God, he claims, is inherent to man's nature, and that he, the Maitreya, is the administrator of God's will. So, the law which he wishes to enforce must be the papal version of the Ten Commandments. The commandment which gives authority to the law is the Sabbath commandment which

contains the signature of the law giver. The Papacy, having changed the fourth commandment and supplanted it with a spurious Sabbath, which it claims is the mark of its authority, will be exalted, according to Revelation 13 by having its mark enforced upon all nations. (See *The Mark of the Beast*) It is obvious that the Maitreya will align himself with this false law emanating from Rome. Marian visionaries and Marian apparitions have made the same claims; these forces are working in harmony.

The events just prior to the real coming of Christ must be taken into account by the false Christ, and it is noteworthy that throughout his teachings, Satan makes reference to the events predicted by Christ pertaining to the end of the world. He introduces the false doctrine of the millennial kingdom of peace on this earth, and claims that many will accept him. This is particularly true in the light of the fact that he will make his appearance only after numerous additional false Christs have made their appearance in the world. Everywhere in the world, people are claiming to be Messiahs, but when the Maitreya appears, miracles happen. Benjamin Creme claims that the Maitreya has appeared in all the major centres of the world, that many have seen him, and that healings have accompanied these appearances. In Europe, water wells have been blessed by the Maitreya and have served as a source of healing.

In a further channelled book of the modern New Age period, *New Teachings for an Awakening Humanity*, written by the Christ, it states:

Those who believe in what I am talking about should from now on affirm the fact of the Christ, of the World Teacher; affirm the fact of Hierarchy, and the fact of the imminent reappearance in the world of the Christ and the hierarchy. If we believe it, this is what we should do, because there is a very tight time schedule involved in this preparation work. The time between now and the reappearance of the Christ is very short indeed. Recently, this has been brought forward until the Christ is virtually in the world — so near is His reappearance. The first five Masters are coming into the world this year. Of course, they won't declare themselves, but their

work will start in the five Centres this year.²⁴

The Bible says that the devil knows that his time is short and that he has great wrath. (Revelation 12:12) The counterfeit must always precede the genuine article, and if Satan knows that there is a tight time schedule, then the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, visible to all, must be near indeed. Further teachings of the Maitreya reaffirm that he is the same serpent that spoke in Eden.

As you learn on earth to practice the teachings of our Creator, you will earn the higher opportunity that awaits you at the time you call death. The purpose of any church, ashram, temple, cathedral, or place of prayer and meditation is to teach the love of God above all things. It is not to deify one world teacher or any combination of them. It is to appreciate and understand their teachings so much that you practice them. That you live them. This mutually loving behaviour brings and sustains peace. If you wish to honor me, for instance, it is your loving behaviour that will demonstrate your affection, not your cowlike or solemn affectation in the use of my name. Your prostrations which are not followed with everyday application are useless. If you love me for my example, follow it. Spread love and peace. That is all you need do. Love for me is shown by your behaviour, not by grandiose buildings and expensive organizations. These often detract from love's true mission. If you love me or any world teacher, honor us by the actions of your daily life.²⁵

Clearly, in this statement we see the heart of the gospel torn out. Sadly, these very sentiments are mirrored by the churches of the day, where the love of God is dwelt upon, but the power thereof is denied. Little distinction is made between good and evil, but love is preached as a sickly sentimentalism. The Bible is no longer considered, but self becomes important. The Christ makes the following statement to this effect:

Then each of you must meditate daily in the inner recesses of your being to forge the tools of communication to which all are entitled, not just a select few. By meditating you can live God's commandments more easily, especially **love God... love God with all your heart, mind and soul... and your brothers and sisters as yourself**. Therefore, by the power of God and many compatriot world teachers who join me in this New Age effort, I call forth the holy God power within you to hear this message and bring you into the Golden Age as a bright and shining example of the new life all can have through willingness to accept the love we offer. God smiles on our mutual opportunity and committed endeavour.²⁶

Note that the lie of divinity within the individual is again reiterated. Moreover in the following statement, Scripture is relegated to a secondary position, whereas Christ referred to Scripture as the source of all truth. The love component is blown up out of proportion, and replaces the teachings of the Bible:

Is my message to those in the religious occupations on this planet clear? Your sole responsibility is to bring the children of God home again. Do this by getting everyone in touch with their inner teacher, the Holy Spirit, and the soul who knows its life purpose and blueprint designed by God. Encourage, inspire, and feed the souls who seek guidance, ever turning them back to the Father/Mother, turning them within. Theology is usually useless and argument over scriptures is wasteful energy. Simply take the theme of loving and live it. Put your energies into the fabric, the work of the world, where it will bear fruit. Anything less is a poor response to God's message.²⁷

The love of God for mankind was not demonstrated in excusing sin. It was demonstrated by God in that He paid for man's transgression

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with His own life. Christ's death is not an excuse for sin, but a call to repentance, and a new life in Christ in which we are admonished to "Go and sin no more". The theme of self-indulgence mingled with a false gospel of love is apparent in the following by the Christ:

I, the Christ, world teacher, do hereby call forward any sincere person on planet earth to become a lover of God... A lover of your planet earth ... a lover of yourself and all living things throughout the omniverse. This planet needs volunteers for a love corps to bond in unified and enduring endeavour. Will you join us of heaven who ask for your assistance? Will you meditate daily and share your love with other meditators weekly? Will you become one with God? If so, by the power and authority of my role as your world teacher. I do grant you the full support of heaven in your responsibilities as envoys of world and universal peace. Know that you are, henceforth, never alone, and that an additional personal guide or teacher will be provided you when your meditative communication system is linked to heaven again.²⁸

Finally, the theme of the tribulation and the millennium of peace is brought forth, not as a warning to prepare the heart for the coming of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, but as a period of growth, leading to a birth of a higher consciousness. As stated by the Christ:

Even though the time called 'the Tribulation' is an apparent ending of some kind, I have told you there is no ending in Spirit, so do not expect to have an experience which totally ends life. Remember always that God extends... extends... extends... and therefore, so do the star systems, and the universes and the galaxies... and my dear ones, so do I and you! Do not fret about how it began and what God is. God is breathing or extending out and then will breathe us all home again (this is the concept of Brahma breathing out and breathing in - a

vedic concept) to enjoy our spiritual banquet. Merely trust that there is a plan of great promise and joy for all who choose it. Trust. Believe. Without trust you are in peril.²⁹

A further statement concerning the millennium is the following:

*You are coming into this Golden Age of the thousand years of peace, my dear ones; therefore, get your birthright in order by creating the only passport required — your demonstration that you are light and light is what you choose. Your meditation times will build this communication link of light and higher energy vibration, which can never fail you once the link is forged.*³⁰

The contrast of this statement with the Biblical teaching on the millennium is clear. (See *The Long Awaited Millennium*). Sadly, the Christian denominations of the world are teaching this same doctrine of demons rather than the Biblical version calling men to repentance before the great and terrible day of the Lord.

On June 11, 1988, the Maitreya made his first public appearance. He appeared at the faith healing centre of Sister Mary Akatsa. Sister Akatsa introduced him as Jesus Christ. (Photographs are available courtesy of Share International, Amsterdam, Holland.) Since then, appearances of the Christ have been more and more numerous, and various people claim to have seen him on television in the United States and Australia, where hundreds of viewers witnessed his appearing on television screens accompanied by miraculous signs and healings.

Prominent New Agers are no longer shy to state openly where their sentiments lie or even who “The Christ” really is. David Spangler, co-director and spokesperson for the Findhorn Community in northern Scotland had this to say:

The true light of Lucifer cannot be seen through sorrow, through darkness, through rejection. The true light of this great being can only be recognized when one’s own

*eyes can see with the light of the Christ, the light of the inner sun. Lucifer works within each of us to bring us to wholeness ... each of us in some way is brought to the point which I term Luciferic initiation ... Lucifer comes to give us the final gift of wholeness.*³¹

These signs tell us that the time for the final deception, Satan masquerading as an angel of light, is upon us. The true outpouring of the Holy Spirit must be imminent. Jesus Christ will not end His work with less power than that with which He started it. The true coming of Christ is at hand. We are urged to come out of Babylon and to separate ourselves from the evil conflagration of people who will side with the false prince of this world to make void the law of God.

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Escaping the Labyrinth of Error

A STONE TO REST YOUR HEAD

Does God have a movement to counter the spirit of Babylon? If, as we have seen, Babylon constitutes the great end-time confederacy of religious powers aligned against the government of God, then who will represent the case of God? The sad fact is that the great majority of people will be deceived by the power and splendour of the woman who rides the beast. The woman decked with gold, precious stone and pearls (Revelation 17:4) represents, as we have seen, Rome (see *Wine of Babylon*). This attire that she wears corresponds to that of the ancient high priest, which means that she usurps the High Priestly role of Christ, placing herself in His position. The doctrines of Rome have permeated through the cultures of the world and the religious systems have willingly accepted her leadership. The High Priestly ministry of Jesus is of vital significance to the world and while Babylon comes to fruition, God also heralds the final warning and invitation to call us back into a covenant relationship with Him.

Throughout the ages, God has had a people through whom He chose to disseminate His truth. It was God's plan that all people - every nation, tribe and tongue should become partakers of His grace. In His divine plan of restoration, He chose fallen human beings to become co-workers together with Him to achieve this end. God has always had

faithful followers who would stand for truth and justice even in the face of great opposition. Before the flood, Enoch walked with God, and faithful Noah became the father of the post-flood human race when he and his family were the only remnant to be saved from the destruction of the then-time apostate world.

After the flood, the patriarch Abraham was given the promise that through his seed all peoples would be blessed. (Genesis 12:2) The Messianic promise was to be realized through Isaac and Jacob whose name was changed to Israel after he wrestled with God for divine forgiveness and blessing. (Genesis 32:28) “Israel” became the name of the descendants of Jacob - the chosen people in terms of the covenant between God and Abraham their forefather. (Genesis 15:18; Psalm 105:9-10)

The Israel of God

a) Old Covenant Israel

There is much confusion today as to who constitutes the Israel of God. Many denominations seek the fulfilment of the promises of God to ancient Israel in modern Israel. They expect the restoration of Israel, and the modern Israel in Palestine is seen to be integral in this process. It must be remembered that “Israel” is not the natural name of Jacob, but was given to him by God in recognition of a spiritual victory when he prevailed with God and secured pardon for his past sins. Jacob wrestled with the Angel and refused to let Him go unless he obtained the surety of the heavenly blessing which would grant him the pardon of his sins. Jacob prevailed and received the blessing. His heart was renewed and he could face his brother Esau knowing that God was with him. The name change signified a change in character from the “supplanter or deceiver” to “God contends”. An understanding of the relationship between physical Israel and the covenant people of God is vital if we are to discern who God’s light-bearers are in this modern age.

Following the Exodus from Egypt, God formally entered into a covenant with the nation of Israel. (Exodus 19:1-8) Israel was to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6) and they were to spread light to all people on the face of the earth. (Isaiah 60:1-3) The

covenant promises made to ancient Israel were conditional to obedience.

Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a special treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.
Exodus 19:5

The promises were subject to “if”. The physical throne of Israel was always conditional to obedience, and both David and Solomon were informed on this issue.

...that the Lord may continue His word which He spake concerning me, saying, ‘If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘there shall not fail thee a man on the throne of Israel.’ 1 Kings 2:4

This promise was repeated in 1 Kings 9:5-7:

...then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying ‘There shall not fail thee a man on the throne of Israel.’ But if ye shall at all turn from following Me, ye and your children, and will not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house which I have hallowed for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 1 Kings 9:5-7

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 contains a list of the most wonderful blessings ever pronounced to any nation or people. Again the promises were conditional to obedience.

And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of

the Lord thy God. Deuteronomy 28:2

Israel did, however, not heed this admonition and became more corrupt than the nations around them. (2 Kings 17:6-23) Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were spared for a while, and the other tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria and disappear from history, though some believe that they constitute the nations of Britain and their descendants including the USA. Without loyalty to God, the promises could not be fulfilled, and a century and a half later, even Judah was plucked up from the Promised Land and scattered in the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

Nevertheless, some had remained faithful to God even in the face of this calamity as is shown by the stories of Daniel and his friends who were willing to rather face death than disobey God. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God had granted a specific time for repentance and reflection, and He had promised that they would return to their land after 70 years of exile (Jeremiah 31:10-14; Isaiah 43:1-13). They were to rebuild the temple, the time prophecies of Daniel predicted the advent of the Messiah; and they had the opportunity to be witnesses to the nations (Micah 4:1-4; 5:2-6; Zechariah 8:20-23). Again all these promises were conditional to obedience (Zechariah 6:15). Sadly, the nation rejected the Messiah and forfeited its covenant role and covenant promises. By rejecting Jesus, the house of Israel became desolate.

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,
and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often
would I have gathered thy children together, even as
a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye
would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.
For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till
ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of
the Lord. Matthew 23:37-39*

b) New Covenant Israel

When the Jewish nation rejected the Messiah, the Gospel was to go to the Gentiles and all who would believe in the name of Jesus would become the spiritual descendants of Abraham. (Galatians 3:16; Romans 4:16; Romans 9:3,8)

And if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:29

The apostle Paul speaks of Christians as the "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16) and the "circumcision" (Phil. 3:3) The kingdom of God and the covenant promises associated with it were to be taken from the Jews and passed on to spiritual Israel - those who would permit Christ to transform them, to change their character as was the case with Jacob of old.

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bearing forth the fruits of it. And whoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Matthew 21:43-44

Jesus did not choose 12 disciples coincidentally. Just as the twelve patriarchs were the founders of ancient Israel, so these twelve men are the foundation stones of new Israel to which the Lord promised the kingdom (Matt 19:28; Luke 22:30). The subsequent choice of seventy others is modelled after the choice of seventy elders by Moses in ancient Israel (Num 11:16). The real Israel of God is a remnant chosen by grace (Rom 11:5). There is a marvellous continuity between the old and the new Israel of God. In Romans 11:17-24, Paul speaks of the olive tree which represents Israel. The branches (Jews) were broken off because of unbelief and the wild olive shoots (Gentiles) were grafted in to share in the nourishment of the tree. The natural branches could be grafted back into the tree if they accepted the conditions. God is no respecter of nations or individuals. All who turn to Him will be accepted (Acts 10:34-35).

For there is no difference between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon Him.
Romans 10:12 NIV.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26

The new Israel is the inheritor of God's covenant promises. Those who have accepted Christ have become the chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God. (Compare 1 Peter 2:9-10 with Exodus 19:5-6) They were chosen to reveal God's marvellous light to the world. (1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 3:10)

The human race is in desperate need of redemption. God yearns to forgive and cleanse. (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:4) Henceforth it was the role of the church to carry the Gospel to the world.

Spiritual Declension and Reformation

It is a sad fact of history that, like Israel of old, spiritual Israel also experienced a moral decline and turned towards the worship of other gods. The principles of heathen sun worship found their way into the church, and under the guidance of the Roman church, were elevated to such a position that they would counterfeit the very Gospel of Jesus Christ. (See *Wine of Babylon*)

Throughout the period of spiritual decline, there were people who clung tenaciously to the Word of God, but these were relentlessly persecuted for their faith. Among these were the Waldenses who, after having withdrawn to the Alps because of persecution, fully separated from the Roman church. The work of Vigilantius Leo, who vigorously opposed the many false doctrines and practices that had been adopted by the Roman church, served as a light to many believers.

The Waldenses constituted a remnant that kept the light of God's Word alive in a period of terrible spiritual declension. For their faith, they were ruthlessly massacred by Catholic leaders in a series of campaigns led against them, particularly those by D'Oppede in 1544,

the Marquis of Pianesse in 1655, and Gabriel of Savoy in 1686.

The light of truth which the Waldenses and Albigenses spread laid the foundations for the Reformation. In England, John Wycliffe was the herald of reform, and Huss and Jerome, invigorated by his writings, carried the flag of reform in Bohemia. Huss was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415 and Jerome on May 30, 1416, but the Reformation forged ahead in spite of persecution. One by one, the great reformers uncovered precious truths that had been hidden under the rubble of false doctrine and superstition. Justification by faith and the once-for-all atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His all-sufficient mediatorial priesthood were the cornerstones of the reformers' faith.

Many unbiblical teachings, such as veneration of saints and relics, the mass, purgatory, celibacy, the numerous sacraments and faith in tradition rather than the word of God were discarded. The Protestant Reformers were virtually unanimous in identifying the papal system as the "man of sin", and he was equated with the "little horn" of Daniel chapter 7.

Martin Luther was one of the most prominent reformers used by God to call the world out of darkness. He obtained much light, but the full work of restoration was not entrusted to him alone. Others followed and each had some aspect of truth that together could have created a highway for the Gospel. Instead, the followers of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, and other great reformers often ventured no further along the path of Gospel light than had their leaders. They would crystallize their beliefs into a creed to the extent of shutting out additional light that did not fit into this creed. Instead of forging a way for collective truth, the Reformation resulted in a host of denominations, each with aspects of the truth, but excluding total truth. Satan had once again achieved a victory. Caught in the cage of creeds, Protestantism itself degenerated into formalism and theoretical theology, which extinguished the reformatory flame, opening the way to universal apostasy. The present wave of cooperation between the churches is based not on issues of the Gospel, but on social issues, thus there is nothing separating the "reformed churches" from Rome. The aim of the Reformation, the unveiling of the gospel, had once again been curtailed.

The Final Reformation (The Latter Rain)

God will not end the work on earth with less power than that with which He started it. Under the symbols of the former and latter rain, God had promised showers of blessing that would bring the harvest to ripening. As God's power was manifested at Pentecost when the fledgling church was empowered to take the Gospel to the world, so God's power will be manifested when the church completes its witness. The symbols of the early and the latter rain (Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23,28-32; Acts 2:16-21) represent not only the outpouring of the Spirit on the church, but also on the individuals that constitute the church. Each individual must also have a former and latter rain experience. The former rain represents the rebirth whilst the latter rain is to bring the character in line with the character of Christ. They also refer to justification and sanctification or "us in Christ" and "Christ in us". (John 14:20)

To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27
NKJV

At the end of time, God will have a people that will represent Him and His truth before an apostate world. As in the days of the disciples, the truth will be triumphant - the latter rain will do its work to bring God's harvest to fruition.

Time of the End

The time of the end is not to be confused with the end of time. The phrase "time of the end" is used five times in Daniel chapters 8-12 and refers to a time before the Second Coming of Christ. There would also be a definite appointed time when that time should arise. (Daniel 11:35) In Daniel 7:25, the prophet refers to the 1260-year period of papal dominance, and in Daniel 12:6-7, the same period (time, times and half a time) is mentioned with regard to the time of the end. The completion of the 1260-year period of papal dominion in 1798 com-

mences the time of the end. The great truths concerning the ministry of Christ had been trampled on during the period of papal dominance, (Daniel 8:11) but these truths were to be restored.

The prophet Daniel himself did not understand the vision of the cleansing of the sanctuary (Daniel 8) at the end of the 2300-day period, nor did he fully comprehend the events that would unfold during the time of the end. The reason for this is that the prophecy was sealed unto the time of the end. (Daniel 8:17, 26; 12:9)

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Daniel 12:4

In the Hebrew, the definite article is given with the word “knowledge”, which indicates that knowledge of the book of Daniel itself will be increased at the time of the end. It is noteworthy that only the wise and none of the wicked will be lead to an understanding of these prophecies. The wise would also lead many to righteousness. (Daniel 12:3)

Wisdom in a Biblical sense comes from a relationship with God that is built on trust and obedience, and cannot be compared with worldly wisdom. In Psalm 119, we read:

Thou, through Thy commandments, hast made me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. Psalm 119:98-99

Wisdom is associated with the law of God and the Word of God. Understanding comes from obedience to God’s law (Psalm 119:100,104) and to the testimony, the Word of God revealed through the prophets of all ages (Psalm 119:125,130,144). If truth was to be restored, then knowledge and understanding of the Biblical concept of truth is essential. Three definitions of truth are given in the Scriptures:

...I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me. John 14:6

Truth Matters

Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth.
John 17:17

Thy word is very pure; therefore Thy servant loveth it. Psalm 119:140

Thou art near, O Lord, and all Thy commandments are truth. Psalm 119:151

Truth restored contains all these elements. It is Christ-centered, it is Word-based, and it involves obedience to the law of God. As Jesus Himself pointed out:

If ye love Me, keep My commandments. John 14:15

At the time of the end, there would thus be a movement to restore all things and to unveil the sealed prophecies of the book of Daniel. History confirms that a great resurgence of interest in the Scriptures, accompanied by missionary zeal commenced around the year 1798. In 1795, the London Missionary Society was organized, followed a year later by the New York Missionary Society, the first in America. The great Bible societies of the world were also formed in the period between 1798 and 1844, which is the close of the 2300-year prophecy. Associated with this resurgence of interest, numerous health and temperance societies were formed, and by 1807 William Metcalf had even founded the vegetarian and teetotaler “Society of Bible Christians of Philadelphia”. It is noteworthy that this time period is also associated with the great technological advances of our age.

The first steam engine was patented in 1769, and this opened the way for steamboats (1810-1807) and the railroads (1825). The Gospel was to be spread to “all the world” and God saw to it that the means to achieve this end would also be available. In the world of music, the great Biblical themes were a prominent source of inspiration with Handel’s “Messiah” focusing attention on the King of kings and Haydn composing the “Creation” in 1844.

The Unsealing of Daniel's Prophecy

It is during this period of renewed interest in the Scriptures that a young Baptist farmer by the name of William Miller (1782-1849) published a series of articles in the Baptist weekly - "Vermont Telegraph" on the prophecies of Daniel. He used a simple set of rules to unravel the great themes of prophecy, namely:

- a) The New Testament is the expositor of the Old
- b) Scripture must be its own expositor
- c) The symbolism of type and antitype
- d) Every word must be taken into consideration
- e) Prophecy compliments prophecy

His study of Daniel chapter 8 led him to believe that the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was to take place at the end of the 2300-year period, referred to the cleansing of the earth from sin. He concluded that Christ would return at the close of this prophetic time, and using the day-year principle, calculated that this event would take place in 1843. It is then that the "spiritual sanctuary", the church, would be cleansed.

Miller rejected the popular interpretations of the day and reintroduced the old Protestant Christ-centered interpretation, which saw the followers of Jesus at the heart of the end-time prophecies. He stressed the pre-millennial return of Christ and, based on the time prophecy of Daniel 8, eventually set a definite date for this event, namely October 22, 1844. As a consequence, he, together with some 100,000 others, were expelled from their churches. The believers in the imminent advent of Christ came from all denominations and included at least 200 ministers from prominent Protestant churches.

Drawing from the parable of the Ten Virgins, (Matthew 25:1-13) the message became known as the "midnight cry", the return of the bridegroom. There was a return to primitive godliness, as the various groups of advent believers awaited the return of the Lord.

History tells us that Jesus did not return to this earth in 1844. Those that eagerly awaited His return were greatly disappointed, an event which became known as the "great disappointment". Many were disillusioned and left the movement. Those that clung to their experience were ridiculed and became objects of scorn.

Once before in the history of the church had there been such

a disappointment. The followers of Christ had with great expectation awaited His coronation as the Messiah in Jerusalem. They had hailed Him as their king and thrown palm branches before His feet, (John 12:13) but instead of a coronation, they had to witness a crucifixion. Their disappointment was real, and many lost their faith. Even the disciples were filled with fear and hid themselves “for fear of the Jews”. (John 20:19) On the road to Emmaus, two followers of Jesus were contemplating these sad events (Luke 24:13-53) when Jesus joined them and...

...beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24:27 NKJV

As in the case of the disappointment in Christ's time, the disappointment of 1844 led to ardent study of the Scriptures and assimilation of truths uncovered by the Reformation. Those associated with the Advent movement that remained after 1844 considered themselves as “the remnant church” or simply “the remnant”. The prophecies of Daniel were re-examined and a number of believers discovered that the books of Hebrews and Revelation are full of references to a sanctuary in heaven. The great doctrine of the sanctuary, its type and antitype (See *An Advocate for Our Time*) was rediscovered and the role of Jesus as our High Priest and sacrificial lamb were understood in its setting. The Typology of the Jewish feasts and their meaning and fulfilment were also uncovered. Together with this tremendous breakthrough in understanding came the realization of what the day of atonement stood for in type, and what its relevance was in terms of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary or the commencement of the judgment in heaven. The standard of judgment, the law, and its significance was also understood in its relationship to the plan of salvation. The ancient wall of truth that had served as a bulwark against evil, was being rebuilt as Isaiah had prophesied:

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. Isaiah 58:12

The Law and the Sabbath were rediscovered and the relationship between law and grace was placed in a right setting. The commandments of God and faith in Jesus Christ became pillars on which the faith of the remnant rested.

In Revelation 12, John describes the attributes of the last generation of believers before the return of Christ.

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17

Out of the ashes of the Millerite movement grew the Seventh-day Adventist Church. By 1848, a doctrinal platform existed incorporating the great truths uncovered by the Reformation. The basic principles of prophetic interpretation as held by the emerging church were the cumulative prophetic views of the church of the centuries. They adopted, coordinated, and continued reforms that had been lost in the sands of time. Doctrinal landmarks of the movement were grounded on the Scriptural teaching regarding:

- 1) The Second Coming of Christ
- 2) The binding claims of the seventh-day Sabbath
- 3) The third angel's message in relation to the first and second angel's messages
- 4) The ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary
- 5) The non-immortality of the soul

At the Right Time

The judgment hour message which was proclaimed by the Millerite movement was not the final message of warning, but a commencement of the "restoration of all things". In Revelation 14, John describes the judgment hour message, as given by an angel who said in a loud voice.

Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.
Revelation 14:7

This message is, however, followed by two further messages, namely the proclamation of the fall of Babylon, and the warning against allegiance to the beast and his image.

The expulsion of Advent believers from the established churches led these pioneers to believe that the refusal of these churches to accept the warning of God meant that they had fallen in the eyes of God. The refusal of light leads to darkness (Isaiah 5:20; Jeremiah 13:16) whereas the acceptance of God's Word brings light:

The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. Psalm 119:130 NKJV

They associated this fall with the fall of Babylon, as proclaimed by the second angel. (Revelation 14:8) It was, however, only after the great disappointment that the message of the third angel began to be understood.

The Third Angel's Message is the final message of warning to an apostate world. It is filled with power and deep spiritual truths. As its significance came to be understood, the symbolism and prophetic import of the entire book of Revelation was unfolded. The prophecy of Revelation 10, in particular, was associated with the unfolding of the message and the experience of the Advent believers.

In Revelation 10, a mighty angel is depicted having a little book open in his hand. He cries with a loud voice as when a lion roareth (verse 3) and in the midst of the sound of seven thunders, John hears a voice from heaven saying:

...seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered and write them not. Revelation 10:4

A book (or scroll) that is open and a reference to information that is sealed can only be a reference to a sealed book (or prophecy) which

must now be opened or unsealed. Scripture must be its own expositor and in this regard only the prophecy of Daniel (the 2300-day prophecy) was a sealed prophecy that would be opened at the “time of the end” or after the 1260-day period which brings us to 1798. At precisely the right time (after 1798), the Millerite movement proclaimed the message of judgment as a consequence of the unravelling of the prophecy of Daniel. The message was sweet, but turned to bitter disappointment when Christ did not return in 1844.

The 2300-day prophecy is the longest time prophecy in the Bible, and no prophetic time is given thereafter. The statement by the angel in Revelation 10:6 that “there should be time no longer” can be seen as a reference to the prophecy of Daniel which brings us to the end of prophetic time. John is also given the instruction to eat the scroll, (verse 9) which is sweet in his mouth but turns bitter in his stomach. (verse 10). To eat the scroll is to internalize it, make it one’s own, to understand it.

Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts.
Jeremiah 15:16

The sweetness was a joyful expectation that the understanding of the Word elicited, whereas the bitterness reflects the disappointment experienced by wrong application. The Advent believers had expected the return of Christ - but He had not come. They thought the last message of warning had been given - but it had not. In Revelation 10:11, the instruction is given:

And he said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”
Revelation 10:11 NKJV

The word “again” is of significance. They thought they were finished with prophesying, but they had to prophecy again. Moreover, the message to be prophesied again was to be a worldwide message that was to reach all the peoples and nations of the entire world.

Truth Matters

What was the all-important message that God wanted proclaimed to the entire world? It is the Three Angels' Messages recorded in Revelation 14 where the instruction is given once again that the message must go to all peoples on the face of the earth.

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue and people ... Revelation 14:6 NKJV

At the right time, God raised up a people who came from all denominations (a remnant) to preach the Gospel in its fullness, "the everlasting gospel", to the whole world. This is the remnant that the dragon would persecute at the end of time, those:

which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17

Here are brought to the fore the attributes of this remnant which rouse the ire of Satan, obedience to God's commandments and the testimonies of Jesus Christ. The Reformation had restored faith in the merits of Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation, but the importance of the law and obedience to God as well as the significance of the High Priestly ministry of Jesus were largely misunderstood. The fullness of the Gospel and ministry of Jesus, together with the prophetic chain of events from the fall to final restoration, were truths which were to be proclaimed in the final hours of probation by a remnant responding to the call of grace. To this end, the testimony of Jesus or the spirit of prophecy was restored to assist in the unravelling of truth (see *God's Guiding Gift*).

And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, See that you do it not! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Revelation 19:10 NKJV

The Seventh-day Adventist Church (The Elijah to Come)

The attributes of the remnant are so clearly defined in Scripture, that it should be possible to determine who matches the criteria. It should also be noted that such a remnant should base its beliefs on the whole Scriptures, which are the recorded will of God:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV

In the light of the almost universal apostasy, which, according to the Scriptures, would exist at the end of time, it is also logical that the remnant would constitute a minority in spite of its universality. There is only one movement that meets all the criteria, and that is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which arises on the stage of history at precisely the right time to fulfill prophecy. Only the Seventh-day Adventist Church preaches the Three Angels' Messages to the entire world and, for this purpose, the Seventh-day Adventist church is the single most widespread Protestant denomination in the world. Moreover, the Seventh-day Adventist Church traces its roots to the unsealing of the scroll of Daniel and the great Advent awakening. The movement preaches the everlasting gospel "saved by the blood of the Lamb together with obedience to His precepts", and points to the Creator of all things as the only one worthy of worship. The Church officially upholds the Creation account as the only true source of origins and since God's memorial of creation is the Seventh-day Sabbath, they endeavour to keep the Sabbath, thereby acknowledging the seal of authority of the Creator.

Whilst most denominations are antinomian (believing that God's law has been done away with), Adventism emphasizes the immutability of the law of Ten Commandments. In this regard, they emphasize that no one is justified by keeping the law:

For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

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But the keeping of the law is a consequence of being saved and an expression of love to God.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14:15

Adventism rejects the almost universally accepted doctrine of the immortality of the soul and accepts the Biblical doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. (See chapter *The Mystic Realm of Death*). Above all, Adventism exalts the high-priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary trusting that:

Wherefore He is able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25

They believe that only Christ is the mediator between God and man, and through Him the whole creation was brought into existence. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3) Moreover, the Word of God, the Bible, is regarded as the true and complete revelation of the will of God to men.

Only the Seventh-day Adventist Church complies with all the attributes of God's remnant as given in the Scriptures. Satan may counterfeit one or the other of the attributes, but he cannot counterfeit them all. The Adventist church:

- 1) Arises at the right time
- 2) Preaches the Three Angels' Messages
- 3) Has a worldwide distribution
- 4) Keeps the commandments of God. (Rev 12:17; 14:12; 22:14)
- 5) Has the faith of Jesus. (Rev 14:12)

They have a Christ-centered religion and believe that through trust in God, the believer will obtain grace to overcome as Christ overcame. (1 John 5:4; Rev 12:11; 1 John 2:6; 3:3,7)

6) Has the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17) which is the spirit of prophecy, (Rev 19:10) (see *God's Guiding Gift*)

The mission of the movement is to call a people out of apostasy and point them to the Lamb of God and allegiance to His authority. Just as God had called Israel out of Egypt, a land of apostasy, and brought them into the wilderness, so God called the end-time Israel out of the nominal churches, and brought them into the wilderness of the people

after 1844. Just as God restored the law and the Sabbath (Exodus 16:23-30; 20:1-17) to Israel of old after calling them out of Egypt, so the law and the Sabbath were restored after 1844. Likewise, as God restored to Israel of old the principles of hygiene and healthful living, (Exodus 15:26) so Adventists preach a message of healthful living believing that, as Christ saw to the physical maladies of man in His days, so the physical needs must be met in our day when presenting the Gospel. No other Protestant church has such a large worldwide medical ministry as has the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

In Matthew 17:11, Jesus promises the return of Elijah to restore all things prior to the end.

...Elijah comes and will restore all things.

Matthew 17:11 NIV

In verse twelve, he refers to the Elijah who had already come, but whose teaching had been rejected. This is a reference to the preaching of John the Baptist whom Jesus identifies as Elijah. (Matthew 11:14) Clearly the references to Elijah refer to the message rather than the man. The messages of the Elijah of old, John the Baptist, and of the Seventh-day Adventist church bear striking parallels. All three call the people back to obedience to God, and a worship of Him who made the heavens, the earth, and the springs of water. In addition, the messages of John and the Adventist Church is a message of preparation - to make straight the path - for the coming of the Lord. (Luke 1:17)

In 1 Kings 16:31, the story is told of the marriage of King Ahab to Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. This illicit marriage resulted in the introduction of Baal or sun-worship in Israel. (2 Kings 23:5) The result was total apostasy by the northern tribes.

And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, made for them a molten image even two calves and a graven image and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 2 Kings 17:16

Elijah's mission was to call a people out of apostasy and to restore the unity of Israel. He personally restored the broken sacrificial altar com-

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prised of twelve stones symbolizing the unity of Israel, the altar itself being a symbol of salvation by grace, as it is only through the blood of the Lamb that we may be saved. (Leviticus 17:11)

Just as Elijah of old was a forerunner of the impending judgments of God in ancient Israel, so end-time Elijah was to be a forerunner of the end-time judgment of God.

Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.
Malachi 4:4-6 NKJV

Elijah restored the ancient landmarks of obedience to God and trust in His saving grace. Likewise the Adventist church is to restore the broken law and trust in the merits of Jesus. As Isaiah prophesied:

Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honourable, and shall honour Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.
Isaiah 58:12-14 NKJV

The broken walls are a reference to the law of God. The paths are a reference to the ancient paths, the truths of the Gospel that had been trampled in the dust by the inroads of paganism. In this end-time

prophecy, the Sabbath is lifted up as the great cleaver that would cleave a people out of the world to restore a right relationship with God. The Sabbath is not to be a burden, but a delight - a day to honour God.

The Three Angels' Messages immediately precede the Second Coming of Christ and the harvest of the world. They prepare the way for the Second Coming and call a people out of the world:

...who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12

The Jewish feasts foreshadowed the events unfolding here at the end of time. The heralding of the Second Advent of Christ is the antitype of the Feast of Trumpets, The announcement of impending judgment is the antitype of the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles foreshadowed the final deliverance and home-going of the people of God.

The Three Angels' Messages

The Three Angels' Messages are the final messages of warning to the world. With the termination of these messages, the time of probation will close and Christ will return to liberate His people. The great controversy between Christ and Satan reaches its climax in the preaching of these messages and the followers of the Christ and Satan will be split into two groups, those following the Lamb and those following the beast. The contest will be fierce and there will be a time of trouble such as never was. (Daniel 12:1)

Throughout the book of Revelation, the two great camps are contrasted and Satan determines to counterfeit the very plan of salvation, so as to deceive, if possible, the very elect. (Matthew 24:24) Through the Beast power (Roman Catholicism), he determines to counterfeit the ministry of Christ. (See *Wine of Babylon*) and he sets up a false trinity to lead the world astray. Only the true prince of this world, Jesus Christ, can save us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness:

And from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the

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kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ... Revelation 1:5

Christ and His followers are involved in this battle and although Christ has already overcome the adversary, the battle will rage until the Second Coming of Christ.

... I will no longer talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh, and he hath nothing in Me.
John 14:30

This false prince, Satan, will be judged and cast out.

... because the prince of this world is judged.
John 16:11

Contrasting the two sides is the theme of the book of Revelation.

The First Angel's Message

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people - saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." Revelation 14:6-7 NKJV

The message entailed in the First Angel's Message is not only a message of judgment, but a message of the "restoration of all things". It is the Elijah message, the final reformation that would cleave the remnant of spiritual Israel from the world, and prepare a people for the coming of the Lord. The angel is depicted as spreading the everlasting Gospel to every nation. God employs people to be co-workers together with Him in the spreading of the Gospel. The angel is a symbol of the heavenly nature of this message.

The everlasting Gospel is the great theme of salvation - saved by the blood of the Lamb. This Gospel has never changed. Our first parents were taught the lesson of salvation by grace when God covered their nakedness with the pelt of a sheep - symbolizing the righteousness of Christ which would cover them. Abel offered a lamb as sacrifice because he understood that salvation was to be found outside himself in the merits of the Lamb that was to be slain for the sins of the world. Cain sought favour through the works of his hands and his offering was not acceptable to God. The two great classes - salvation by grace and salvation by works - were established from the very beginning. Abraham understood the significance of the Lamb when God enacted the plan of salvation in mini-form through the patriarch's own son, Isaac.

Issac was a symbol of God's Son who was to be offered, but God provided His own lamb - a ram, a symbol of Jesus who would die for the sins of the world. The Jews in the ceremonial law were taught the principles of the plan of salvation, which were the same principles that apply today - our salvation lies in the Lamb that was slain. The Gospel has never changed, but Satan perverts the Gospel to suit his ends.

The Lamb was slain because the law could not be compromised. If the law could have been done away with, then Christ need not have died. To be saved by grace does not give a license for sin, which is transgression of the Law. (1 John 3:4)

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law. Romans 3:31

God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Romans 6:2

...for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.

Romans 2:13-14 NKJV

Every deed will be brought into judgment (2 Cor 5:10). God's grace is as great as God's justice.

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord', shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My

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Father in heaven. Matthew 7:21 NKJV

The Gospel rests on the twin pillars of law and grace. Satan knows this and wars against those who bring these twin pillars into a right relationship.

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17 NKJV

In Israel of old, Satan exalted the law and crucified the Lamb whilst in spiritual Israel he exalts the Lamb and crucifies the law. Make no mistake - we cannot claim the merits of Christ whilst we deliberately keep on sinning.

For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. Hebrews 10:26 NKJV

We cannot accept justification and refuse sanctification. Without holiness, no one will see God. (Heb 12:14)

We accept sanctification in the same way as which we accepted justification - through faith in Christ. No man can keep the law in his own strength, it is only through Christ in us that obedience becomes possible. Sanctification is a growth in Christ and not a magic wand. Through abiding trust in God, our bent sinful nature can be overcome.

Some strive for perfection, and some even believe that they are sinless. All such striving is useless for only through Christ in us can we attain the victory. By ourselves we can do nothing. (John 15:5)

*Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.
1 John 3:24 NKJV*

You therefore, beloved, since you know this before hand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.

2 Peter 3:17 NKJV

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 1 Corinthians 10:12 NKJV

The nearer one is to Christ, the more one will be humbled by His beauty and the less meritorious one will seem in one's own eyes. Like Isaiah of old, one will be led to exclaim:

...Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Isaiah 6:5

Even the beloved John fell at the feet of Jesus like one who was dead when Christ appeared to him in His glory. (Rev 1:17)

The law contains no elements of selfishness. There will be no selfishness in heaven. The very atmosphere of heaven is permeated by selflessness. True sanctification will eradicate selfishness from the soul. False sanctification will exalt self and nurture a judgmental spirit.

The everlasting Gospel to be preached by the remnant is to set straight the record and place the issues of law and grace in a right perspective:

...Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.
Revelation 14:7 NKJV

The remnant will preach the judgment (See *Millenium of Peace*) and exalt the Creator - the One who made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of water. This is the seal of God, which is the sign of His authority. It also appears in the Sabbath commandment where it emphasizes not only the authority over, but also God's ownership of the universe.

The Sabbath stands as a memorial to creation and the remnant is to point to and exalt God as Creator. It is noteworthy that, at the

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close of the 2300-day prophecy in 1844, God sends a message into the world reminding the world of its origins whilst at the same time (1844), Darwin's concept of evolution is readied for the world. In the music world, Haydn's "Creation" exalts the Creator.

The First Angel's Message calls for a choice between truth and error; between the binding claims of the Gospel versus popular humanism; between emptying of self together with trust in God and exalting self.

The Second Angel's Message

And another angel followed, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'

Revelation 14:8 NKJV

Babylon of old was opposed to Jerusalem. Babylon enticed Jerusalem and made her serve foreign gods. Babylon of old eventually led the whole of Israel captive and only a remnant returned to rebuild the ancient ruins. God pronounced judgment on ancient Babylon.

Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged. Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies.

Jeremiah 51:7-9 NKJV

In similar fashion, the anti-typical Babylon, the confederacy of religious powers at the end of time, will lead people astray and take them captive through her numerous false doctrines. (See the chapters *Wine of Babylon*, *Spirit of Unity*, *Strange Fire*, and *New Age Movement*) The same pronouncement as pronounced in Jeremiah 51:8 on ancient

14 - A Stone to Rest Your Head

CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE	SATAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS
Trinity of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit	False Trinity of Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet
All Power unto the Son (<i>Heb 1:8; Rev 6:2</i>)	Power unto the Beast (<i>Rev 13:2</i>)
Keys of Death and Hades (<i>Rev 1:18</i>)	Keys of the Bottomless Pit (<i>Rev 9:1</i>)
Who is like unto the Lord (<i>Is 40:18</i>)	Who is like unto the Beast? (<i>Rev 13:4</i>)
A Lamb as it had been slain (<i>Rev 13:8</i>)	One of the heads as it were wounded unto death (<i>Rev 13:3</i>)
He which is, and which was, and which is to come (<i>Rev 1:4</i>)	Beast which was, and is not, and is about to come (<i>Rev 17:8</i>)
Wrath of the Lamb (<i>Rev 6:16</i>)	Wrath of the Devil (<i>Rev 12:12</i>)
God's seal in forehead (<i>Rev 7:2-3</i>)	Beast's mark in forehead or hand (<i>Rev 13:16-17</i>)
Name of God (<i>Rev 14:1</i>)	Name of beast (<i>Rev 13:17</i>)
Tribes of Israel (<i>Rev 1:4</i>)	Tribes of the earth (<i>Rev 1:7</i>)
Armies of heaven (<i>Rev 19:14</i>)	Armies of earth (<i>Rev 19:19</i>)
War against Satan and his followers (<i>Rev 12:7; 16:14; 19:11</i>)	War against Christ and His people (<i>Rev 12:17; 17:14; 20:8</i>)
Supper of the Lamb (<i>Rev 19:9</i>)	Supper of birds (<i>Rev 19:17-20</i>)
Lamb's bride (<i>Rev 21:9-10</i>)	Harlot of Babylon (<i>Rev 17:1,5</i>)
Apostles of the Lamb (<i>Rev 21:14</i>)	False Apostles (<i>Rev 2:2</i>)
Jerusalem - God's Church (<i>Rev 11:2; 14:20</i>)	Babylon - Satan's Church (<i>Rev 14:8; 16:19</i>)
Ruler of Heaven, earth, sea (<i>Exod 20:11; Gen 2:3; Matt 23:18</i>)	Beast out of sea, Beast out of earth, Dragon (<i>Rev 13:1-2,11-14; 12:9</i>)

Figure 14.1

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Babylon is pronounced in Revelation 14:8. In Revelation 18:1-5, the call out of Babylon is the same as that given by God in ancient times. (Jeremiah 51:9) Babylon cannot be healed. She has stopped her ears to the call of God and the remnant is called out of her. Indeed her soothing doctrines of salvation in sin and self-exaltation are doctrines of evil. (1 Timothy 4:1)

After these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.' And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.'

Revelation 18:1-5 NKJV

The Second Angel announces the fall of Babylon, but the loud call to come out of her my people is only pronounced later. God's people are thus still in Babylon. It is Babylon that is condemned - the system of religious structures aligned in confederacy against Christ and His people - not the individuals.

There are two calls out of Babylon. Just as Jesus began and ended His ministry on earth by cleansing the temple from profanation, so there are two calls to the churches at the end of time. The first of these calls was made at the commencement of the Advent movement around 1844, and was confined largely to America, whereas the final call will be worldwide and climax in the loud cry just prior to the close of probation. This experience will be accompanied by the outpouring of the latter rain.

The Third Angel's Message

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Revelation 14:9-12 NKJV

The Third Angel's Message is the most fearful message ever given to the world. It warns against the acceptance of the mark of the beast or the worship of the beast or its image. (See *Mark of the Beast*)

Accepting the authority of the counterfeit religious system over and above that of God is tantamount to worshipping the beast system rather than God. Accepting the spurious Sabbath is an acceptance of the authority of the beast in the place of the authority of God. As the beast obtains his authority from the Dragon, (Rev 13:2) acknowledgement of that authority is worship of the Dragon or of Satan himself.

So they worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?'

Revelation 13:4 NKJV

The worship of the system entails far more than just an acceptance of authority. It is also an alignment with the principles of the system. The doctrine of salvation in sin permits all things and teaches that in Christ all are free to do as they please.

For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Matthew 24:38-39 NKJV

Indeed:

Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they have hid their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. Ezekiel 22:26

Those that are in Christ will align themselves with the principles of Christ. They will attain to holiness and separate themselves from all that separates from Christ.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' Wherefore, 'Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' Says the Lord Almighty. Having therefore, these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

The whole lifestyle of believers in Christ must reflect this relationship. Babylon is in enmity with God, and teaches a doctrine of compromise, but compromise with sin is impossible, because God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:29)

The Third Angel's Message is a message of separation from Babylon and its principles. It is a message that puts our relationship with Christ in its right perspective, and it is a message that brings about lifestyle changes as behooves those who are to stand in the presence of a holy God.

Separating from the world does not mean retiring to solitary confinement. We are to labour in the world as Christ laboured, but we are not to be trapped by the ways of the world. To make a stand for right principles will require courage and fortitude often in the face of fierce opposition, but in Christ, it is possible to overcome the world. The consequences of drinking the wine of Babylon are spelt out in the word of God:

The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. Revelation 14:10

The wrath that is to be poured out without mixture refers to the wrath without mercy, without grace.

Anyone who has rejected Moses' law die without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot,

counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Hebrews 10:28-31 NKJV

In ancient Israel, the enemies of God were to be totally destroyed. (Deut 7:2; 20:16-18) The false prophets that led Israel astray were to be executed without mercy. (Deut 13:7-10) This typology is applicable also to the enemy of God in the last days.

But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness - indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

Romans 2:8-11 NKJV

God's people need not fear the judgments as:

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:18-19 NIV

Those who accept the mark of the beast are set in sharp contrast with those that receive the seal of God. In Revelation 7, John sees the 144,000 who receive the seal of God. They have a number of identifying characteristics that are given in Revelation 14. Firstly, they have the name of the Lamb and His father written on their foreheads. (Rev 14:1) Secondly, they are redeemed from the earth. (Rev 14:3) They have not defiled themselves with women, (Rev 14:4) and they are virgins. Moreover, there is no lie in their mouths (Rev 14:5), they are blameless

(Rev 14:5) and they follow the Lamb wherever he goes. (Rev 14:4) Of significance here is that they stand in sharp contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast.

The name stands for their character. They have a share in the nature and character of God, and they refuse to be defiled by women, which means that they refuse to become involved with idolatrous practices. They remain chaste, faithful to Jesus. The fact that no lie is found in their mouths signifies an investigation into their character. But they are found to stand justified before God. They are blameless.

...we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Ephesians 1:4 (See also Phil 2:15, Colossians 1:22, 2 Peter 3:11)

This is not a message of legalism or perfectionism, since without Jesus we can do nothing. It is a recognition of the power of Christ. Christ depicts His bride as dressed in spotless white, covered with the righteousness of Christ. No man should ever dare to utter "I am sinless," but Christ can write it in His book, because His forgiveness does not only remove the stain of sin but also the record of sin. In the book of Leviticus we read that priests were only permitted to marry virgins, a typology of Christ and His bride. The priests were not even permitted to marry chaste widows, who by the nature of their status had had previous relationships. Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, all of us fall into the category of having had previous relationships with evil. To fulfill the requirements of the typology, the forgiveness of God has to be so complete that not even the record of the previous unfaithfulness of God's people will remain. Only then can they qualify as the chaste virgin, pure and undefiled. All the honour and glory belong to God and this leaves no room for legalism, which relies on one's own merits.

Is it coincidental that there are only two truly worldwide religious movements in the world today - The Roman Catholic Church and The Seventh-Day Adventist Church? The American Bible Society and Church Missions document lists the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the only universally distributed Protestant denomination in the world. The Catholic Church demands obedience to its system and claims

Sunday as the mark of her authority, and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church propagates obedience to God and Him only and upholds the Seventh day Sabbath as the sign of obedience to God, in accordance with the Scriptures. As Catholics admit, compromise is impossible:

*Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of One or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.*¹

This is a simple contest of wills, a contest for authority. Pope John Paul II's encyclical on Sunday worship is calling the world to honour that day. The Seventh-day Adventist Church warns the world against accepting the mark of the beast. It is protesting against the usurping of God's authority. This is the recipe for the final conflict. As the Roman Catholic Church admits, the Adventists have the authority of Scripture on their side in this confrontation. In fact, they boast that Protestants keeping Sunday are paying homage to them:

*You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, A day which we never sanctify.*²

*...the observance of Sunday by Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic Church.*³

The Catholic Church openly acknowledges that only the Seventh-day Adventist Church is here acting in accordance with the Scriptures:

*The Adventists are the only body of Christians with the Bible as their teacher, who can find no warrant in its pages for the change of day from the seventh to the first. Hence their appellation, 'Seventh-day Adventists'*⁴

The (Catholic) Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her Founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter the Seventh-day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant.⁵

The Saint Catherine Catholic Church Sentinel had this to say on the issue.

People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become Seventh Day Adventists and keep Saturday holy.⁶

The choice is ours - the commandments of God or the commandments of men. Those who knowingly disobey God will have to give an account to God.

And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. Matthew 15:9 NKJV

The final conflict in the drama of the great controversy between Christ and Satan is about to unfold. Once the choice has been placed before the people and the mark of the beast has been legislated, then probation will close and Christ will return. The redeemed will sing a "new song before the throne." Their unique experience as those who will come out of the last tribulation will qualify them to sing this song of praise to the Lamb of God that was slain, but lives forever more. The choice is clear. God longs to redeem us. He who spared not His own Son wants to give us all things. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.

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15

GOD'S GUIDING GIFT

When God warned the ancient world of the coming judgment, He made use of a prophet. Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5) and found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8). God has always used prophets to warn His people and in the time of the Exodus, He used Moses to lead the people out of Egypt to Canaan. Moses was more than a prophet--he was also the leader of the people. Moses had to prepare a people for their entry into the Promised Land. This great event serves as a type for the final gathering of God's people and their entry into the heavenly Canaan. Surely if a prophet was deemed necessary for the preparation for earthly Canaan, how much more so for the heavenly Canaan. The Bible predicts that the remnant would possess the spirit of prophecy and that the restoration of this gift would be one of the issues that Satan would war against.

And the dragon was enraged over the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17 NKJV
...Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit

of prophecy. Revelation 19:10 NKJV

God's remnant must thus possess the spirit of prophecy in order to qualify as the remnant. We need to understand the issues involved. There is nothing more dangerous to Satan than the clear revelation of the will of God. The way to war against it is to cast contempt upon it or to counterfeit it. It is therefore vital that we understand the Biblical criteria for the manifestation of the gift of prophecy, and that we understand the reasons why God grants this gift in the first place, so that we will not be swept away by Satan's deceptions.

Sin Separated Us From God

When Adam and Eve sinned, their first impulse was to hide themselves from God.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. Genesis 3:8

Their reason for hiding themselves was that they recognized their nakedness. When God called Adam, Adam answered:

... 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.' Genesis 3:10

Adam and Eve had been stripped of their cloak of righteousness and stood naked before God. Sin caused a separation between God and man.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

And only in Christ are we reconciled to God:

For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Romans 5:10

The message of reconciliation has been entrusted to the Church. To the Old Testament church in type, and to the New Testament church in verity.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

In Christ, we are reconciled with God, but as long as sin exists, face to face communication with God is not possible. The brightness of His glory would consume us.

Whenever God has revealed Himself to man, it was either in a dream, vision, or God veiled His glory. When God spoke to Israel from Mt. Sinai, He warned them that they would die if they came too close. The presence of God, although veiled in thick clouds, was so impressive that the people requested Moses to speak to them the words of God, lest they should die from the voice of God. (Exodus 20:19) The prophets of old, even in vision, felt that they would die in the presence of God.

Then I said, 'Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' Isaiah 6:5 NKJV

And in New Testament times, the situation was no different. When John saw Jesus in vision, he fell as dead.

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He

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*laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, 'Fear not;
I am the first and the last,...' Revelation 1:17*

One day it will be possible again to stand before God and speak to Him face to face:

*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face;
now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as
I also have been fully known.
1 Corinthians 13:12 NKJV*

Our communication is hindered, but it will be restored.

*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but
when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.
1 Corinthians 13: 9-10 NKJV*

How God Communicates

The greatest gift to fallen man is the gift of God's own Son:

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should
not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

The greatest words ever spoken were the words of Christ when He walked amongst men. God did not leave His children without words of life *before* the incarnation of the Son of God, and neither did He leave them orphans *after* the resurrection. Throughout the ages, God communicated His will to His servants the prophets.

*Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth
His secret unto His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7*

These prophets did not speak their own words, but revealed God's will to man.

...for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1:21

Prophets, chosen by God, have been used by God since the fall.

...God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21

Enoch was the first prophet mentioned in the Scriptures.

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of saints...' Jude 14

Since Enoch, there have been numerous prophets, both men and women. Some prophets were instructed by God to write His words on a scroll, and some of these writings form a part of the Scriptures. Other prophets and prophetesses are mentioned in the Bible whose writings were not taken up in the canon. Examples in Old Testament times include Nathan, Gad and Huldah the prophetess. (2 Samuel 7:2; 1 Samuel 22:5; 2 Kings 22:14) In New Testament times, there were Simeon (Acts 13:1), Anna (Luke 2:36, Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10), Barnabas (Acts 13:1), and Phillip's four daughters (Acts 21:9). God used both men and women to communicate His will to His people, and although not all the prophets' writings or sayings were taken up in the canon, this did not make their messages any less significant, neither is there any reason to argue that male prophets were in any way different from female prophets in terms of the prophetic gift. Prophetesses mentioned in the Bible include Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Anna (Luke 2:36), and the four daughters of Phillip (Acts 21:9).

The Prophetic Gift

If God communicates His intention through His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7, Hosea 12:10), and Satan counterfeits the messages of God through false prophets (1 John 4:1), then it is vital that we test the prophets to see if the message is indeed from God. On the one hand, the Scriptures admonish us to:

Despise not prophesyings. 1 Thessalonians 5:20

and to:

Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established; believe his prophets, so shall you prosper.
2 Chronicles 20:20 NKJV

whilst, on the other hand, there is the warning against false prophets.

For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Matthew 24:24 NKJV

A prophet must be able to stand the test:

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
1 John 4:1 NKJV

False prophets also claim to have dreams and to see visions, so the Scriptures must provide criteria whereby the authenticity of the prophet's utterings may be tested.

The gift of prophecy is one of the gifts given to the people of God to maintain the integrity of the church throughout all the ages. The prophets of old were given messages of warning and reproof, as well as visions and dreams of future and past events to keep the people of God on track. The prophets were, as it were, the eyes of the church.

The spiritual body, the church, is compared to the human body.

For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12

Just as the human body is a highly organized structure where all components work in unity, so the people of God form a unit with different components. Among the gifts given by Christ to the church, the gift of prophecy features prominently. Not everyone receives the same gifts:

Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that. 1 Corinthians 7:7 NKJV

The gifts are given to make one strong for service (Romans 1:11) and they are irrevocable (Romans 11:29) but subject to obedience (1 Kings 13). The gifts can be summarised as follows:

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF GIFTS INCLUDE:

Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28-31;

Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

1. **Apostles** - *to be sent forth, a messenger or ambassador* - Besides the twelve apostles, the term is also applied to Paul on numerous occasions (1 Corinthians 9:1-2; Romans 1:1), Barnabas (Acts 14:14), and even to Jesus Himself (Hebrews 3:1)

2. **Prophet** - *one who has a vocation from God* - A prophet may speak of past, present or future events. To prophesy can also mean to utter inspired words.

3. **Evangelist** - *announcer of glad tidings* - The term was applied to Philip (Acts 21:8) and Timothy (2 Timothy 4:5)

4. Pastor - *to lead, to tend, to shepherd*

5. Teacher - The ability to teach is a gift from God to lead others to Christ (e.g. Acts 18:24-28)

6. Miracles - God has worked miracles through some of His servants to further faith.

7. Healing - God cares about the spiritual and physical needs of His people. The gift of healing has always formed an integral part of the ministry, but has also been an issue of contention, as some have substituted presumption for faith in regard to this issue.

8. Helping - The Gospel is a double-edged sword. By helping others, all can be uplifted.

9. Administration - The gift of administration is intended to keep the church functioning optimally.

10. Tongues and Interpretation - This gift has been discussed in the chapter *Strange Fire*

11. Mercy - *to take care of the needs of others and have compassion on the brokenhearted* - e.g. James 1:27; Isaiah 61:1

12. Wisdom

13. Knowledge

14. Faith - Without faith it is impossible to please God. *Hebrews 11:6*

15. Discernment

16. Hospitality - *1 Timothy 3:2*

Of all the gifts - the greatest is **love** - which God will sow in all who accept His call. The gifts all serve a common purpose:

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.
Ephesians 4:12

The Role of the Prophet

The prophetic gift has always had a position of prominence within God's church throughout the ages, and has played a major role in preventing God's people from straying from the path of truth. Truth is eternal, and the New Testament church is built on this truth, which includes the truth revealed through the Old Testament prophets. In the Dark Ages, truth was thrown to the ground and the law of God had been changed by the Papal power. Since the prophet Amos declares that visions cease when the Law is no more (Amos 441:4,12; 8:11-12), this gift of prophecy could no longer operate during this period.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.
Ephesians 2:20-21

In New Testament times, the gift of prophecy is equally as prominent as it was in Old Testament times, and still offers words of encouragement, warning and reproof from God.

It was through prophets that the fledgling Christian church initiated its mission outreach (Acts 13:1; 16:6-10), and prophets ensured the safety of the believers by warning them against impending dangers such as famine (Acts 11:27-30) and personal dangers to those who spread the Gospel. Moreover, the prophets confirmed doctrines and practices (Acts 15:1-15) and prophets encouraged and strengthened the church.

Now Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves,

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exhorted the brethren with many words and confirmed them. Acts 15:32

The gift of prophesy will remain until the end of time and the day of the Lord when He shall come again in glory:

...so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 1:7-8 NKJV

In the light of Christ's warning against false prophets and the admonishment to "test the Spirit" (1 John 4:1), it is vital that we discern between the true and the spurious.

Do not despise prophecies, test all things; hold fast what is good. 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 NKJV

Testing the Prophets

The Bible lists a series of tests that can be applied to prophets to determine whether they are genuine or not. Taken individually, it is possible to counterfeit many of these tests, but collectively, they provide an impassable barrier to false prophets. False prophets can quote Scripture or have some of their prophecies come true, but they can still be false prophets, subtly using every opportunity to lead God's people astray. A prophet of God will have to satisfy all the Biblical criteria, which can be summarised as follows:

1) A true prophet's message will be in complete harmony with the Word of God and the law of God.

To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah 8:20

Most modern-day prophets would fail this test. A prophet cannot negate

what God has revealed in His Word, and all the precepts of the law are binding.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James 2:10

When the law is not observed, the gift of prophecy is withdrawn:

...the law is no more, her prophets also find no vision from the Lord. Lamentations 2:9

2) A true prophet's predictions must come to pass.

As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent. Jeremiah 28:9 NKJV

...when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. Deuteronomy 18:22 NKJV

A word of warning seems in order here. A prophet's predictions may come true, and he/she may even perform miracles to convince you of the genuineness of the prophecy - yet it may be false.

If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying 'Let us go after other gods' - which you have not known - and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear

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*Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice;
you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.*
Deuteronomy 13:1-4 NKJV

Signs and wonders are no test of genuineness. As in the above Scriptural example, the prophet's words were not in harmony with the Law of God. Satan will work miracles in the last days to deceive many. (Revelation 16:14)

3) A true prophet prophesies to edify the church, counselling and advising in religious matters.

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation, and comfort, ... but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 1 Corinthians 14:3-4

But I am the Lord your God, ever since the land of Egypt; I will again make you dwell in tents, as in the days of the appointed feast. I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions; I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets.
Hosea 12:9-10 NKJV

A true prophet will not flatter or condone sin (transgression of the law 1 John 3:4)

4) A true prophet will exalt Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind.

No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.... Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
1 John 4:12,15 NKJV

When Jesus, after His resurrection, expounded the Scriptures to His disciples, He revealed to them the prophetic proclamations regarding Himself.

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He

expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24:27

Again a word of warning regarding this test. Many false prophets will say to Jesus in the last judgment:

'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?' Matthew 7:22

The Lord will, however, not recognize them as His, as they practiced iniquity (Greek: *anomia* - against the law of God). They seem to pass the test, but fail in regard to the Law.

5) The true prophet will speak with authority:

...for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matthew 7:29

Jesus is the supreme example, and He spoke those things which He had seen and heard from the Father (John 8:26, 28, 38). A prophet will likewise reveal those things with authority that have been revealed to him by God.

6) The true prophet will bear good fruit.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Matthew 7:20

This test is compelling. Does the prophet live a life in harmony with the will of God and are the lives of those he/she touches transformed so that they too live godly lives? Once again, a word of warning. No one is without sin and all fall short of the glory of God.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. James 5:17 NKJV

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Although Elijah had similar faults and passions as we have, he strove to live a godly life and the fruits of his labour testify that he was truly a prophet of God.

7) The true prophet, when in vision, will exhibit physical signs:

a) In vision, the prophet's eyes will be open.

The utterance of him who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down, with eyes wide open. Numbers 24:4 NKJV

Two pointers are here of significance: firstly, the prophet falls to the ground and secondly, his/her eyes are wide open. The New King James Version renders the translation from the original text very precisely, and for this reason it is quoted above. Most modern Bible translations do not bring these points to light clearly. The NIV, for example, translates the text as follows:

the oracle of one who hears the words of God, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened. Numbers 24:4 NIV

In this translation, the issue of the wide open eyes is lost, and can be interpreted in a spiritual rather than in a literal sense.

In Daniel 10, the physical state of the prophet Daniel, whilst in vision, is described.

And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face to the ground. Daniel 10:7-9

Daniel had “no strength”, and he must have fallen to the ground as he lay with his “face to the ground”. The prophet does not, however, remain in this helpless state on the ground, but he is lifted up by God, and whilst still in vision, stands up on his feet.

And behold an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, ‘O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

Daniel 10:10-11

b) In vision, the prophet will have no breath in him, and no strength of his/her own.

And suddenly one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, ‘My Lord, because of the vision, my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my Lord talk with you my Lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.’ Daniel 10:16-17 NKJV

Note that Daniel has no strength because of the vision. He is touched by God and speaks although there is no breath in him. Again, new translations of the Bible obscure these vital texts by means of interpretive rather than literal translations. The NIV renders verse 17 as follows:

How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.

Daniel 10:17 NIV

"I can hardly breathe" does not convey the same message as “nor is any breath left in me”; or as the KJV puts it: “neither is there breath left in me”. Daniel is given strength by God.

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Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. Daniel 10:18 NKJV

No mention is made of the restoration of breathing whilst in vision. The prophet is sustained by God whilst in vision. In summary, a prophet in vision:

- i) falls down weak
- ii) is raised up and strengthened by God
- iii) has the eyes wide open during the vision
- iv) does not breathe, even though he/she speaks.

These are signs, which cannot readily be counterfeited. In fact, modern “so-called” visionaries tend to fall down with their eyes closed, and they have breath in them, because only God can sustain life without breath.

The Gift of Prophecy in the Time of the End

One of the identifying features of the remnant of God is the spirit of prophecy.

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 12:17 NKJV

The remnant keeps the commandments of God and the Law is therefore restored in its fullness. As prophets of God need to live and speak in harmony with God’s law, the true gift of prophecy can only be made manifest if the law forms an integral part of the theology of the prophet. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus.

Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Revelation 19:10 NKJV

The Scriptures teach that those awaiting the coming of the Lord will come behind in no gift, and Christ warns against false prophets in the last days who would tend to mislead God's people. As we are also admonished to test the spirits and to hold on to what is good, it is vital that we apply the criteria provided to test the prophets in our time.

After the death of the apostles, prophets enjoyed respectability in many circles until 300 A.D.,¹ but the decline of spirituality in the Church and the resultant apostasy led to a diminishing of both the presence and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, false prophets caused a loss of confidence in the prophetic gift. The decline of the prophetic gift during certain periods of Church history did not mean that God had withdrawn the gift permanently. The Bible indicates that as the end approaches, this gift will be present to assist the Church through these difficult times. More than that, it points to an increased activity of this gift. The church of the Middle Ages made void the law of God by altering the Ten Commandments and this effectively blocked the prophetic gift.

Her gates have sunk into the ground; He hath destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles; the Law is no more, her prophets also find no vision from the Lord. Lamentations 2:9

Before the first advent of Christ, God gave the gift of prophecy to John the Baptist to prepare the way for His coming. In a similar way, the prophetic gift must be restored before the Second Advent, so that everyone will have the opportunity to prepare to meet their Saviour.

Christ mentions the rise of false prophets as one of the signs that His coming is near! (Matthew 24:11, 24) If there were to be no true prophets during the time of the end, Christ would have warned against anyone claiming that gift. His warning against false prophets implies that there would be true prophets as well.

The prophet Joel predicted a special outpouring of the prophetic gift - just prior to Christ's return.

And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth; blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. Joel 2:28-31

Pentecost saw a remarkable manifestation of the Spirit. Peter, citing Joel's prophecy, pointed out that God had promised such blessings. (Acts 2:2-21) However, Joel's prophecy did not reach complete fulfilment at Pentecost, as the "great and terrible day of the Lord" is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ.

Pentecost, then, was a foretaste of the full manifestation of the Spirit before the Second Advent. Like Palestine's early rain, which fell in the autumn shortly after the crops were planted, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost corresponds to the spiritual early rain, which was to nurture the fledgling church. The complete and final fulfilment of Joel's prophecy corresponds to the latter rain, which, falling in the Spring, ripened the grain. (Joel 2:23). Likewise, the final bestowal of God's Spirit will take place just before the Second Advent - after the predicted signs in the sun, moon and stars. (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12-17; Joel 2:31)

Like the latter rain, this final outpouring of the Spirit will ripen the harvest of the earth, (Matthew 13:30, 39), and "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved". (Joel 2:32)

The Millerites and later the Adventists saw a fulfilment of the prophecy regarding the darkening of the sun and the falling of the stars in the unexplained dark day of New England of May 19, 1780 when there was an unequalled darkness over large areas of New England. On November 13, 1833, the world witnessed the greatest meteoric event in recorded history when meteors lighted up the sky, falling at an estimated rate of 200 000 per hour. Considering the turning of these events in relation to the unsealing

of the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel, it is understandable that they should be linked to the prophecies regarding last day events.

During this time period, there was a resurgence of prophetic claims and many movements arose which were founded by prophets. It has always been a strategy of Satan to confound true issues by creating numerous diversions so that truth would be lost in the quagmire of false prophecies. God has always used prophets to support His people and to lead them into a fuller understanding of His truth. Never was the prophet intended to start a new movement and to gather followers on the basis of new light, which contradicted light already given. Nevertheless, in the time period preceding and just after 1844, many such movements arose. Examples are:

1) The Mormon movement headed by their prophet Joseph Smith (1805-1844) who claimed to have received many revelations from God. Some of these revelations led to abhorrent practices, such as baptism for the dead and polygamy. Joseph Smith was murdered by a mob in 1844 while he was waiting trial for exactly these reasons.

2) The Shakers who featured prominently during this period and followed their prophet, Ann Lee, who claimed to be Christ himself incarnate in woman's flesh. They believed in the dual (Father-mother) personality of God and practiced a communal form of life in which spiritism formed an integral part.

3) Modern spiritism commenced in 1848 with the Fox sisters and made communication with the dead fashionable. (See *Mystic Realm of Death*)

4) The modern New Age Movement traces its roots to many so-called prophets who also arose during this crucial time period. (See *New Age Movement*)

All these movements are based on revelations which annul or

modify the Word of God to suit their needs, but God does not change:

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. James 1:17-18 NIV

A Prophet for the Remnant

After the Great Disappointment of 1844, many who believed in the return of Christ were disillusioned and prepared to abandon their faith. Just prior to 1844, two men received similar visions regarding the Advent movement. The first was William Foy, a member of the “Freewill Baptist Church” who was studying for the ministry. In 1842, in Boston, he witnessed the reward of the faithful and the punishment of the wicked, the great scenes of the judgment in three steps, the books of record in heaven, the coming of Christ, and the reward of the faithful, in that sequence. Foy related these visions to audiences, but when he received a third vision, which he did not understand, he ceased his public work.

Hazen Foss also received a vision regarding the experience of the Advent people, but refused to make it public after the Great Disappointment, which had severely affected him.

Shortly after this period, a young girl by the name of Ellen Harmon was given a vision of the trials of the Advent people. This vision was given her two months after the Great Disappointment in December 1844. The vision did not reveal the reasons for the Disappointment, but did offer comfort and greater understanding of the events as they had and would be unfolding. The events covered by the vision showed Adventists travelling to the city on a narrow path with the bright light of the “midnight cry” behind them, and the path lighted to its end so that they would not stumble. Those who kept their eyes on Jesus would not stumble but enter into the city, the New Jerusalem. She witnessed the events of the Second Advent and the sealing of the 144 000, the ascent to the New Jerusalem and the reward of the faithful.²

When Ellen Harmon related her first vision early in 1845, Hazen

Foss was present and was overwhelmed that the vision was the same as he had received, but which he had refused to reveal.

From 1844, when Ellen Harmon was 17 years old, until 1915 when she died, she had more than 2000 documented visions. During this time, she lived and worked in America, Europe, and Australia. Her work was often met with scepticism and ridicule, particularly since she was a woman and had not had much formal schooling in view of an accident in her youth, which had left her partly debilitated. At the age of nine, Ellen was seriously injured by a stone thrown by a classmate whilst she was on her way home from school. For three weeks, she was unconscious, and it was thought that she would not recover. After her initial recovery, she returned to school, but never got beyond the early grades. Ellen was a member of the Methodist church and was baptized on June 26, 1842. She was an ardent student of the Bible, and after attending meetings held by William Miller and his associates, she was impressed by the message which she heard.

After the Great Disappointment, which also greatly affected her, she was chosen to receive her first vision and she relates her reaction as follows:

After I had the vision, and God gave me light, He bade me deliver it... but I shrank from it. I was young, and I thought they would not receive it from me.³

On August 30, 1846, Ellen married James White, a young Adventist preacher, and they had four sons: Henry, Edson, William and Herbert. After the death of her husband on August 6, 1881, Ellen laboured alone for another 34 years, during which time some of the most profound writings on the Word of God were produced by her. Her ministry and visions:

1) Guarded the church against fanatical influences, and the inroads of non-biblical doctrines

2) Established the pillars of the Adventist faith in confirming or correcting the results of ardent Bible study by a host of Advent believers. These pillars included the role of the Law of God, the Sabbath, the Sanctuary, the Second Coming of Christ, the Three Angel's Messages,

and the identity and role of Babylon in the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

3) Established church order and directed the ministry on the spreading of the final message of hope and reproof--the Three Angels' Messages.

4) Established the publishing work and helped it expand into a worldwide ministry.

5) Established the right arm of the ministry, a worldwide health message that recognizes that man has physical as well as spiritual needs.

Despite her physical frailness and debilities which made it impossible for her to write, Ellen White became one of the most prolific writers for our time. No other woman author has produced as much published religious material as has Ellen G. White. Numerous books, magazine articles, tracts and pamphlets, as well as letters, have flowed from her pen. Her writings cover a wide field of issues from doctrinal practices to Christian living, diet and health, parental care and guidance, education, medical ministry and the illumination of Biblical prophecies and historic events. This remarkable turn of events was, according to her, made possible by the direct intervention of God. After being instructed to write down the things she had seen in vision, she had felt it an impossible request. She relates the experience as follows:

The Lord has said, 'Write out the things, which I shall give you.' And I commenced when very young to do this work. My hand that was feeble and trembling because of infirmities became steady as soon as I took the pen in my hand, and since those first writings, I have been able to write. God has given me the ability to write... That right hand scarcely ever has a disagreeable sensation.

*It never wearies. It seldom ever trembles.*⁴

She relates her feelings as follows:

*I wept, and said, 'Impossible, impossible.' The words came, 'Nothing is impossible with God'. The effort was made and my hand commenced to write the things that had been given me.*⁵

The Vital Question:

Was Ellen G. White a Prophet of God or was she a Deceiver?

There is nothing worse than deception, yet deception is Satan's greatest weapon.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Ephesians 5:6 NKJV

On the other hand, we are counselled to take heed of the word of the prophets (2 Peter 1:19). The only way out of this dilemma is to test the prophet by applying the Biblical criteria. If she truly was a prophet of God, then all the criteria must apply. If they do, then we can rest assured.

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
2 Peter 1: 19-21 NKJV

Applying the Test to Ellen G. White

1) Did she exalt the Word of God and the Law of God?

The Word of God - The Bible - She wrote:

The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience.⁶

Her writings, which collectively are referred to as the Spirit of Prophecy, were never intended to give new light, but were always intended to illuminate the greater light, the Scriptures. She wrote:

Little heed is given to the Bible and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.⁷

The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken, and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse...The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.⁸

To those who criticized the Word of God, she wrote:

Cling to your Bible as it reads and stop your criticism in regard to its validity and obey the word, and not one of you will be lost.⁹

The Bible was to be the only creed:

*The Bible and the Bible alone is to be our creed, the role bond of union... God's word is infallible... lift up the banner on which is inscribed the Bible, our rule of faith and discipline.*¹⁰

Just as the great Reformers, Ellen G. White lifted up the Bible banner against false doctrines and practices. She wrote:

*As darkness thickens and error increases, we should obtain a more thorough knowledge of the truth, and be prepared to maintain from the Scriptures the truth of our position.*¹¹

*We must stand barricaded by the truths of the Bible. The canopy of truth is the only canopy under which we can stand safely.*¹²

Her position regarding the Word of God is the same as that held by Protestants since the beginning. Protestants have always rejected the claim of Roman Catholicism that tradition as well as Scriptures should dictate beliefs. The Westminster Confession underscores this point:

*The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures. Yet notwithstanding our full persuasion and assurance of infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.*¹³

Ellen G. White clearly recognizes the role of the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of Scripture as outlined in the Westminster Confession. She wrote:

We can attain to an understanding of God's word only through the illumination of that Spirit by which the word was given.¹⁴

The fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the Word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings.¹⁵

Wonderful illuminations will not be given aside from the Word, or to take the place of it.¹⁶

The Law of God

Ellen White repeatedly pointed to the binding claims of God's law. Joseph Bates, an Adventist pioneer had introduced the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to her and although she was first sceptical, she and her husband studied the Scriptures and were confirmed in the view that the Sabbath was as binding as the other nine commandments. One Sabbath, April 3, 1847, Ellen White was given a vision confirming the binding claims of the Ten Commandments and the Sabbath. Concerning the Law of God, she writes:

But it is ever the purpose of Satan to make void the law of God and to pervert the true meaning of the plan of salvation. Therefore, he has originated the falsehood that the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary's cross was for the purpose of freeing men from the obligation of keeping the commandments of God. He has foisted upon the world the deception that God has abolished His constitution, thrown away His moral standard, and made void His holy and perfect law. Had He done this, at what terrible expense would it have been to Heaven! Instead of proclaiming the abolition of the law, Calvary's cross proclaims in thunder tones its immutable and eternal character.¹⁷

Likewise she stated that it was the duty of God's children to enlighten others regarding the prophecies and the law of God:

Then present to them the prophecies; show them the purity and binding claims of the law of God. Not one jot or tittle of this law is to lose its force, but hold its binding claims upon every soul to the end of time.¹⁸

The writings of Ellen White are based on the twin pillars of faith in the merits of Jesus Christ and obedience to His righteous law. Jesus said, "If ye love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15) and in her writings the relationship between law and grace is clearly expounded. Never does she present a legalistic view of the law of God and never does she belittle its claims. Never does she claim that the law has saving merits. We are saved by grace and grace alone, but a consequence of being saved is that through the merits of Jesus Christ, one is once more brought into a right relationship with God, which includes obedience to His law. She writes:

Cannot men see that to belittle the law of God is to dishonour Christ? Why did He come to this world to suffer and die, if the law is not binding upon human beings? Who could speak more plainly than He did regarding the immutability of the law? He came to bring light and immortality to light by exalting the law, and making it honourable. Where can be found those who preach the binding claims of God's law more plainly and decidedly than did Christ when He was upon the earth?^{e19}

In presenting the binding claims of the law, many have failed to portray the infinite love of Christ. Those who have so great truths, so weighty reforms to present to the people, have not had a realization of the value of the atoning Sacrifice as an expression of God's great love to man. Love for Jesus, and Jesus' love for sinners, have been dropped out of the religious experi-

ence of those who have been commissioned to preach the gospel, and self has been exalted instead of the Redeemer of mankind. The law is to be presented to its transgressors, not as something apart from God, but rather as an exponent of His mind and character. As the sunlight cannot be separated from the sun, so God's law cannot be rightly presented to man apart from the divine Author. The messenger should be able to say, 'In the law is God's will; come, see for yourselves that the law is what Paul declared it to be 'holy, and just, and good'. It reproves sin, it condemns the sinner, but it shows him his need of Christ, with whom is plenteous mercy and goodness and truth. Though the law cannot remit the penalty for sin, but charges the sinner with all his debt, Christ has promised abundant pardon to all who repent, and believe in His mercy. The love of God is extended in abundance to the repenting, believing soul. The brand of sin upon the soul can be effaced only through the blood of the atoning Sacrifice. No less an offering was required than the sacrifice of Him who was equal with the Father. The work of Christ - His life, humiliation, death, and intercession for lost man - magnifies the law, and makes it honourable.²⁰

It is impossible for man in his own unaided strength to overcome the natural propensities to evil. There is no saving quality in the law, to save the transgressor of the law, and yet no man who has had light as to the binding claims of the law will be excused from obedience by the great Lawgiver because it is inconvenient to keep God's commandments, because it would injure man's popularity, or hurt his worldly interests. In the judgement, the law will be seen to be the test of character. It is the settled purpose of Satan to deceive men today as he deceived Eve in Eden, and lead them to disregard the command of God, and accept something beside God, something independent of God, something in opposition to God.²¹

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment forms an integral part of the law of God and is as binding today as it was when God blessed and hallowed it after His work of creating the world. To change the Sabbath is to deny the binding claim of God's law and would disqualify a prophet claiming such a change.

This is the work that we are called upon to do. From the pulpits of the popular churches it is proclaimed that the first day of the week is the Sabbath of the Lord; but God has given us light, showing us that the fourth precept of the Decalogue is as verily binding as are the other nine moral precepts. It is our work to make plain to our children that the first day of the week is not the true Sabbath, and that its observance after light has come to us as to what is the true Sabbath, is idolatry, and in plain contradiction to the law of God.²²

Ellen White fulfilled all the requirements of the first Biblical test of authenticity. She exalted the Word and the Law of God.

2) Did Her Predictions Come True?

Most of the predictions made by Ellen White are related to Biblical prophecy, which is to be fulfilled in the last days. She wrote extensively on events as they would unfold, and also issued some personal warnings as to disasters that would strike the inhabitants of the world. She wrote extensively on issues of health and made astounding predictions in this field which were way ahead of the time she lived in. Indeed most of these are only being fulfilled at present.

In 1902, she warned that the cities around the bay area of California would suffer disaster. She wrote:

Not long hence, these cities will suffer under the judgment of God. San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them in wrath.²³

Those who heeded Ellen White's warning left this area and avoided the earthquake of April 18, 1906 that devastated the cities mentioned! In 1890, when peace was prevalent, she wrote:

*The tempest is coming.... We shall see trouble on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down and human lives will be sacrificed by millions.*²⁴

In 1904, she wrote:

*Soon great trouble will arise among nations - trouble that will not cease until Jesus comes.*²⁵

The world has seen two world wars and numerous skirmishes since then. Currently, it is a sad fact that over 200 wars between ethnic nations are raging across the globe, leading to what is often called "ethnic cleansing." Besides these global warnings, she made a number of personal predictions regarding individual church members who refused to heed the counsel of God. These too were all fulfilled to the letter.

Regarding the establishment of the health ministry, Ellen White received numerous visions with detailed instructions as to what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The information that was brought to light was way ahead of its time, mostly contradictory to the views held by the scientific fraternity of her time period, and her predictions concerning future health hazards are currently unfolding with astounding rapidity.

The health message was designed to lift mankind out of the quagmire of erroneous ideas on the issue of health and to provide a bulwark against disease. The health message was more than this--it was also designed to spiritually prepare a people to withstand the stresses and spiritual warfare predicted for the time of the end. It is God's intention, through the health message, to lead mankind step by step back to that lifestyle that he had originally intended for man.

When God called the Israelites, through His prophet Moses, out of Egypt and led them to Canaan, He also changed the lifestyle and diet of His people so that they may be prepared for the rigours of this experience. Many were dissatisfied and rebelled against God's plan, and they

longed for the fleshpots of Egypt. Those that rebelled turned from their allegiance to God and, by their own choice, severed their connection with their Creator. When God called His remnant out of the slavery of sin to prepare them for their journey to the heavenly Canaan, He likewise used a prophet to communicate His will to His people. God in His wisdom provided the information that would fit His people physically and spiritually for the journey, and we are free to accept or reject His counsel.

Ellen White was herself very frail and ill when she received her first visions on health, but by adopting the counsels given, was gradually restored to health and lived to a ripe old age. Space does not allow a detailed discussion on her health counsels, but a few issues are worthy of note. As far back as 1864, when the medical world was unaware of the dangers of tobacco, and indeed often prescribed it as a cure or preventative measure against certain lung ailments, Ellen White wrote:

*Tobacco is a poison of the most deceitful and malignant kind, having an exciting, then a paralysing influence upon the nerves of the body. It is all the more dangerous because its effects upon the system are so slow, and at first scarcely perceivable. Multitudes have fallen victims to its poisonous influence.*²⁶

Not until 1957 did a committee of scientists appointed by the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association conclude that smoking was a causative factor in lung cancer. Counselling physicians on how to regard the issue of smoking, she wrote:

*The physician should be a strictly temperate man. The physical ailments of humanity are numberless, and he has to deal with disease in all its varied forms. He knows that much of the suffering he seeks to relieve is the result of intemperance and other forms of selfish indulgence. He is called to attend young men and men in the prime of life and in mature age, who have brought disease upon themselves by the use of the narcotic tobacco.*²⁷

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The fact that she calls tobacco a narcotic is indeed surprising, since the narcotic effects of nicotine have only been established in recent times. Given this fact, and the present knowledge that the use of tobacco is a recognized precursor for the development of cravings for stronger stimulants such as drugs, to which the youth is particularly susceptible, it is indeed astounding that she wrote about these issues in her time.

*The use of tobacco and strong drinks has a great deal to do with the increase of disease and crime. Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison, and its use is working untold harm... Boys begin the use of tobacco at a very early age. The habit thus formed, when body and mind are especially susceptible to its effects, undermines the physical strength and corrupts the morals.*²⁸

Given the Biblical teaching that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that we are admonished to preserve our bodies as living sacrifices:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:1-2

This would include the avoidance of harmful substances. The following statement by Ellen White can be placed in such a perspective.

*Men can do much more for God and his fellow-man, if he is in the vigour of health, than if he is suffering from disease and pain. Tobacco using, liquor-drinking, and wrong habits of diet, induce disease and pain which incapacitate man for the use he might be in the world.*²⁹

Ellen White counselled that the use of animal products in the diet was harmful and that their use would become even more harmful as time progressed. The following statements, so contradictory to the views of her day, are a brief extract of what she wrote on the issue.

The meat diet is the serious question. Shall human beings live on the flesh of dead animals? The answer, from the light that God has given, is No, decidedly No. Health reform institutions should educate on this question. Physicians who claim to understand the human organism ought not to encourage their patients to subsist on the flesh of dead animals. They should point out the increase of disease in the animal kingdom. This testimony of examiners is that very few animals are free from disease, and that the practice of eating largely of meat is contracting diseases of all kinds - cancers, tumours, scrofula, tuberculosis, and numbers of other like affections.³⁰

This counsel is only now being proved by the scientific fraternity. The link between meat consumption and the diseases listed is well documented. Worldwide, and in my own laboratory, this link has been established beyond doubt.³¹ Vegetarian societies have a much lower age specific relative risk of contracting the diseases listed than omnivorous societies. Ellen White also warned that the time would come when, for the sake of health, one would have to dispense with all animal products, including milk and eggs. Never did she, however, advocate fanatical views on this issue and even cautioned that circumstances should be taken into account when counselling the poor people who did not always have access to alternative foods. In 1901, she wrote:

We see that cattle are becoming greatly diseased, the earth itself is corrupted, and we know that the time will come when it will not be best to use milk and eggs. But that time has not yet come. We know that when it does come, the Lord will provide. The question is asked, meaning much to all concerned, Will God set a table

*in the wilderness? I think the answer may be made,
Yea, God will provide food for His people.³²*

In 1902, she counselled that the time had not yet come to give up milk and eggs and people should therefore act circumspectly.

Milk, eggs, and butter should not be classed with flesh meat. In some cases, the use of eggs is beneficial. The time has not come to say that the use of milk and eggs should be wholly discarded. There are poor families whose diet consists largely of bread and milk. They have little fruit, and cannot afford to purchase the nut foods. In teaching health reform, as in all other gospel work, we are to meet the people where they are. Until we can teach them how to prepare health reform foods that are palatable, nourishing, and yet inexpensive, we are not at liberty to present the most advanced propositions regarding health reform diet.³³

She counselled that God would prepare the way for the substitution of harmful foods with healthier alternatives. This prediction has been fulfilled with the introduction of new cultivars, such as the soybean and its by-products, as well as the expansion of trade and communication routes.

In all parts of the world, provision will be made to supply the place of milk and eggs. And the Lord will let us know when the time comes to give up these articles. He desires all to feel that they have a gracious heavenly Father who will instruct them in all things. The Lord will give dietetic art and skill to His people in all parts of the world, teaching them how to use, for the sustenance of life, the products of the earth.³⁴

The time should, however, come when these items are to be discarded from the diet.

Soon butter will never be recommended, and after a time, milk will be entirely discarded, for disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men. The time will come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream or butter.³⁵

In our time, these predictions have been fulfilled in a manner that has astounded both the scientists and the general public. Indeed even governments are in a panic over the modern flood of diseases, which have struck the farming industry. In Britain, the entire stock of cattle needs to be exterminated in view of BSE (mad cow's disease). The chicken and egg industry has been reeling under the exponential increase in transferable infectious diseases caused by bacteria such as *Salmonella*, forcing governments to introduce legislation restricting the sale of uncooked eggs in restaurants.

The modern animal husbandry industry has produced a new breed of antibiotic resistant bacteria that are threatening the outbreak of worldwide epidemics of food poisoning from the consumption of animal products. The outbreak of food poisoning is no longer confined to countries or institutions with poor hygiene, but has become universal, such as the devastating outbreak of food-poisoning from *E. Coli* in Japan in 1996.

The predictions made by Ellen White regarding political, personal, religious, and health issues have been so accurately fulfilled that she certainly satisfies the prophetic criterion that the prophet's predictions must come true. Moreover, her counsels are not given to satisfy idle curiosity, but are given for the benefit of not only the church, but all of mankind.

3.) Did she edify the church?

The visions given to Ellen White were intended to lead the church into a greater understanding of the Word of God, and to correct wrong paths that were from time to time taken by God's people. Just as the letters of Paul were addressed to the church in his day, and often contained strong words of reproof even to individual members, so the

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testimonies of the *Spirit of Prophecy* were also intended for the remnant church. Only a church fully equipped with the weapons of warfare (a right understanding of the Word and the good fruits springing from their relationship with God) could bring the saving message of grace to a dying world. As in the days of Paul, the message addressed to the church is often misapplied to suit the ends of those who would wish to pervert the truth.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 1 John 3:15-16

Ellen White clearly warns against such distortions, and counsels on a circumspect study of the Testimonies in their context:

It will be found that those who bear false messages will not have a high sense of honour and integrity. They will deceive the people, and mix up with their error, the Testimonies of Sister White, and use her name to give influence to their work. They make such selections from the Testimonies as they think they can twist to support their positions, and place them in a setting of falsehood, so that their error may have weight and be accepted by the people. They misinterpret and misapply that which God has given to the church to warn, counsel, reprove, comfort and encourage those who shall make up the remnant people of God. Those who receive the Testimonies as the message of God will be helped and blessed thereby; but those who take them in parts, simply to support some theory or idea of their own, to vindicate themselves in a course of error, will not be blessed and benefited by what they teach.³⁶

Individual testimonies were often written to those who had strayed from the truth, not in some condescending way, but to assure

them of God's love. Those in the church who felt no need to labour for souls were also reproved.

We found that we could do nothing for the scattered sheep near us until we had first corrected the wrongs in many of the members of the church. They had let these poor souls wander. They felt no burden for them. I wrote out pointed testimonies, not only for those who had erred greatly and were out of the church, but for those members in the church who had erred greatly in not going in search of the lost sheep.³⁷

The fact that the *Spirit of Prophecy* is in the first instance intended for the church, does not imply that it must be hidden under a bushel, just as the writings of Paul were not to be hidden under a bushel. The world needs to know the truth as communicated by God through His servants the prophets. The truth is for all, reproof and correction is for the church.

There are some occupying positions of responsibility who have had little experience in the working of the Holy Spirit. They do not appreciate the light in warnings, reproofs and encouragement given to the church in these last days, because their hearts and minds have not been receiving the Spirit of divine grace. These persons are disposed to conceal the fact that in connection with the work of the third angel's message, the Lord, through the Spirit of Prophecy, has been communicating to His people a knowledge of His will. They think that the truth will be received more readily if this fact is not made prominent. But this is a mere human reasoning. The very fact that this light coming to the people is not presented as having originated with human minds will make an impression upon a large class who believe that the gifts of the Spirit are to be manifested in the church in the last days. The affection of many will thus be arrested, and they will be convicted and converted. Many will thus be impressed

*who would not otherwise be reached.*³⁸

Ellen White herself never claimed the title prophetess, but referred to herself as God's messenger. She did not, however, reprove those who referred to her as prophetess. Her testimonies to the church cover such a span, and were so extensive that in them can be met the cases of all who should live till the end of time. Every person will find in the testimonies that which concerns him or he and, if accepted, will bring about that change of character, which God intends for all His children. She wrote:

*I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. I have not stood before the people claiming this title, though many called me thus. I have been instructed to say, 'I am God's messenger, sent to bear a message of reproof to the erring and of encouragement to the meek and lowly.' With pen and with voice, I am to bear the messages given me. The word given me is, 'You are faithfully to reprove those who would mar the faith of the people of God. Write out the things which I shall give you, that they may stand as a witness to the truth till the end of time.'*³⁹

Considering the lines of work which she initiated, Ellen White was indeed more than a prophet for the church.

4) Did she exalt Christ as the true Son of God?

Jesus Christ is the all-pervading theme of all the writings of Ellen White. She wrote four specific books on the life and teachings of Christ, and her book on the life of Christ *The Desire of Ages* has been hailed the best devotional book ever written on the life and ministry of Christ. Her writings draw one to Christ and produce a longing to commune with Him as is illustrated from an extract of the book *The Youth's Instructor* in the chapter entitled: "Are you buying the treasure?"

Jesus Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, was not dis-

cerned in the disguise of humanity. He was the divine teacher sent from God, the glorious treasure given to humanity. He was fairer than the sons of men, but his matchless glory was hidden under a cover of poverty and suffering. He veiled his glory in order that divinity might touch humanity, and the treasure of immense value was not discerned by the human race, "but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The man who finds Christ, the man who beholds the treasure of salvation, has found the field and the hidden treasure. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.... And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." The treasure indeed is hidden under the garb of humanity. Christ is the unsearchable riches, and he who finds Christ, finds heaven. The human agent who looks upon Jesus, who dwells by faith on his matchless charms, finds the eternal treasure. In the parable, he who finds the treasure is represented as so well satisfied with his discovery that he sells all that he has to purchase that field.

In a further statement, she explains the development of the relationship with Christ and how through His grace we can once more become children of God and labourers with God.

All spiritual life is derived from Jesus Christ. 'As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.' John 1:12 But what is the sure result of becoming a child of God? The result is that we become labourers together with God. There is a great work to be done for your own soul's salvation, and to qualify you to win others from unbelief to a life sustained by

*faith in Christ Jesus. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me (with a casual faith? - No, with an abiding faith that works by love and purifies the soul) hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.... I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world... Except yet eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.'*⁴⁰

The writings of Ellen White ever tend to place our relationship with Christ in the right perspective. There are those who believe that to know Christ is sufficient in itself to be saved. Christ came to save that which was lost, and He came to restore mankind to the image of God. Man cannot claim justification and then refuse sanctification, which are both offered as gifts from God through the merits of Jesus Christ. Ellen White wrote in this regard:

In this age, the word of God is not considered reliable. The word of Christ, that cuts directly across human desires and indulgences, and condemns popular habits and practices, - the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us, - is ignored and despised. The teachings and example of Christ are not made the criterion for the life of the professed follower of Christ. Many who name the name of Christ are walking in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, rather than following in the footsteps of their professed Master. They do not represent the same character that Christ represented in His pure, sincere love to God, and in His love for fallen man. They do not take God at his word, and identify their interests with Jesus Christ. They do not form the habit of communing with Jesus, of taking him as a guide and counsellor, and thus learn the trade of living a well-defined Christian life. Those who not only hear

but do the words of Christ, make manifest in character the operation of the Holy Spirit. The result of the internal operation of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the outward conduct. The life of the Christian is hid with Christ in God, and God acknowledges those who are his, declaring, "Ye are my witnesses". They testify that divine power is influencing their hearts and shaping their conduct. Their works give evidence that the Spirit is moving upon the inward man; those who are associated with them are convinced that they are making Jesus Christ their Pattern.⁴¹

Throughout her writings Christ is exalted as our Redeemer, the only one through whom we can be saved:

The world's Redeemer was treated as we deserve to be treated, in order that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins upon His own divine soul, that we might receive His imputed righteousness. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. The world's Redeemer gave Himself for us. Who was He? — The Majesty of heaven, pouring out His blood upon the altar of justice for the sins of guilty man. We should know our relationship to Christ and His relationship to us. We are to trust God fully, and ask Him to supply the least as well as the greatest want. The Lord encourages our confidence; and the great proof of our union with Christ, and the best manifestation of our love to Him, is in yielding obedience to His claims. If you have love to Jesus Christ, which is an expression of the life of Christ in the soul, then you will do what He commands you. This is practical religion. Redeemed by the ransom money paid for your souls, you will go forth and how much you love Jesus by obedience to His commandments. You are to bring forth fruit by doing

*His commandments, because you are branches of the living Vine. It is His prayer that His joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full.*⁴²

Truly she exalted Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

5) Did she speak with authority?

Ellen White had to wage a constant battle against those who maligned her and ridiculed her message. She faced her toughest challenges when she was still young and frail and humanly speaking, there is no way in which she could have exercised the authority she did without the direct intervention of God. God chose the weakest of the weak to confound the strong. The authority she had was the authority of God. The word of God did the cutting, not the servant. Without this authority, the pillars of the Advent faith would have long hence been torn down, but they are sustained by the Word and will stand until the end of time. She wrote:

I am instructed to say to those who endeavour to tear down the foundation that has made us Seventh-day Adventists - we are God's commandment keeping people. For the past fifty years every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teachings of the Word — especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of heaven of these last days, as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimonies of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold

*firmly with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon **unquestionable authority**.*⁴³

6) *Did she bear good fruit?*

Ellen White's life and work was dedicated to the service of God. In all her published works, numbering 55 volumes, there is the fruit of one who has known and loved Jesus. In her thousands of letters to individuals, she always spoke the truth in love even if the message was one of reproof. She went out of her way to uplift others and practiced what she preached. As stated in her book *Education*:

*Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. Yet the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized - this was to be the work of redemption. **This is the object of education, the great object of life.***⁴⁴

Ellen White was not only a messenger, but worked as a missionary. She helped establish missions in several places in the world and encouraged everyone to take part in the great work of spreading the Gospel:

Christ crucified - talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts. This is the power and wisdom of God to gather souls for Christ...The melting love of God in the hearts of the workers will be recognized by those for whom they labour. Souls are thirsting for the waters of life. Do not be empty cisterns. If you reveal the love of Christ to them, you may lead the hungering, thirsting ones to Jesus, and He will give them the bread of life

*and the water of salvation.*⁴⁵

Today the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the single most widespread Protestant denomination in the world. It sponsors over 5000 schools, 350 academies and colleges all over the world. It has established a worldwide health ministry supplying healthful foods to millions of people and sponsoring over 200 hospitals in cities and areas that are often inaccessible. In addition, the church runs a worldwide relief organisation - ADRA - which has played a major role in bringing relief to areas stricken by natural disasters and wars.

These great achievements in such a short time would have been impossible without her council and labour. These are the fruits of her labours. The life labours of Ellen Gould White ended on July 16, 1915 when she was 87 years old. She was buried next to her husband in Oak Hill Cemetery at Battle Creek, Michigan. Shortly after her death, *The New York Independent* carried an article which stated:

*She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess, the most admirable of the American succession.*⁴⁶

The press commenting on the death of Ellen White said:

*The life of Mrs. White is an example worthy of emulation by all... She was a humble, devout disciple of Christ and ever went about doing good... She was honoured and respected by all who appreciate noble womanhood, consecrated to unselfish labour for the uplifting and betterment of mankind. Her death marks the calling of another noted leader of the religious thought and one whose almost 90 years were full to overflowing with good deeds, kind words, and earnest prayers for all mankind.*⁴⁷

In spite of the fact that the works of Mrs. White were written long before the advent of modern scientific

nutrition, no better overall guide is available today. ⁴⁸

7) Did she exhibit the necessary physical signs?

The physical signs associated with a true prophet of God are so astounding, that they can only be explained by supernatural intervention. False prophets have always been a plague to the people of God and the world at large. True prophets of God were severely persecuted, tortured, and even put to death in the most cruel fashion. False prophets, on the other hand, mostly make sensational prophecies of prosperity or promise redemption on the grounds of exclusivity rather than redemption in Christ and obedience to His requirements. Pride and selfishness are the two great barriers that prevent mankind from accepting the free gift of salvation.

God in His wisdom has deemed it necessary to associate the physical signs with the true gift of prophecy, which cannot be counterfeited. Together with all the criteria applicable to a prophet of God, all will be left without excuse if they choose to ignore His prophets.

The physical signs associated with a prophet in vision as discussed previously in this chapter, are as follows:

1. The prophet falls down weak
2. The prophet is strengthened by God and raised up
3. The prophet's eyes are wide open during the vision
4. The prophet does not breathe during the vision

In the case of Ellen White, God saw fit to establish the authenticity of her visions publicly. Particularly in the early years of her ministry, she frequently went into vision at public meetings where many sceptics and physicians could examine her whilst in vision. Eyewitness accounts are astounding and prove beyond doubt that Ellen G. White exhibited all the physical criteria specified in the Word of God. After her ministry and authenticity had been established, particularly in the later years, she would receive most of her vision in the "night season", as was also the case with the prophet Daniel (Daniel 7:12).

Before examining the evidence from medical examinations, a description of events from a long-standing acquaintance of Ellen White

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seems appropriate. J.N. Loughborough, who saw her in vision 50 times, describes the events as follows:

*In passing into vision, she gives three enrapturing shouts of “Glory!” which echo and re-echo, the second, and especially the third, fainter but more thrilling than the first, the voice resembling that of one quite a distance from you, and just going out of hearing. **For about four or five seconds she seems to drop down like a person in a swoon, or one having lost his strength; she then seems to be instantly filled with superhuman strength, sometimes rising at once to her feet** and walking about the room. There are frequent movements of the hands and arms, pointing to the right or left as her head turns. All these movements are made in a most graceful manner. In whatever position the hand or arm may be placed, it is impossible for anyone to move it. **Her eyes are always open, but she does not wink;** her head is raised, and she is looking upward, not with a vacant stare, but with a pleasant expression, only differing from the normal in that she appears to be looking intently at some distant object. She does not breathe, yet her pulse beats regularly. Her countenance is pleasant, and the colour of her face is florid as in her natural state.⁴⁹*

All four of the criteria mentioned in the Scriptures, in the right sequence, are here listed and were verified by numerous reputable eyewitnesses. A further eyewitness (Nellie Sisley Starr) reports the events associated with a vision that Ellen White had on June 12, 1868 at a prayer meeting held at Battle Creek. Referring to Ellen White, she describes the event as follows:

She walked back and forth and talked to us, and as she walked, she fell right down. She fell down gently. She went down as if an angel’s hands were under her... We thought she had fainted, but Brother White said

*"Cause yourselves no alarm. Wife has not fainted, but has fallen in vision." I wish I could describe the feeling that we all had. It was perfect quietness; even the children made no noise... It seemed as though heaven was settling down upon us and closing us in... Sister White lay perfectly quiet and unconscious. Oh, the feeling that was sensed in that building. Brother White said, "There may be some in the congregation that may have doubts in regard to my wife's inspiration. If there are any such we would be glad to have them come forward and try the physical tests given in the Bible. It may help some of you." I knew my mother had some doubts. We had come over from England and she had come from the Church of England, and she could not quite understand it, so I said, "Mother, let us go right up and stand right by her head". In the meantime, Brother White had knelt down, and raised Sister White's head and shoulders on his knees. Others came up, and there were two unusually large men. They stood one on each side of her shoulders. "Now", Brother White said, "we all saw Sister White fall; we know she lost her natural strength. Now we will see if she has supernatural strength." She was lying with her hands gently folded over her chest. She was lying quietly and looking up in the corner of the building. **Her eyes were open, with a pleasant expression on her face.** Nothing unnatural or unusual. Brother White said to these large men, **"Take her hands apart. You have two hands to her one. Just pull her hands apart."** So they tried. They pulled and pulled till some of us got anxious that they would hurt her. Brother White said, **"Don't be anxious; she is safe in God's keeping, and you can pull until you are perfectly satisfied."** They said, **"We are satisfied now. We don't need to pull anymore."** He said, **"Take up one finger at a time."** That was impossible. They could not do so much as move a finger. It seemed like a block of granite. There*

was no change in appearance, but it just couldn't be moved. We looked to see if her eyes were closed and see if she was breathing. Then she took her hands apart and waved her hands. We said, "We will see when she comes out of vision that she has been flying." Brother White said to these men, "Now hold her." I think they thought they could. They grasped her by the wrists, but they could not retard the motion. It looked like any child could hold her, but she went on just the same. Elder White said, "Now we are satisfied with that. **Now we must see if her eyelids will close.**" **There was a large Rochester (kerosene) lamp close by on the stand. He removed the shade and put this light right in front of her eyes. We thought she would move her eyes to protect them. She didn't.** She was perfectly unconscious. The expression of her countenance changed at times. Sometimes she look pleased. At other times we could see that there was something distressing her, but the eyelids did not close. "Now," Brother White said, **we must see if there is any breath in her body.**" **There didn't seem to be any. Everything looked all right, only there was no breath. Brother White said, "No we will send out and get a mirror, and we will test it." So someone went to the next door and got a mirror, and it was held close to her face, but no moisture gathered. So there was no breathing.**⁵⁰

It is noteworthy that the sequence of events is again exactly in agreement with the Scriptures.

Ellen White had to often contend with aggressive opposition. On one such occasion, she was taken into vision at a gathering of people who were opposed to her visions. The opposers shouted, interjected, read loudly from the Scriptures and tried every means possible to interrupt her, but she continued to speak from about midday to sunset with a voice that cut through the din of the opposers until they were exhausted. At one stage, they placed a heavy Bible in her hand from which she began to quote whilst holding the Bible up above her head with the one hand and paging to the

passages with the other without looking where she pointed. Otis Nichols, an eyewitness at the meeting, describes the events as follows:

Then Thayer took a heavy, large quarto family Bible which was lying on the table and seldom used, and opened it, and laid it open upon the breast of Ellen while in vision, as she was then inclined backward against the wall in one corner of the room. Immediately after the Bible was laid upon her, she arose upon her feet and walked into the middle of the room, with the Bible open in one hand and lifted up as high as she could reach, and with her eyes steadily looking upward, declared in a solemn manner, "The inspired testimony of God" or words of the same import, and then she continued for a long time, while the Bible was extended in one hand and her eyes [were] looking upward and not on the Bible, to turn over the leaves with the other hand and place her finger upon certain passages and correctly utter their words with a solemn voice. Many present looked at the passages where her finger was pointed to see if she spoke them correctly, for her eyes at the same time were looking upward. Some of the passages referred to were judgments against the wicked and blasphemous; and others were admonitions and instructions relative to our present condition. In this state, she continued all the afternoon until nearly sundown when she came out of vision.⁵¹

Finally, it is necessary to note the testimony of medical doctors who examined Ellen White whilst in vision. Two well-documented occasions will be discussed here. The first was at a conference held in June 1854 where representatives from numerous churches were present, and the second was at a conference held at Hillsdale, Michigan, where there were also numerous people present. At the first meeting, Ellen White went into vision on June 26, 1854 and David Seeley, corroborating the testimony of other eyewitnesses, writes as follows:

I was present at that meeting and witnessed the examination. I agree with what is stated by Brother and Sister Lamson, and would say further that it was Doctor Fleming and another younger physician who made the examination. After Mrs. White rose to her feet, as they have stated, quoting the texts of Scripture, Doctor Fleming called for a lighted candle,...He held this candle as near her lips as possible without burning, and in direct line with her breath in case she breathed. There was not the slightest flicker of the blaze. The doctor then said, with emphasis, "That settles it forever, there is no breath in her body." ⁵²

At the second meeting, James White called for a doctor to examine his wife whilst in vision. On this occasion, Dr. Lord was in the audience and also found no breath in her whilst in that state. Two reports are available regarding this event. The first is from the Fowler couple who testify as follows:

We were present when Sister E.G. White had a vision in Waldron's Hall, Hillsdale. Dr. Lord made an examination, and said, "Her heart beats, but there is no breath. There is life, but no action of the lungs. I cannot account for this condition." ⁵³

The second testimony is from C.S. Cover who states:

I was present when Sister White had the above-named vision in Waldron's Hall, Hillsdale. In addition to the above statement, I heard the doctor say that Sister White's condition in vision was "beyond his knowledge". He also said, "There is something supernatural about that." ⁵⁴

Ellen White is the only prophet in modern history who satisfies all the Biblical criteria of a prophet of God. She wrote pointed testimonies and received instructions from God that were to provide the necessary

guidance for God's remnant at the end of time. Those who take this instruction to heart will develop a greater understanding of the will of God and will be led into a closer relationship with God. She wrote:

Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people. But my strength is yet spared, and I hope to continue to do much useful work. I may live until the coming of the Lord, but if I should not, I trust it may be said of me, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Revelation 14:13

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16

CELEBRATING CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

What must I do if I have discovered truth and wish to live my life in harmony with God? Since Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, obviously my actions must be determined by His revealed will. The Scriptures are our guide, and through them we can learn to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The greatest commission ever given to man is to preach the Gospel to the world.

...Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not will be condemned.
Mark 16:15-16

The words spoken in verse 16 are of vital significance to a lost world.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

It is not enough to believe the Gospel. One must live it.

Not everyone who saith unto Me, 'Lord, Lord', shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, cast out demons in Your name, and in Thy name done many wonders?' And then I will profess unto them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity!'
Matthew 7:21-23

The class referred to in the above passage is a class who professes faith in Jesus. They preach His name and even profess to have done great works in the name of Jesus, but they practice iniquity. The word iniquity that is used here is translated from the Greek "anomia", which means lawlessness or transgressing the law, and transgression of the law is the only definition of sin in the Scripture.

Whosoever commiteth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4

Obedience is the fruit of a relationship with God. Understanding the character of God, His love and care for all His creation is vital if we wish to understand the demands of the law. Those who enter into the new covenant relationship with God will wish to keep the law because they understand the principle of love embodied in the law. Obedience is better than the fat of rams, and in keeping the law there is great reward:

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making the simple wise. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the Lord are pure, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. And Your servant is warned by them; in keeping them there is great reward. Psalm 19:7-11.

16 - Celebrating Christ's Resurrection

It is not enough to to have a theoretical knowledge of the law or to keep it because we know it is right (this is legalism). The law must be kept from the heart. It must become part of our character—only then will we be able to reflect the love of Christ to a world in need.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock... Matthew 7:24

The believer must be brought into harmony with God's law.

...for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. Romans 2:13

If we now re-examine the words of Mark 16:16, the full significance of the word "baptized" becomes clear. Baptism is the symbol of the changed life. It is the symbol of rebirth, a demonstration of the death of the old man of sin and the resurrection of the transformed man—the man that lives in harmony with the law of God. Baptism is the symbol of restoration—the transformation of man from one who lives in enmity with God to one who lives in harmony with the will of God.

And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:2

Before being touched by the grace of God and the workings of His Spirit, it is impossible to obey God and keep His requirements. There may be a theoretical keeping of the law, but without Christ this translates into a form of godliness.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Romans 8:7-8

It is the spirit of God that enables us to live in harmony with the will of God.

In John chapter 3, Jesus discusses the nature of the spiritual rebirth with Nicodemus, and in verse 5 He states:

...Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. John 3:5 NKJV

The spirit works inwardly to transform our bent characters into characters that will reflect the character of Jesus. The water is the outward symbol of one's willingness to accept the transformation process, and this willingness is demonstrated in baptism. Obedience to God comes as a gift from God. Both justification and sanctification are gifts which we receive through faith in the Son of God.

...not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5 NIV

Being washed means being justified before God because of the merits of Jesus Christ. The text however, continues by saying:

...and renewal by the Holy Spirit

This is sanctification. Acceptance of justification and sanctification is a package deal. One cannot accept one without the other. Refusal to accept sanctification is a demonstration of false justification.

Wherefore by their fruits, ye shall know them.
Matthew 7:20

Baptism is the outward sign of the acceptance of the covenant relationship with God, the new covenant that God promised to spiritual Israel.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which My covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jeremiah 31:31-33

Spiritual Israel will keep the law, but they will keep it from the heart. The fear of the Lord is that reverence which develops when God is seen in His glory, when His character is made manifest. Paul applies these texts to the new covenant in Hebrews 8:8-10:

For finding fault with them, He said to them, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make an end on the house of Israel and on the house of Judah; a new covenant shall be, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I took hold of their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt," because they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not regard them, says the Lord. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Joining the Body of Christ

Baptism is a very serious step to undertake and requires an understanding of the issues involved. Baptism is also more than the outward symbol of rebirth. It is also the outward sign of entrance into the body of Christ, His church.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
1 Corinthians 12:13

And you are the body of Christ, and members in part.
1 Corinthians 12:27

Those who accept Jesus become part of the church.

Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts 2:47

If by being baptized we demonstrate our acceptance of the covenant relationship with God, then we become a part of the covenant people of God. As there is only one body, it is essential that careful consideration be given to this choice.

...so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members of one another. Romans 12:5
(See also 1 Corinthians 10:17; Colossians 3:15)

For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body - whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free - and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member by many. But now are they many members, yea but one body. 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 20

There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Ephesians 4:4

The true body of Christ must teach obedience to the law of God and

must have faith in the transforming power of the Spirit of God. (See *A Stone to Rest Your Head*) One cannot be baptized and live apart from the church. That would be like an organ trying to exist outside the body. Baptism is thus a symbol of the following:

1. It is a symbol of one's willingness to accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Baptism commemorates Christ's death, burial and resurrection.
3. It symbolizes the death and burial of the old man of sin.
4. It represents the resurrection to "newness of life" in Christ Jesus, the washing of rebirth through justification and sanctification.
5. It is a symbol of entrance into the body of Christ, His church, the Israel of God.

What About Re-Baptism Upon Receiving New Light?

There are circumstances where re-baptism seems called for. The Scriptures cite the example of believers that had been baptized by John the Baptist being re-baptized on receiving greater light regarding salvation in Christ.

Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance,

saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19:1-5

Can I Work by Myself Outside the Organized Body?

God has ever worked through His organized body, the church. Even Christ, in spite of the scorn heaped upon Him, worked within the organized body that was then Israel. After the Lord called a remnant out of Israel and organized the Christian church, He also did not bypass His means of imparting a knowledge of the Gospel. Even Paul was sent to the Lord's church for instruction after the Lord called him to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. Acts 9:6

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 9:17

Mode of Baptism

The Greek word 'baptizo' means 'I immerse' and 'baptisma' means 'immersion'. As with all things, Christ should be our example.

He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked. 1 John 2:6

When Jesus was baptized, He was baptized by immersion.

And Jesus when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him; and lo, a voice from Heaven saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3:16-17

Jesus was baptized *in* the river. Also John baptized in the river because he needed water that was deep enough.

Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there... John 3:23 NIV

A further example of the mode of baptism given in the Scriptures is that of the eunuch's baptism by Phillip.

And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Phillip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:38-39 NKJV

Note that they went *into the water* and then *came up out of the water*. This baptism was then also by total immersion. The Reformers also understood that baptism should take place by immersion. Martin Luther defined baptism in this way:

The Greek baptizo means "I immerse", and baptisma means "immersion". For this reason I would have the candidate for baptism totally immersed in water as the word "baptisma" signifies. Thus it was also doubtless instituted by Christ.¹

John Calvin wrote:

The very word "baptize", however, signifies 'to

immerse", and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient Church.²

When John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, was forty years old, he prepared a statement reading:

I believe it is a duty to observe, so far as I can, to baptize by immersion.³

Infant Baptism

As baptism is a symbol of one's willingness to accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is a conscious decision.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16:16

Infants cannot make a conscious decision, and infant baptism is never propagated in the Scriptures. The doctrine of infant baptism is of pagan origin and was brought into the church by Roman Catholicism. As with most Catholic doctrines, infant baptism has its origins in the Babylonian mysteries.

In Babylon, new birth was conferred by baptism of infants. European pagans sprinkled their newborns or immersed them, and to this day, the "holy water" used for baptism is in some circles still prepared according to the pagan custom of plunging a torch from the altar into the water. Having introduced infant baptism, the Roman Catholic Church was vehemently opposed to adults being baptized and even issued the following decree:

Let him be accursed who says adults must be baptized.⁴

Some modern Bible translations are also written in such a way as to leave leeway for subversive doctrines. The King James Version of the Bible was translated from the Greek *Textus Receptus* in 1611, but modern Bibles also make use of other texts of which the context may

be dubious. Origen was one of the first Biblical scholars (200 A.D.) to corrupt Biblical manuscripts to accommodate his humanistic and allegorical ideas. Throughout the ages, many of these manuscripts have been tampered with to create a highway for pagan philosophies.

In Acts 8, the King James Version gives a full description of the baptism of the eunuch. The eunuch was a high official from Ethiopia (Acts 8:27) and had come to worship in Jerusalem. He was reading the book of Isaiah when Phillip was sent to him and explained to him the passages pertaining to the Messiah. When he had grasped their significance and recognized Jesus Christ in these verses, he was ready to be baptized. (Acts 8:17-35) The KJV continues with the following verses:

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?' And Phillip said, 'If thou believest with all thine heart, thou may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. Acts 8:36-38

The question of the eunuch, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" (vs 36) is answered by Phillip in verse 37.

If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.

Modern translations leave out verse 37, and the eunuch is thus denied his answer. It is stated in these translations that certain manuscripts do not contain this verse, but if this is so, then they do not do justice to the chiasmic structure of the passage in question. The passage is written in question-answer chiasm and leaving out verse 37 would destroy this literary structure. Omission of the verse is, however, convenient for those who propagate infant baptism, as the condition for baptism, believing with one's whole heart, cannot be met by infants. Both infant baptism and baptism by infusion (pouring of water) have been introduced by Roman Catholicism into the church, but they find no support in the Scriptures.

Baptism Through the Ages

The numerous ruins of early Christian churches bear a silent testimony to early baptismal practices in the church. Early Byzantine churches were equipped with baptismal fonts which were designed for baptisms by immersion and for adults—both men and women.

But when they believed Philip preaching the gospel, the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12

Jesus Himself was baptized at the age of 30 at the time He started His ministry (Luke 3:23), and that practice of adult baptism and by immersion was thus still practiced by the early Church. Even Roman Catholic sources admit to this fact, as can be seen by the writings of Cardinal Gibbons. He states in his book *Faith of Our Fathers*:

For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion; but since the twelfth century, the practice of baptising by infusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than baptism by immersion.⁵

It was not until the Council of Ravenna in 1311 that the Roman Catholic Church declared sprinkling as official. It was then that the Greek Orthodox Church parted ways with the Catholics, so they could continue to administer baptism for infants by immersion, which they practice to the present day. Johannes Warns in his book on baptism states:

The so-called baptisteries or baptismal chapels in the oldest Catholic churches are further proof that all churches for centuries performed baptisms by immersion. They contain great baptismal basins,

*(with descending steps), and often, in addition, a room for baptismal instruction . . . In the Italian work *Il Battistero di Parma*, by Michaele Lopez, no fewer than sixty-six such baptisteries in Italy are named, the construction of which falls between the fourth and fourteenth centuries.⁶*

Baptism has also been portrayed in art through the centuries.

The oldest baptismal pictures date, perhaps, from the second century, coming from the most ancient part of the catacomb of St. Calixtus.⁷

On the baptismal font of Verona is a picture of the baptism of Christ.

The water of the Jordan is raised into a hillock, and our Saviour is being immersed in it.⁸

The baptistry of Pisa has a scene of Jesus in the Jordan with water up to His neck.⁹

Through the centuries, baptism by immersion has been practiced by various religious groups. Anabaptists, Mennonites, and eventually the great Baptist movement spread the doctrine of Bible baptism.

In 1806, John Smyth, a pastor in the church of England, left the church and joined the separatists who emigrated to Holland to escape the persecution of James I.

[He] formed the first Church composed of Englishmen that is known to have stood for the baptism of believers only.¹⁰

From this humble beginning, the Baptist movement has spread over the world and become one of the strongest forces in Protestantism.

The Meaning of Baptism by Immersion

Besides being a symbol of one's willingness to accept the Gospel of justification and sanctification and gain entrance into the body of Christ, baptism by immersion conveys deep spiritual truths. These truths are expounded upon in Paul's writings.

Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. Colossians 2:12

Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised unto His death? Therefore we were buried with Him in baptism into death; that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. Romans 6:3-6 NKJV

These verses point out that the old life of sin is buried by baptism. The candidate for baptism should be immersed beneath the surface of the water in order to bury the old life of sin in the watery grave.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Galatians 3:27

The other modes of baptism, such as sprinkling and pouring, rob the ordinance of its meaning. Only baptism by immersion can rightly symbolize the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The apostle Peter ties in baptism with salvation by using these words.

There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 3:21 NKJV

As there is only one method of baptism described in the Scriptures, any baptism other than by immersion must be flawed. There is only:

One Lord, one faith, one baptism. Ephesians 4:5

Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit

As baptism brings one into the covenant relationship with God, the promises of God become applicable to the believer.

'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. 'Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.' Acts 2:36-39 NKJV

The promise of the Holy Spirit to those who believed and were baptized is here made to the whole of spiritual Israel. As baptism is an acceptance of the conditions of salvation—obedience to God—so the promise of the Holy Spirit is conditional to repentance and obedience.

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promises for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call. Acts 2:38-39

And we are His witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that

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obey Him. Acts 5:32

If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. John 14:15-17

To obey is better than sacrifice. 1 Samuel 15:22

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:3-4

Baptism is thus not just accepting the forgiveness of Jesus; it is accepting the transforming power of Jesus.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Romans 6:6

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20

The Holy Spirit has two functions in the believer:

- 1) Molding the character and bringing the life back into harmony with God.
- 2) Fitting the believer for service.

The old nature must die and the new nature, bearing fruits of righteousness, must be put on. In Galatians chapter 5, Paul compares the fruits of the flesh with the fruits of the Spirit. The new man is totally transformed by the workings of the Spirit.

16 - Celebrating Christ's Resurrection

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Galatians 5:17 NIV

The acts of the sinful nature are:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV

Baptism is the sign of the crucifixion of the old man of sin and, as such, the sinful nature is buried in the waters of baptism.

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Galatians 5:24-26 NKJV

...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Romans 6:6-7

...not by works of righteousness which we have done,

but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit... Titus 3:5 NKJV

Fitting for service is achieved firstly by instruction through the Spirit of truth (John 14:17), who would remind us of that which we have learnt regarding the Word of God (John 14:26). Then He would also impart gifts of service so as to expand the work and spread the Gospel. These gifts are listed in Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28, 31, and Ephesians 4:11-12.

The promise of restoration thus restores us in totality, making us once again children of God and co-workers together with Him.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

1 John 3:1-3 NKJV

In these last days, God is calling a people out of Babylon to stand in the breach and to help with the rebuilding of the wall. The restoration of the truth as it is in Jesus requires labourers together with God, who will take their place in His vineyard and help with the work of the harvest.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38

Acceptance of truth is not passive. It requires a stand for principle and it involves a cross. To truly follow Jesus has never been popular; it has always required picking up one's cross. Moreover, truth causes division, but this should not deter one from following it.

And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:38

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:34-37

And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Acts 22:16 NKJV

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Truth Vindicated

HISTORY'S COMING CLIMAX

THE FINAL CONFLICT

The stage is set—the last events to take place on earth are about to sweep across the planet. While men are binding themselves together in confederacies, the last message of warning is being proclaimed on earth. Soon the Three Angels' Messages will have done their work and in his efforts to secure worldwide homage, Satan will move the powers of earth to adopt the papal mark of allegiance and the Sabbath-Sunday issue will be brought into full view of the peoples of the earth. A choice will be made to either worship God on his terms, or to worship the beast on his terms. Compromise will be impossible. As the conflict escalates and Sunday laws are enacted at the instigation of the False Prophet, the message of warning swells to a loud cry depicted in Revelation 18 by another mighty angel repeating the message of Babylon's fall. This final message of warning also gives power to the proclamation of the Third Angel's Message, since it also warns against the acceptance of the mark of the beast.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Revelation 18:1-4

This is the final warning and the choice we make will determine whether we receive the mark of the beast or the seal of God. Which lawgiver is paramount in our lives? When the human race has made its choice, probation will close and the following solemn announcement will be made in heaven:

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, and I will give to every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22:11-12

The door of probation is closed; there is no time to turn back. As in the days of Noah, the door of the ark was shut and probation for the antediluvians was closed, yet they knew it not. For one week, the ark stood on dry ground whilst the people mocked it, not knowing that they had been judged and found wanting. Then the floodgates of heaven opened.

God bears long with human iniquity, but the time of His forbearance will soon end. We are still living in the time of the anti-typical Day of Atonement, but this pre-advent judgment will end and Jesus will no longer be the intercessor. He will put on His kingly robes and the executive judgment will commence.

The Seven Last Plagues

The typological events portrayed in the Old Testament can teach us much about the future. God's character has not changed and with Him there is no shadow of turning. God has always been consistent in His dealings with sin and apostasy. Although He is long suffering and does not wish for anyone to be lost, His forbearance has limits and there comes a point when He acts. When all God's entreaties had fallen on deaf ears and apostasy had become universal, the antediluvian world was destroyed by the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire from heaven. These events serve as examples for those living at the end of time. There is no room here for second chance doctrines, and if we wish to be consistent, then we have to expect that God will deal with universal apostasy in the same decisive manner as He dealt with it in the past.

Events leading up to the final apostasy in the great conflict between Christ and Satan are also foreshadowed in the events that transpired in Egypt during the Exodus. Egypt is a type of the world in opposition to God, and the Israelites are a type of the people of God who will be redeemed out of the world and taken to the heavenly Canaan.

In Exodus chapter five, the final events leading up to the Exodus are vividly portrayed. Moses had instituted Sabbath reforms amongst the Israelites and Pharaoh responded by issuing a decree, which would make it impossible to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.
Exodus 5:5 (KJV)

The Hebrew word used here for rest is "shabath" which means to keep the Sabbath. In response, Pharaoh increased their workload and thus enacted a law making it impossible for the Israelites to keep the Sabbath. This law sealed the fate of Egypt since it was in direct opposition to the Law of God. As a consequence, the plagues fell and Israel was freed from slavery and taken to the Promised Land. These events serve as a type of the final deliverance of God's people under

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similar circumstances. The mark of the beast will be enforced making it impossible for God's people to keep the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments. Probation will close and the seven last plagues will fall.

I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. Revelation 15:1 NKJV

Jesus had ceased His intercession, and John sees the heavenly temple fill with smoke. The heavenly temple service ends and probation is closed:

And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no man was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. Revelation 15:8

These events take place in heaven prior to the coming of Christ. The next event is that of the plagues falling:

Then I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go your ways, pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." And the first angel went and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast and upon them which worshipped his image. Revelation 16:1-2

The First Plague

The first plague falls only on those who have the mark of the beast, but God's people are divinely protected. In Egypt, God differentiated between the Egyptians and the Israelites. The last seven plagues did not affect the Israelites. Before Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, God warned His people about the coming destruction. He pointed them to the prophecies of Daniel and urged them to study and understand them. Those who listened to His counsel escaped with their lives, but those who did not, perished. They suffered the conse-

quences of their choice. God had pleaded long and it was only with an aching heart that He gave them up.

Just as Pharaoh did not relent when the plagues fell, so the unrepentant in the end will not cease in their endeavours to destroy God's people. The crisis will escalate until it climaxes in the death decree against those who refuse to honour the Papal Sabbath. The promises of God are, however, sure:

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor by the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it will not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plagues come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. Psalms 91:5-11

What a comforting thought. Angels of God will protect those who have the seal of God.

The Second Plague

And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea. Revelation 16:3

Are we perhaps getting a foretaste of what this plague will be like now? Already we are feeling the consequences of man's indiscriminate dumping of toxic waste in the delicate marine and fresh water systems of the world. Algal blooms in both marine and riverine systems are becoming more and more common, and some of these produce amazingly similar effects to what the Bible is describing. Blood red blooms of algae and micro-organisms cause the death of millions of aquatic creatures as they are deprived of oxygen. The algae and dead organisms then rot to form a blood-like sludge.

The Third Plague

The third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say: Thou art and righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For thy have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' And I heard another out of the altar say, 'Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.'

Revelation 16:4-7

While those who slighted the hand of God continue in their determination to shed the blood of the saints, the waters turn to blood, but the promise for the people of God is:

... bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.

Isaiah 33:16

Just as Elijah was taken care of in the time of his calamity, so God will take care of His children in time of their calamity. The prophet Elijah serves as a type of the end-time people of God. Elijah did not see death, but was translated and taken to heaven. Similarly, those who receive the seal of God will also be translated without seeing death. Just as Elijah was persecuted by the Church-State alliance of his day, so God's people will suffer a similar persecution at the end of time. God provided Elijah's needs and God will also provide the needs of the faithful at the end of this great drama of rebellion against His government.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."

Revelation 16:8-9

The Fourth Plague

The fourth plague involves the sun. The earth will not only experience drought, but the sun's radiation will be so intense as to scorch people. As in the case of the aquatic disasters produced by the previous plagues, we also have present-day indicators of how this plague will affect mankind. With the destruction of the ozone layer, ultraviolet radiation has increased dramatically and some countries have introduced dress codes for school children to avoid exposure. Greenhouse gases are causing global warming and weather patterns have changed dramatically over the last decades. Changing weather patterns have resulted in unprecedented droughts in some areas and massive floods in others. The droughts, often associated with the El Nino phenomenon, have also taken their toll in terms of raging fires that have swallowed up millions of acres of forests and grazing. What is being witnessed today is merely a foretaste of worse things to come. The prophet Joel foresaw this plague and had this to say:

How the beast groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed because they have no pasture; yea, even the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry, for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness and flames have burned all the trees of the field.
Joel 1:18-19

In the same way that God differentiated between the Egyptians and the Israelites, He will protect His people from this plague.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. Psalm 121:6

God protected the Israelites from the heat of the day by being a pillar of cloud for them and from the cold of the night by being a pillar of fire.

The Fifth Plague

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.
Revelation 16:10-11

This plague strikes at the throne of the beast in particular. The Papacy had kept the people of the world in darkness, and so darkness is their portion. With their tongue they deceived the nations, and now they gnaw their tongues in agony.

Light emanates from God, and in Him there is no darkness. They replaced Jesus, the light of the world, with their own systems. They slighted His role as mediator, crucified Him again and again in the mass, and instead of the Word, they fed the people on liturgies and commandments of men.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 1 John 1:5

The Word of God, which had been withheld and distorted by the Papacy, could have cured their malady had they been willing to listen.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. Psalm 119:130

Rome tampered with the law and changed the ordinances of God.

The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Isaiah 24:5

If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the

Lord, [then] the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Jeremiah 31:36

God does not change. With Him there is no shadow of turning,

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.
James 1:17

The fifth plague brings about a turning point. The inhabitants of the earth, already reeling under the effects of the previous plagues, witness the agony of the beast (the papal system) and begin to doubt its credentials. Just as support for Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to let Israel go waned when the plagues fell in Egypt (Exodus 10:7), so support for the papal system begins to wane, opening the way for the sixth plague.

Sixth Plague

The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and its water thereof was dried up that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.
Revelation 16:12

Two issues are brought to the fore—the river Euphrates dries up and this prepares the way for the kings from the east. The Euphrates was the river that fed Babylon, and we are here taken back to this ancient city's fall when the river dried up to prepare the way for the conquerors to enter the city. One hundred and fifty years before the conqueror of Babylon was born, the prophet Isaiah mentioned his name:

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden of to subdue nations before him and I will loose the loins of kings, to open doors him the two leaved, and the gates will not be shut. I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut asunder

the bars of iron. Isaiah 45:1-2

This is an amazing prophecy. Careful study reveals that Cyrus is here a type of Christ who will one day come and rescue His children from mystic Babylon and take them to the heavenly Jerusalem.

That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Isaiah 44:27-28

Isaiah 44:27 says that God Himself will dry up the waters of the Euphrates and this will cause its fall and open the way for Cyrus to enter the city. History reveals that Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. because the waters of the Euphrates stopped flowing. Cyrus is called a shepherd, and in Isaiah 45:1 he was called the Lord's anointed. Cyrus set Israel free without price and Jesus will set His captives free without price.

Just as the waters of literal Babylon dried up, so the waters of spiritual Babylon must dry up. The waters according to Revelation 17 are the nations that support Rome, so the support base for its stand begins to crumble.

And he saith unto me, 'The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.' Revelation 17:15

Who were the kings of the East who conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. when the waters of the Euphrates dried up?

They were Cyrus and Darius, his father-in-law, a type of father and son. Who are the kings that will come to our rescue once the anti-typical Euphrates dries up and human support is withdrawn from mystical Babylon? If Cyrus was a type of Christ, then the anti-typical kings of the East must be God the Father and God the Son at the Second Coming of Christ. The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel speak about this spectacular event.

...let us come near together for judgment. Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to His foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. Isaiah. 41:1-2

Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. Ezekiel 43:1-2

Jesus will come in His glory, His father's glory and the glory of all the holy angels:

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Mark 8:38

What is the final event just before the coming of Christ?

Spurned on by the dwindling support base, Satan uses all his power to muster the forces of Babylon, and in a final effort sends forth his evil spirits to convince the world that the problem lies with those that keep the commandments of God and refuse to acknowledge the papal Sunday. After John sees the waters of the Euphrates dry up, he sees:

Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief! Blessed is he that watcheth

and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.
Revelation 16:13-16

In this final conflict, the forces of Babylon unite. As identified in the chapter *The Wine of Babylon*, the dragon represents spiritism, the beast represents Catholicism, and the false prophet represents fallen Protestantism. This trio also represents the false father, son and “Holy Spirit.” The Dragon imitates God the Father, because he too gives power, authority and a throne to someone else, in this instance, the beast. The beast, the Papacy, counterfeits Christ, as he also receives a deadly wound like Christ did and experienced a resurrection. The false prophet is the lamb-like beast, Protestant America, of Revelation 13 (see the chapter *The Two Beasts of Revelation 13*) who deceives the world with strange fire because he causes fire to come down from heaven. In other words, he imitates Pentecost and produces a false Holy Spirit.

God, as in the past, intervenes for His people in the time of their extremity. When God’s people are persecuted, it is tantamount to warring against God. An example of this is given in the account of the conversion of Paul. In Acts, we read that Jesus is saying that Paul was persecuting Him whilst Paul was persecuting the Christians:

He fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, “Who art thou, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” Acts 9:4-5

Since Revelation 13 reveals that the death decree will finally be enacted for all who do not worship (obey in place of God) the image of the beast (church-state alliance of Protestant America) and who refuse to accept the mark of the beast, this final event brings about the battle of Armageddon.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. Revelation 13:15

Armageddon is called a place:

Then they gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. Revelation 16:16

The political powers of earth add their legislative powers to the deceptive power of Babylon and war against God by persecuting the saints. In this extremity, Christ intervenes to punish and convict the wicked:

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Jude 14-15

The term Armageddon literally means ‘Mountain of Megiddo.’ Here, God had fought on behalf of Israel and vanquished their enemies. If one overlooks the valley of Megiddo, the only mountain that can be seen is the Mount Carmel, and here Elijah had confronted the prophets of Baal. It is fitting that the final battle will also be fought because of a choice that was made concerning whom one should serve. The type gives us information about the antitype. The final battle will not be fought at the literal Megiddo, but the greater fulfilment will be similar to what happened in the past. The Greek word for “place” is *topos*, and *topos* has a literal meaning as well as a metaphorical meaning. The latter means state of mind. Satan will induce a state of mind in the people of the world that will compel them to seek the death of those who refuse to obey their dictates. This will cause distress and there will be a time of trouble such as never was, but at that time Christ will intervene.

At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time, thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be

found written in the book. Daniel 12:1

Other verses of Scripture also describe the battle of Armageddon, employing different terminology. Joel calls it the Valley of Jehoshaphat whilst Zechariah states that the nation will be gathered to Jerusalem, meaning that they will fight against God's people:

I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat... Joel 3:2

I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle ... Zechariah 14:2

How exactly will this battle be fought and when precisely?

First, let us look at the time. No one knows the time or the hour of Christ's return.

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Matthew 25:13

Nevertheless, the Bible does state that this event will take place at midnight. This could simply mean the final moment. However, legislative decrees of governments also come into effect at midnight and universal decrees are legislated according to midnight at specific longitudes. For example, the UN decree against Iraq went into effect at "midnight standard eastern time". A universal decree enforcing the mark of the beast could thus also come into effect under similar circumstances. Since we cannot make a specific time, however, all this tells us is that the intervention takes place at the final moment when the decree is about to take effect. We have the same in type (Egypt) and in antitype:

And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt ... Exodus 12:29

In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hand. Job 34:20

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
Matthew 25:6

The Seventh Plague

The question of how the battle will be fought is answered by the seventh plague.

And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.
Revelation 16:17-21

The final plague of hail destroys the nations of the earth. Babylon disintegrates and falls apart into its three components and then the greatest earthquake ever to have struck the planet destroys the last vestiges of life on earth. Huge blocks of hail weighing in the vicinity of 50 kilograms end the rebellion. In the midst of this confusion, Christ's people are taken away as we will see later. In the book of Job we have a reference to this war of hail.

Hast thou entered the treasures of the snow or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved

Truth Matters

*for times of trouble, for days of war and battle? Job
38:22-23*

Christ is the victor in this conflict:

*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse;
and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True,
and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.
His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were
many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man
knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture
dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of
God. And the armies which were in heaven followed
him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and
clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that
with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule
them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress
of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he
hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written,
KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.
Revelation 19:11-16*

The redeemed will shout for joy. Their conflict is ended and they are taken to the heavenly Canaan.

*And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God;
we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is
the Lord, we have waited for Him; we will be glad and
rejoice in His salvation. Isaiah 25:9*

The Second Coming of Christ

The theme of the Bible is Christ and His Kingdom. Sin and death will not rule forever, but the day will come when Christ will vanquish His enemies, and put an end to Satan's rule. Christ's kingdom should be the theme of our contemplations and prayers, and is the first request in

the Lord's prayer.

Thy kingdom come. Matthew 6:10

The great and venerable day of the Lord has always been the great hope of God's people throughout the ages, but has also been a theme that has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Many have hoped for a temporal Messiah to save them from their current circumstances, whilst others developed doctrines of exclusivity, claiming salvation and messianic revelation only for themselves. To groups such as these, the humility and ministry of Jesus Christ, when he walked amongst men, was less than appealing, and they sought another Saviour more in tune with their misconceptions. To these Jesus said:

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.
John 5:39

God has not left us orphans. He has revealed Himself and Heaven's rescue plan to us by His servants the prophets.

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7

God's interventions in the affairs of men have not been arbitrary, but were designed to save men through grace whilst satisfying the demands of the law. Transgression of the law demanded justice, and the penalty for transgression was death. When Adam and Eve fell, God promised the Saviour.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.
Genesis 3:15 NKJV

In this prophecy, the woman is the church (God's people throughout the ages). The seed of the serpent constitutes all apostates throughout the ages, while the Seed of the woman is the Messiah who would crush the

serpent's head. In addition, He Himself would be bruised by the serpent. The two genealogies of Jesus given in the Scriptures trace the lineage of Christ from Adam, through Abraham, to Joseph and Mary. (Matt 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-38) In Revelation 12, the woman depicted bringing forth the male child is a reference to the church (see *The Battle of the Giants*), and the "Seed" is an applied reference to Christ. (Galatians 3:16)

At His first coming, Jesus came to pay the price for sin. He became "sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21):

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes, we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

Justice was satisfied, and grace could abound. In Christ, we were reconciled to God (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:21-22). This was the objective of the first coming of Christ. Satan was vanquished, but not eliminated. Sin and death were conquered, but not eradicated. Jesus promised to return to this earth in order to take the redeemed with Him to mansions which He would prepare for them.

In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:2-3

This is the great promise of the coming of the Lord in glory. However, not even this promise entails the final setting up of the kingdom of the Lord. What is promised here is that the Lord will come again to fetch His redeemed and take them to the place He has prepared for them.

I will come back and take you to be with me, that you may be where I am. John 14:3 NIV

17- History's Coming Climax

	Matt	Mark	Luke
1. War and distress of nations	24:7	13:8	21:9-10
2. Earthquakes	24:7	13:8	21:9-11
3. As in the days of Noah	24: 37-39	--	--
4. Gospel to be preached worldwide	24:14	13:10 (see <i>A Stone to Rest Your Head</i>)	--
5. Tribulation	24:21	13:24	--
6. False Christs	24: 4-5, 23-24	13:22	21:8
7. Signs in the sun, moon, stars	24:29	13:24-25 (see <i>A Stone to Rest Your Head</i>)	21:25-26 Isaiah 13:10

Figure 17.1

The redeemed are to be taken to heaven at the coming of the Lord. Yet, the Bible clearly teaches an earthly kingdom. It is the earth that will be the ultimate home of the redeemed (Matthew 5:5; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 5:10; 21:1-3) and God Himself will make the new earth His home. (Revelation 21:3)

Clearly then, there must be more than one coming of Christ to this earth, and careful exegesis is required to distinguish these from each other in the Scriptures. The Bible, in fact, speaks of four comings of Christ, each with a different mission.

- 1) The coming of Christ as a babe
- 2) The coming of Christ to the Ancient of Days. (Daniel 7:13)
- 3) The coming of Christ in glory with all His angels to take the redeemed to heaven
- 4) The coming of Christ to set up His kingdom upon the earth

The coming of Christ as a babe has been dealt with in the chapter *Jesus, Imposter or Messiah*, and the setting up of the kingdom will be dealt with in the next chapter *The Long Awaited Millenium*. The coming of Christ to the Ancient of Days and the coming in glory do not refer to the same event. There is also much confusion regarding these events, and various views exist in the Christian world as how to interpret these texts. The coming of Christ to the Ancient of Days is an event that takes place in heaven prior to the Second Coming. While this pre-advent judgment scene is taking place, the prophet Daniel sees and hears the little horn on earth blaspheming against God, and the return of Christ could thus not have taken place (see *The Man Behind the Mask*).

Signs of His Coming

The Scriptures testify to the events that precede the coming of Christ. There would be signs in the earth, distress of nations and turmoil in the social structure of societies. In Matthew 24, Jesus portrays the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem and the destruction of the world at the end of time. This discourse is also presented in Mark 13 and Luke 21. A summary of these events as described in the Gospels can be found in Figure 17.1.

It can be argued that many of the events portrayed in these chapters have always existed on the earth, but never has there been a time when all these events were evident in the world simultaneously in diverse places.

The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness. Zephaniah 1:14-15

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations,

with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear... Luke 21:25-26

The events portrayed here refer to the dark day and the meteor showers, which ushered in the great Advent Movement. After the tribulation of the 1260 years of papal suppression of the truth, New England experienced the famous Dark Day on May 19, 1780, which was followed by signs in the moon as well. The stars that fell were equated with the great meteor shower of November 13, 1833, when 200 000 meteors fell per hour. These signs were seen by the Millerites as fulfilments of these prophecies. The parallel text can be found in Revelation 6.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. Revelation 6:12-13

History records these memorable events as follows:

The dark day of New England, so familiar to old and young, came May 19, 1780 ... Near eleven o'clock, it began to grow dark, as if night were coming. Men ceased their work; the lowing cattle came to the barns, the bleating sheep huddled by the fences, the wild birds screamed and flew to their nests, the fowls went to their roosts ... At night it was so inky dark that a person could not see his hand when held up, nor even a white sheet of paper. - "History of Weare, New Hampshire, 1735-1888." (Boston Public Library)

During the whole time, a sickly melancholy gloom overcast the face of nature:- Nor was the darkness of the night less uncommon and terrifying than that of the day; notwithstanding there was almost a full moon, no object was discernible, but the help of some artificial

light, which, when seen from the neighboring houses and other places at a distance, appeared thro' a kind of Egyptian darkness, which seemed impervious to the rays. - "The Independent Chronicle"
(Boston). June 8, 1780. p. 4

Herschel, the great astronomer, frankly admits:

The Dark Day, May 19, 1780, is one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest but which philosophy is at a loss to explain.

Jesus also predicted that tension between nations would increase prior to the Second Coming.

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.
Matthew 24:7

The Greek word for nation used here is the word *ethnos* from which we get the words *ethnic group*. Sadly, when we look at the nations of the world today, there may be talk of peace, but ethnic violence, even so-called ethnic cleansing, is rife.

In the economic world, the value of commodities is dropping, and distinctions between rich and poor are ever increasing. Economic woes and labour unrest are foretold for the last days.

Your gold and silver have corroded, and their poison will be a witness against you, and will eat your flesh as fire. You heaped treasure in the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. James 5:3-4 NKJV

False religions and false Christs will stake their claims prior to the

return of Jesus:

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Matthew 24:24

The close of the twentieth century saw a resurgence in false Christs. The so-called Lord Maitreya made his appearance and uttered statements in direct contradiction to Scripture, but the world religions are awaiting just a one as he.

All the great religions posit the idea of a further revelation to be given by a future Teacher. Christians hope for the return of the Christ, the Buddhists look for the coming of another Buddha (the Lord Maitreya), while Muslims await the Imam Mahdi, the Hindus a reincarnation of Krishna, and the Jews the Messiah. (Share International)

Numerous additional signs of the imminent return of Christ are given in the Scriptures which testify that the time is near. These include:

- An increase in knowledge - *Daniel 12:4*
- An increase in demonic activity - *Rev 16:13-14, 1 Timothy 4:1-7*
- An increase in lawlessness - *2 Timothy 3:1-7*
- Departure from the faith - *2 Timothy 4:3,4*
- Rise of False teachings (evolution) - *2 Peter 3:3-7*
- Increase in traffic (modern transport) - *Nahum 2:4*

Of all these signs, the one with the greatest finality is:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. Matthew 24:14

We are admonished to study the signs and to pay attention. (Matthew 24:32-35) However, we are not to conclude that we can discern the day or the hour of His coming from these events. (Matthew 24:36)

Truth Matters

Moreover, if we study the nature of the coming of Christ and the purpose of His coming, then no one need be deceived. Yet, strange as it may seem, not a single mainline Christian church teaches the Biblical coming of Christ today. Most churches, if they preach about the Second Coming at all, preach a coming of Christ that will bring peace to the nations, but the Bible teaches a destruction of nations. They preach conversion of sinners at the coming of Christ when the Bible teaches that Christ will come to destroy sin and sinners. Let us carefully examine the evidence.

The Coming of Christ in Glory

The coming of Christ in glory is the blessed hope of the church. Jesus said:

I will come again. John 14:3

This promise will be fulfilled. The return of Christ or His Second Coming to this earth is the event that will finally release the people of God from Satan's earthly rule.

...looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ... Titus 2:13

...to those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.
Hebrews 9:28 NKJV

How He Will Return

And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, 'Ye men of

Galilee; why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven'. Acts 1:9-11

1. In the Clouds Together With His Angels

Jesus was taken up into heaven by a cloud, and He will return in the clouds. The clouds refer to the angels of God that surround Him, as can be seen in Hebrew parallelism.

The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them, as is Sinai, in the holy place. Psalm 68:17

...who maketh the clouds his chariots; who walketh upon the wings of the wind. Psalm 104:3

Jesus Himself promised that He would return with the clouds (the angels).

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24:30

Further texts are Matthew 26:64, Mark 13:26, Mark 14:62, and Revelation 1:7.

...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels. 2 Thessalonians 1:7

When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. Matthew 25:31

The glory of Christ's coming surpasses anything we can imagine. He will return in the glory of His angels and that of the Godhead:

...when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's and of the holy angels. Luke 9:26

2. The Second Coming Will be Universally Visible

Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him... Revelation 1:7

Christ warned against false comings of Christ that would not be universally visible.

Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Matthew 24:26-27

...they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24:30

3. The Second Coming Will be Audible

And he shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other. Matthew 24:31

The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God... 1 Thessalonians 4:16

4. The Lord Will Not Come Down to the Earth, But Will Await the Redeemed in the Sky

For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with

a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

During the last plague, when the final earthquake and hail destroy the inhabitants of the earth, the redeemed (elect) will be gathered together by angels and taken up into the air to meet the Lord in the sky. This is a rapture, but it is not a secret rapture.

And He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. Matthew 24:31 NIV

At the Second Coming, Christ calls forth the dead and sends forth His angels to gather the elect, and together they meet Him in the air. Christ Himself does not come down to the earth—His feet do not touch the earth. His command to His angels is:

Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. Psalm 50:5

Events to Take Place At His Coming

1. The Righteous Dead are Raised

For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

Only the righteous who are "in Christ" are resurrected at the Second Coming. The rest of the dead are not resurrected until after the millennium (see *The Long Awaited Millennium*).

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of those that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Revelation 20:4-5

The righteous are raised—the unrighteous are not raised until the thousand years are finished.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection... Revelation 20:6

In John 5:28-29, Christ tells us that all shall hear His voice. He talks of two resurrections—"the resurrection of life" and "the resurrection of damnation." These two events are separated by a thousand years.

2. The Righteous Living will be Translated

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

The living righteous ("we which are alive") will be gathered together with the resurrected righteous to meet the Lord in the air. The righteous living will not taste death, but will be translated as were Enoch and Elijah. (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11)

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and

we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'

1 Corinthians 15: 51-54 NKJV

The living righteous are changed in moments at the last trumpet. Our bodies will be changed into the likeness of His glorious body.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body...

Philippians 3:20-21 NKJV

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him . . and every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure. 1 John 3:2-3 NKJV

He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for the Lord has spoken it. And it shall be said in that day: 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.' Isaiah 25:8-9

3. The Wicked are Slain and the Nations Destroyed

The cry of those who have rejected God is:

And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men,

the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?'
Revelation 6:15-17 NKJV

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.
Psalm 110:5-6

There is no peace of nations or joy expressed here at the Second Coming of Christ. Those who have slighted the mercy of Christ and sought to destroy his saints will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. Neither is the Lord a respecter of position. The heads of nations will give an account for their actions. Then the wicked one, the man of sin, will be revealed for what he is.

And then shall the wicked be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.
2 Thessalonians 2:8 NKJV

These people will be destroyed and their bodies will be strewn over the earth.

And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.
Jeremiah 25:33

They cannot be gathered, lamented or buried because no living being will remain on earth.

I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form and void; and the heavens, they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, and all the hills moved back and forth. I beheld, and indeed there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all its cities were broken down at the presence of the Lord, by His fierce anger. For thus says the Lord: 'The whole land shall be desolate; yet I will not make a full end.' For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black, because I have spoken. I have purposed and will not relent, nor will I turn back from it. Jeremiah 4:23-28 NKJV

'I will utterly consume everything from the face of the land,' says the Lord; 'I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks along with the wicked. I will cut off man from the face of the land,' says the Lord. Zeephaniah 1:1-3 NKJV

Additional texts of the destruction of all things are: Psalms 21:10; 37:10; 110:5-6; Isaiah 24:1-3; Hebrews 10:26-27.

The Secret Rapture

In stark contrast with the events described above is the doctrine of the secret rapture which proposes that the people of God will be secretly taken to heaven while the unconverted remain on the earth to receive what is tantamount to a second chance. The second chance doctrine is a doctrine of false hope which does not encourage people to change their lives and make right with God.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord,

and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Isaiah 55:7

But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. 'Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?' says the Lord, 'and not that he should turn from his ways and live?' Ezekiel 18:21-23 NKJV

Again there is an "if" in these verses. Salvation is conditional to obedience. We will be held accountable for our deeds.

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Matthew 16:27

God's justice cannot be compromised.

God is just. He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you, and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7 NIV

According to these texts, relief for the righteous and recompense for the wicked take place at the same time—at the return of Christ. Dispensationalists separate these events by a period of seven years. First the rapture, then the destruction of the antichrist at the Second Coming. During this supposed period, the Jewish people will have gone through the tribulation and will have come to accept Christ.

The glory of Christ's Second Coming leaves no hint of secrecy. The events of the second coming are all described as occurring at the same time. The return of Christ is the blessed hope of the people of God—Jesus

is to be revealed. (1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7,13; 4:13) Dispensation-
alists do not believe in Spiritual Israel (the church) but believe that the
promises are for literal Israel. They thus separate the Church from Israel,
but the Bible makes no such distinction.

*Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to
the Israel of God. Galatians 6:16 NKJV*

Typology in the Bible always points to something greater. The
shadow is of less significance than he who casts the shadow. The lamb
points to Christ—the latter being so much greater than the former. Literal
Babylon points to end-time Babylon, comprising all the apostate forces
prevalent at the end of time. Literal Jerusalem or Israel of old is a type
of end-time spiritual Jerusalem or Israel comprising all the redeemed
of all ages. Dispensationalists literalise the type and make it the same
as the type. They await a literal reconstruction of Babylon and Israel,
which would be the same as awaiting the return of a literal lamb.

According to the dispensationalist view, the tribulation is there-
fore determined for the Jews only. The Bible does not teach this. The
trials and tribulations are, on the contrary, designed to purge and cleanse
the church. (1 Thess. 3:3) God's people, those who have washed their
robes in the blood of the Lamb, have to go through the tribulation.

*Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, 'What
are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence
came they?' And I said to him, 'Sir, thou knowest.' And
he said to me, 'These are they which come out of great
tribulation, and have washed their robes and made
them white in the blood of the Lamb...'*

Revelation 7:13-14

*Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The
kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed
in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and
sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But
when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then
the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner*

came and said to him, 'Sir did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this'. The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."' And His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.' He answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43 NKJV

The wicked and the just stay together till the harvest—the return of Christ.

When Israel of old was delivered from the bondage of Egypt, the plagues did not fall when the Israelites were already gone. They were present and witnessed the events, being subjected to the first three plagues themselves. God, however, divinely protected them from the effects of the last seven plagues, just as He will divinely protect God's people at the end of time from the effects of the last seven plagues to fall on this earth. (Revelation 3:10-13) God's people are urged to hold on till He comes. They are not raptured before the events. The texts

often quoted for the rapture are:

For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your lord is coming.

Matthew 24:38-42 NKJV

These texts do not prove a secret rapture. They merely point out that at the return of Christ, some will be saved and others will be lost. Finally, the dispensationalist view that the "antichrist" will arise after the secret rapture is also not in line with the teaching of Scripture regarding the man of sin. (see *The Man Behind the Mask*) The Bible clearly teaches that this power will arise *from* the church, not *after* the church.

Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

1 John 2:18-19 NKJV

Having gone through the tribulation and felt the wrath of the antichrist, the only hope for the people of God is Christ's return. Just as the blood of the lamb was to be painted on the doorposts of the Israelite dwellings during the night of the final plague in Egypt, so the blood of the lamb must be painted on the doorpost of the heart to alert the destroying angel that we have been purchased by the blood of the lamb.

And it will be said in that day, 'Behold, this is our God,

we have waited for Him and He will save us. This is the Lord; We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Isaiah 25:9 NKJV

18

THE LONG AWAITED MILLENNIUM OF PEACE

The word '*millennium*' does not appear in the Scriptures as such, but literally means a period of a thousand years. The word is derived from the Latin '*mille*' (one thousand) and '*annus*' (year), and is used by Biblical scholars to denote the thousand year period referred to by John in Revelation 20:4, when the saints would reign with Christ. The period "*a thousand years*" is referred to six times in Revelation 20:1-7, and the events surrounding this period of time must be carefully analysed in order to place them in perspective.

Modern theological trends place great emphasis on the millennium, and to most, it is the long-awaited period of peace brought about by the binding of Satan and the reign of Christ. The various viewpoints differ, however, on the details surrounding these events. Current concepts can be summarised as follows:

1) Amillennialism

This view does not allow for a specific period of a thousand year reign, but applies the period to the whole of church history. The period will culminate in the earth made new. The Old Testament prophecies pertaining to the kingdom apply to Christ's spiritual reign in the church. This view is the view held by Roman Catholicism and some conservative Protestant groups.

2) Postmillennialism

This view claims that the kingdom is a present reality because Christ reigns in His church. It also propagates the view that all nations will be converted to Christ prior to the coming of Christ. The period prior to His coming will become peaceful and the Gospel will be spread to all nations. At the end of the millennium, there will be a period of apostasy and tribulation brought on by the reign of the antichrist. Then Christ returns and there is a single resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. The resurrection of the righteous, or the first resurrection of Revelation 20, is, according to this view, equated with the new birth and is not literal. Both the Lutheran Augsburg Confession and the Puritan Westminster Confession subscribe to this view.

3) Premillennialism

a) Dispensational Premillennialism

This view allows for two literal resurrections from the dead, that of the righteous before the millennium and that of the wicked after the millennium. However, dispensationalists also believe in a secret rapture prior to the tribulation, and claim that the millennial kingdom must reach its fulfilment in the Jewish nation. This view demands the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, the rebuilding of the temple, and the reinstatement of the sacrificial system.

This interpretation makes many of the teachings of Jesus obsolete to the church. All the warnings given to the church regarding the time of trouble prior to the coming of Christ now become applicable to

the Jews only. In fact, the whole of Matthew 24 and Luke 21 applies only to the Jews as "*the gospel of the kingdom*" must refer to the Jews only. Even the Lord's prayer, "*Thy kingdom come*" then only has bearing to the Jews, as only they are concerned with the kingdom. If this is indeed so, then virtually all prophecies in the Bible regarding the coming of Christ and the setting up of His kingdom become meaningless to the Christian.

Paul preached the "*gospel of the kingdom to the Jews and gentiles*" (Acts 20:25; 28:23, 31) and both Matthew 24 and Luke 21 apply to the church. Surprisingly, of the entire discourse, dispensationalists apply only verse 40 and 41 in Matthew 24 to the church, as they believe to find evidence for the secret rapture in these verses. These views create a false hope, as Christians expecting a rapture before the tribulation will be ill-prepared for the time of trouble. Moreover, built into these views is the doctrine of second chance for those who reject Christ's grace.

Dispensationalists believe in the post-rapture reign of the anti-christ during which a seven year period, the Jews will all come to accept Christ. Paul, in his teachings to the Thessalonians, clearly dispels any such teaching. Referring to the day of the Lord, he writes:

Now brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means: for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God... And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work: only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming

of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-10 NKJV

The "gathering" of the brethren (verse 1) and the destruction of the lawless one (verse 8) occur simultaneously at the coming of the Lord, not at two different times. Paul's warning in verse 3 seems appropriate even to this day.

b) Historic Premillennialism

According to this view, the redeemed of all ages are on the earth during the millennium. The church is the Israel of God comprising all the peoples of God. The millennial period constitutes the first thousand years of God's kingdom on earth.

Historic premillennialists place the end of probation at the beginning of the millennium and, in this way, they differ from all the other millennialists. However, their view of an earthly millennium is inconsistent with Scriptural texts that point to a destroyed earth uninhabited by men during this period. Moreover, Scripture places the millennial judgment scenes in heaven which is in harmony with Christ's promise to take the redeemed to mansions prepared for them in heaven. As seen in the previous chapter, God's elect are gathered by angels and taken away from the earth to meet the Lord in the sky whilst the unrighteous are slain by the brightness of His coming.

To place all the events pertaining to the millennium into perspective, a careful study of the Scriptures is required, detailing the premillennial, millennial, and post-millennial milestones.

The Premillennial Events

The great theme of the thousand year prophetic period is the judgment. The judgment set the record straight as to the origin of sin.

Moreover, God's character and dealings will be vindicated in the judgment.

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
Revelation 20:4-6 NIV

The resurrected and the translated righteous will reign with Christ a thousand years whilst the rest of the dead (the unrighteous that had died before the return of Christ and the unrighteous that were slain at His coming) did not awake until the thousand years were over. What will happen during these thousand years and what judgment is here referred to? If Christ, at His return, severed the wicked from the just, then He had already judged them before His return to earth. A pre-advent judgment must thus have taken place in heaven before Jesus returned to gather His saints.

The Pre-advent Judgment (The Coming of the Lord as a Thief in the Night)

When Jesus returns to this earth, He will reward those who have been obedient and destroy the disobedient.

And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according to his work shall be.
Revelation 22:12

Truth Matters

This implies that the decision as to who is saved or not saved precedes the coming of Christ. The reward of the righteous is eternal life, and the righteous dead are resurrected at the Second Coming.

God's purpose is the destruction of sin which must forever be eradicated from the universe. He is destroying sin now in the believer, but the time will come when the Lord will do "*his strange work*" (Isaiah 28:21) and eradicate both the perpetrators of sin and sin itself from His kingdom. As sin is the transgression of the law, the standard of judgment must be the law of God.

*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law;
for sin is transgression of the law.* 1 John 3:4

...for where no law is, there is no transgression.
Romans 4:15

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery', also said 'Do not kill'. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye and so do as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. James 2:10-12

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

The law of Ten Commandments is the standard of judgment. It is also called the law of liberty since only in keeping the law can the bondage of sin be eradicated. An alcoholic can only escape his bondage by avoiding alcohol altogether. God has appointed a day for judgment and Jesus Himself will judge.

...because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He

has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead. Acts 17:31 NKJV
I said in my heart, 'God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.' Ecclesiastes 3:17

Judgment will also begin with the people of God.

For the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?
1 Peter 4:17

Good question! If God will not condone sin, even in professed believers, how much more so in the willfully disobedient. Since Christ will reward the faithful at His return, this judgment must take place in heaven prior to His return.

This solemn judgment was typified in the Old Testament by the great Day of Atonement. (see *An Advocate For Our Time*) This was the day when the record of sin was cleansed from the sanctuary. Similarly, on the anti-typical Day of Atonement, the heavenly sanctuary must likewise be cleansed. This event was to take place at the end of the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8 that terminated in 1844 (see *A Stone to Rest Your Head*). This “day of judgment” takes place in heaven and terminates with the close of probation when Christ will cease His mediation and declare:

He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.
Revelation 22:11-12 NKJV

Subsequent to this decree is the return of Christ and the reward of the saints.

Truth Matters

In Daniel chapter 7, the prophet describes this great judgment scene in heaven:

I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

Daniel 7:9-10 NKJV

In this scene, the judgment is set and books are opened. The books mentioned here must refer to the books in which are recorded the deeds of those that are to be judged. There are a number of books mentioned in the Bible, and these include the Book of Life and the Book of Remembrance:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. Revelation 20:12

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a Book of Remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name. Malachi 3:16

Nothing about our lives is unrecorded in heaven.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12:14

But I say to you that for every idle word men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Matthew 12:36-37

And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of My book.'

Exodus 32:33 NKJV

The judgment is a serious issue and as judgment begins with God's people, it is essential that we take cognizance of our lives. Christ wants to transform our characters. He wants to give us hearts of flesh instead of our hearts of stone. The work of sanctification is to achieve this end as we cooperate with God to achieve this change of heart. We have nothing to fear from the judgment unless we refuse to submit to the sanctifying power of God.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord... Hebrews 12:14

When we are judged, God reveals our character to us and chastens us so that we may be refined.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

1 Corinthians 11:32 NKJV

Daniel depicts world events continuing whilst the judgment sat.

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. Daniel 7:11

The prophet then describes the coming of one like a Son of Man with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Daniel 7:13

This coming of Christ is not the return of Christ with the clouds of heaven to this earth, but rather the coming of Christ to the Ancient of Days, which takes place before the throne of God in heaven. Christ's mediatorial ministry ceases, and He puts on His kingly robes prior to His return as King of kings.

And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7:14

As it was in the days of Noah, when Noah and his family were locked in the ark and probation for the antediluvian world had ceased, so shall it be at the end of time. Probation had ceased and the wicked knew it not. To those who refuse to allow the sanctifying Spirit of God to work in their lives, life will seem to carry on as usual. They will not have made the Scriptures their guide and when the time comes for Christ's return, they will be caught unawares. To them the coming of Christ will be like a thief in the night. Believers are urged to study the Scriptures and the signs of the times so that day will not catch them unawares.

For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get

drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ... 1 Thessalonians 5:2-9 NKJV

After the close of probation, the executive judgment will begin. In the previous chapter we discussed the seven last plagues and the final deliverance of the saints. Let us briefly here place these events into their time sequence.

Executive Judgment

Once the investigative phase of the judgment has been completed and the pronouncement of judgment has been issued (Revelation 22:11-12), then God's judgments will fall upon the earth. This is the executive phase of the judgment.

The first judgments to fall upon the earth after the close of probation are the seven last plagues. In Revelation 15, there is a description of the heavenly scene taking place at the close of probation.

And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.
Revelation 15:5

The temple is opened. Christ's high priestly ministry has closed and the seven angels having the seven last plagues are instructed to pour out their vials on the earth (Revelation 16). The plagues fall and these judgments are declared just by the angels of God.

And I heard the angel of the waters saying: 'You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is, and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink, for it is their just due. Revelation 16:5-7 NKJV

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The plagues fall prior to the coming of Christ and again the entreaty to be prepared is given.

Behold, I am come as a thief. Blessed is he who watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. Revelation 16:15

Only the righteousness of Christ can shield one from the effects of the plagues.

He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.
Psalm 91:4-8 NKJV

The falling of the plagues takes place whilst the righteous are still on earth. They are shielded from their effects, but not removed from their presence. Christ's prayer is:

Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are... I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. John 17:11,15 NKJV

Christ promises protection, not removal. In Revelation 7, we read:

...these are they which came out of the great tribulation...
Revelation 7:14

This text shows that the righteous pass through the tribulation but will be delivered out of it at the end.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. Daniel 12:1

Deliverance and Armageddon

As discussed in the previous chapter, deliverance takes place during the outpouring of the seventh plague. Babylon's support base had been eroded under the sixth plague and, spurned on by demonic forces, the death decree against all who would not worship the beast, his image or accept his mark, had been proclaimed. The proclamation of this final decree calls forth the direct intervention of God, and Christ returns to deliver His saints. The saints have no power against the confederacy of the world. It is only Christ who can deliver them, and He fights this pre-millennial war called Armageddon on their behalf. During the seventh plague, the earthly confederacy is destroyed by the earthquake, the hail, and the brightness of His coming. (Job 38:22-23, Isaiah 28:17; Psalm 110:5,6; Jeremiah 4:23-27; Jeremiah 25:33-38; Zephaniah 1:1-3)

Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants. And it shall be: as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word. The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away;

the haughty people of the earth languish. The earth is also defied under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Isaiah 24:1-5 NKJV

The prophet Isaiah here so clearly shows that God is just in all His dealings. There is no favoritism here. There is also no room for error in terms of what Christ will do when He returns. The earth will be utterly destroyed, but in the midst of this destruction, the Lord promises deliverance:

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: 'Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak. The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.' Zephaniah 3:16-17 NKJV

What a promise! In the midst of earthquakes and hail under the seventh plague, a loud voice is heard (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the armies of heaven intervene.

The Lord will cause His glorious voice to be heard, and show the descent of His arm, with the indignation of His anger and the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, tempest, and hailstones. For through the voice of the Lord Assyria will be beaten down, as He strikes with the rod. And in every place where the staff of punishment passes, which the Lord lays on him, it will be with tambourines and harps; And in battles of brandishing He will fight with it. Isaiah 30:30-32 NKJV

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots: And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds: And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: Thy graven images

also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee: so will I destroy thy cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. Micah 5:10-15

Assyria was one of the cruelest nations that Israel had to contend with, and the reference to this nation serves as a type for the cruel bondmaster that Christ will destroy with the brightness of His coming. Christ's redeemed of all ages are raised from the dead. The living righteous are translated—they are gathered by the angels to meet the Lord in the sky.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. Isaiah 26:19-21

Millennial Events

Satan Bound

And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,

which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years; and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled. And after that, he must be loosed a little season.
Revelation 20:1-3

The destruction of the wicked and the removal of the saints from the earth leaves the earth desolate. In Revelation 20, John describes an angel who binds Satan with a great chain and throws him in the bottomless pit (abyss). The term 'abyss' is used in Scripture to denote the grave, death and destruction, and the prison of the demons. (Romans 10:7, Luke 8:31) The term 'abyss' is also used in the Greek version of the Old Testament to describe the state of the uninhabited world where the 'deep' is the 'abyssos'.

The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Genesis 1:2

The description of the earth after the coming of Christ, given by the prophet Jeremiah, is an apt description of the formless and void earth.

I beheld the earth, and lo it was without form, and void; and the heavens they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and lo they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld and lo there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld and lo the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities were broken down at the presence of the Lord, by His fierce anger. Jeremiah 4:23-26

The whole world will once again be turned into a great abyss or prison for Satan and his demons. The great chain with which he is bound is thus the chain of circumstances that prevents him from deceiving the nations, as they are destroyed and no man remains on the earth. The Biblical records abound with chains of circumstances. (Psalm 2:3;

107:10,14; 116:16; Ecclesiastes 7:26; Isaiah 28:22; 52:2; 58:6; Jeremiah 40:4; Lamentations 3:7; Ezekiel 7:23)

It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones. And on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prisons; after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously. Isaiah 24:21-23 NKJV

In these verses, God's judgments fall not only upon the kings of the earth, but demonic forces are also punished ("the host of the high ones that are on high"). The evil confederacy is shut up in the prison and after many days (one thousand years), they shall be released. (Revelation 20:3) During the millennium, Satan and his hosts are thus captives on the earth made desolate, while the redeemed are taken to heaven where the wedding feast is held for all the saints of the Most High.

Judgment Given to the Saints

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such, the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Revelation 20:4-6

These prophetic verses are pictured as taking place in heaven where John had earlier seen God's throne and that of the 24 elders (Revelation 4:4). The redeemed are given the promise that they would reign on the earth (Revelation 5:10), but prior to this reign, they are to judge the nations first. Precisely who is meant by the twenty-four elders is not revealed. In the earthly sanctuary, there were twenty-four elders that participated in the services, so the heavenly also must have had twenty-four elders participating in the heavenly sanctuary. The number twenty-four is also the sum of the number of patriarchs and apostles. The gates of the New Jerusalem have written on them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel and the foundation stones have the names of the twelve apostles, thus unifying the Israel of God under the Old and New Covenant. The verse also tells us that amidst this heavenly scene, the saints of God are now to become judges.

...judgment was given unto them. Revelation 20:4

At the return of Christ, the decision as to who would constitute the redeemed and who the wicked had already been made. The judgment that was given unto the saints must therefore be a judgment of verification. God's righteousness and justice must forever be vindicated before the universe. During the thousand years, every case will be scrutinized—no lingering doubts may remain. One harmonious chord must exist in heaven and with one voice, all will proclaim:

...Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Revelation 15:3

God's judgment will be declared righteous. (Romans 2:5; 2 Thess. 1:5; Genesis 18:25; Psalm 19:9)

In this millennial judgment, God's dealing with the rejectors of His truth and of evil angels will be scrutinized (Hebrews 10:26-27; 2 Peter 2:4,9; Jude 6). The saints will judge the world.

*Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?
And if the world will be judged by you, are you*

unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 NKJV

Post Millennial Events

After the thousand years and the verification of judgment in heaven, the final events in the great controversy between good and evil will take place. In this final drama, God's name will be fully vindicated. Every knee will bow, and evil will forever be eradicated. These events are described in Revelation chapters 20-22. As the book of Revelation is written in chiastic structure, with the heart of the chiasm (events dealing with the final events before the return of Christ) in the middle of the book, the events described in these chapters appear to be described in reverse sequence. (e.g. the wicked surround the New Jerusalem in Revelation 20:9, but the city only comes down from heaven in Revelation 21:2). If the chiastic structure is taken into account, then the sequence of events can be readily discerned.

The Post-Millennial Return of Christ

After the thousand years, Christ returns to the earth to execute final judgment on the rejecters of His truth, and to take back that which is rightfully His. It is then that the kingdom will be restored to the saints.

The prophet Zechariah describes the coming of the Lord with all His saints, and how the feet of the Lord touch the earth to create a great plain (something that did not happen at the Second Coming (see Zechariah 14:4-5). The ancient prophecies made to literal Israel could have had their fulfilment in Israel of old if they had been obedient to God. The Old Covenant promises were transferred to spiritual Israel when they rejected the Messiah. The essence of the prophecy in Zechariah thus still applies and reaches its final fulfilment in the return of Christ after the millennium. The New Jerusalem then descends from heaven:

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And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Revelation 21:2

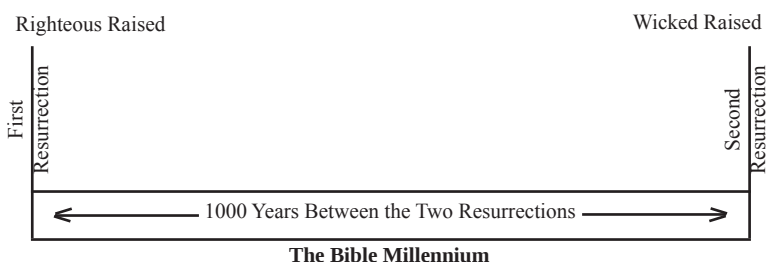
From the safety of the city, the redeemed will then witness the final events which will end the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Satan will have had a thousand years to reflect upon the consequences of his actions and the sentence that awaits him.

The Resurrection of Damnation & the Final Battle: Gog and Magog

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

Revelation 20:7-8 NKJV

Satan had been bound by chains of circumstances when the wicked were slain at the first coming of Christ. The wicked that died would not come to life until a thousand years had expired.



But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished... Revelation 20:5

The resurrection of the wicked of all ages looses the chains of circumstances which had bound Satan, and he spurs the resurrected millions on to take the Holy City in one final effort to retain power.

...and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. Revelation 20:8 NKJV

In Ezekiel 38:2 and 39:6, Gog, the king of Magog, is described as an enemy of God's people. He is described as the leader of the host that would attack restored Israel (Ezekiel 38:2, 14, 16-19), but he would meet his end. This would happen "after many days" (Ezekiel 38:8):

'And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,' says the Lord God, 'that My fury will show in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: "Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel..."' Ezekiel 38:18-19 NKJV

God destroys Gog and Israel does not battle at all. No historic figure has as yet been identified with Gog, and he stands as a symbol of the leader of rebellion, Satan himself.

God permits this final act of rebellion by Satan and his hosts together with the resurrected wicked to dispel any lingering doubt as to the antipathy of those arraigned against God and His people. Good and evil stand opposite each other—the saints within the city, the wicked without.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the

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lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-15 NKJV

At the majestic sight of Christ on His throne, every knee will bow. All thoughts of rebellion and victory will fade.

For it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 14:11-12 NKJV

...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and of things in earth, and of things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:10-11

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. Isaiah 45:22-24

This is the final coronation of the Son of God. The final judgment then takes place:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. Revelation 20:12

And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:15

Each act of defiance, each rejection of God's grace is made apparent. The consequences of these choices are eternal. (Hebrews 6:2) The final sentence is the sentence of death.

For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26-27 NKJV

They chose to believe Satan rather than God (John 8:45) and their characters have been formed according to the similitude of their master. They would never be happy amongst the people of God where there is no room for selfishness. The atmosphere that permeates heaven is an atmosphere of self-sacrifice, and is the essence of its joy. All are satisfied that God's judgments are true and just.

...'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!' And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, 'Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!' Revelation 5:12-13 KJV

Satan's allegation against God and His government are proved groundless. Christ stands vindicated and ready to perform his "strange act":

For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Isaiah 28:21

Destruction of the Wicked

Satan and the wicked will be destroyed by fire.

...and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... Revelation 20:9-10

Then he will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels...' Matthew 25:41 NKJV

Then Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:14-15

The "everlasting fire" was dealt with in the chapter *The Mystic Realm of Death* and refers to the everlasting consequences of that death. The final issue of salvation or damnation is whether one's name is written in the *Book of Life*. The wicked are burnt to ashes and the fires consume them until they are no more.

'For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,' says the Lord of hosts. 'That will leave them neither root nor branch.' Malachi 4:1 NKJV

The root is Satan and the branches are his followers.

'...You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this,' says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 4:3 NKJV

They do not burn forever, but will become ashes. In Ezekiel chapter

28, the prophet takes up a lament against the king of Tyre. This passage cannot refer to the literal king of Tyre because he would not have been in Eden (verse 13) and neither was he an anointed cherub (verse 14). This king is a reference to Satan and his fate is made clear.

You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities. By the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever. Ezekiel 28:18-19 NKJV

With this final destruction of Satan, the great controversy ends. Satan and his host (Gog and Magog) are destroyed by fire. The parallels between the prophecies of Ezekiel and John's Revelation are striking and can best be summarized in the words of Hans LaRondelle:

1) The resurrection of a dead Israel from the graveyard of Babylon to be a new, holy covenant people of Yahweh. (Ezekiel 36:24-28, 37:1-14)

The resurrection of the beheaded witnesses of Christ who refused to worship the Babylonian's "beast or his image". (Revelation 20:4)

2) Israel as the new theocracy lives peacefully in the Promised Land under the rule of the new David, the Messiah. (Ezekiel 37:15-28)

The resurrected saints reign with Christ for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)

3) After "many days", the final attack against Israel from the north by the armies of Gog, king of Magog, receives a smashing defeat through fire from heaven. (Ezekiel 38:8 -39:22)

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After the saints' thousand year reign, the armies of "Gog and Magog" attack the camp of God's people, the Holy City, from all directions, but are destroyed by fire from heaven. (Revelation 20:7-9)

4) The vision of Yahweh's theocracy in a New Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40-48)

The vision of the New Jerusalem which descends from heaven to earth as the bride of the Lamb. (Revelation 21:1-22:5)¹

The Earth Made New

The fire that destroys the wicked also cleanses the earth.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are in it shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. 2 Peter 3:10-13

God restores the earth to its original beauty—the earth is made new.

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And there was no more sea. Revelation 21:1

The sea divides people and contains the waters of the flood that destroyed the antediluvian world. The new earth will no longer contain characteristics that remind one of the curse.

And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.' Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold I make all things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' Revelation 21:3-5 NKJV

God's home will be among the redeemed and the sorrows of the world are passed away and will no longer come to mind.

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. Isaiah 65:17-19

The kingdom of God has been restored and the earth is the final home of the saints.

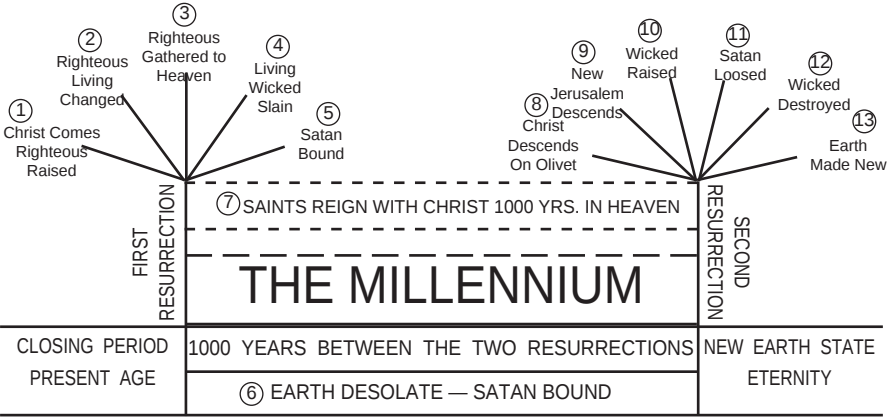
*The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth He has given to the children of men.
Psalm 115:16 NKJV*

This is the hope of the children of God.

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot

and blameless. 2 Peter 3:14 NIV

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
2 Corinthians 7:1 NIV



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