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Lesson #1: God's Great Prophetic Chain

by Stephen Bohr

Introduction: God's Foreknowledge

The Bible tells us four things about God's knowledge:

- [1] God knows the end from the beginning.
- Because He knows the end from the beginning, He is able [2] to predict how historical events will flow.
- God is not a passive observer of history's ebb and flow! He is [3] actively engaged to make sure that things unfold just as He has predicted.
- God does not keep His plans for the future [4] secret but rather reveals them to His servants the prophets so that they can reveal them to us!!

Isaiah 46:9-11

"Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying: 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.' ¹¹ Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed, I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."

Amos 3:7

"Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets."

In the next few days we are going to study some stunning prophecies that have been fulfilled just as God predicted. We will also look at some prophetic predictions that have not yet been fulfilled. Because the prophecies of the past have been fulfilled to the very letter, we can be sure that the future ones will be also.

I must warn you that our study is not for the faint of heart or the politically correct. We will tell it like it is, just as the Bible portrays it. Our study will appeal to our intellect rather than our emotions—what we study will make absolute sense!

Our Primary Focus

Our primary focus will be to identify the antichrist and show how he will be overcome by Christ. At this point several questions emerge:

- Who is this end time antichrist?
- At what stage of history does he appear?

- What is he **like** and how does he **act**?

In the course of Christian history, **many candidates** have been proposed as the fulfillment of the **little horn** and **beast** prophecies of Daniel and Revelation:

- Benito **Mussolini** (Premier of Italy 1922-1943)
- Adolph **Hitler** (Führer of Germany 1934-1945)
- Ayatollah **Khomeini** (Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran and led the 1979 revolution that overthrew the Shah in 1979)
- Yasser **Arafat** (Chairman of the PLO and President of the Palestinian Authority)
- Henry **Kissinger** (Secretary of State during the presidency of Richard Nixon)
- Saddam **Hussein** (dictator of Iraq who was hung in the gallows)
- **Barack Obama** (president of the United States)
- A future **nasty individual** who will rebuild the **Jewish temple**, build an **image of himself**, impose a **tattoo** on the forehead and right hand of his followers, and **persecute the Jews** for **three and a half years**

It is obvious that all of these proposed candidates were just **guesses**. But we do **not need** to guess because the Bible tells:

- **When** this power would arise
- **Where** it would arise
- **What** it would be like

A Systematic, Disciplined, Careful, Contextual Approach

In this presentation we shall use a **careful, disciplined, systematic** and **logical** approach. There will be no **guesswork**, no **unfounded assumptions**, no **conjecturing**. We will use a method that springs from the **Bible text itself**. I have called it the **historical flow** method. This method gives us the **starting point** of the great prophetic chain, its **ending point** and everything **in between**.

In my favorite book on the philosophy of **Education**, we find the following words:

*“The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting **link after link** in the **prophetic chain**, from eternity in the **past** to eternity in the **future**, tells us where we are **today** in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the **time to come**. All that prophecy **has foretold** as coming to pass, until the **present time**, has been traced on the **pages of history**, and we may be assured that all which is **yet to come** will be fulfilled **in its order**.”*
Education, p. 178)

A Symbolic Portrayal

It is important to realize that in prophecy we are dealing with **symbols** that cannot be taken **literally**. In real life there are no such things as lions with eagle’s wings, leopards with four heads and dragons with iron teeth and ten horns. The antichrist is described in Daniel 7 as the **little horn** and in Revelation 13 as the beast. It is obvious that the antichrist is neither a horn nor a beast, **literally speaking!**

In Bible prophecy a symbol represents **something far greater** than the mere symbol. Symbols must be decoded to determine their meaning. Sometimes the **immediate context** provides the meaning of a symbol but other times we must go to **other parts** of the Bible to determine its meaning. So let's **begin our study** of the great prophetic chain in Daniel 7.

The Date of Daniel 7

The **first year** of King Belshazzar is **550 BC**. The kingdom of Babylon was still going to rule for 11 more years. This means that everything in Daniel 7 was future in Daniel's day. We shall find that Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 announce events, with mathematical precision, that were as far away as two thousand five hundred years in Daniel's day.

Winds and Sea

Daniel 7:1, 2: Winds represent **military wars** and **conflicts**

*"In the **first year** of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts. ² Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the **four winds** of heaven were stirring up the **Great Sea**."*

Isaiah 17:12: The churning **waters** of the Great Sea represent multitudes of **nations and peoples**

*"Woe to the multitude of **many people** who make a noise like the **roar of the seas**, and to the **rushing of nations** that make a rushing like the **rushing of mighty waters!**"*

"Winds are a symbol of strife. The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power." GC, p. 440

Four Great Beasts

Daniel 7:3: Four Beasts

*"And **four great beasts** came up from the sea, each different from the other."*

Daniel 7:17: The very **same chapter** provides the meaning of the four beasts:

*"Those great beasts, which are four, are **four kings** which arise out of the earth."*

These beasts represent a succession of **kings** that rule over a **succession** of **four kingdoms**. In the book of Daniel, the words 'kings' and 'kingdoms' are used **interchangeably**.

- This can be seen clearly in **Daniel 2:38** where Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar that **he was** the head of gold but after him **another kingdom** would arise.
- It is also seen in **Daniel 7:23** where the fourth beast is **explicitly** referred to as a 'fourth kingdom' that shall arise in the earth.
- **Daniel 8:20:** *"The ram which you saw, having two horns—they are **the kings** of Media and Persia."*

It should not surprise us that beasts represent nations, for even today, nations frequently have a **mascot**:

- The United States: **Eagle**
- Russia: **Bear**
- England: **Lion**
- China: **Dragon**
- Australia: Red **Kangaroo**
- Bangladesh: The **Bengal Tiger**
- Canada: The North American **Beaver**
- Colombia: The **Andean Condor**
- France: The **Gallic Rooster**

The Lion

One important point to notice: The passive voice of many of the verbs of Daniel 7 clearly points to someone who is directing historical events from behind the scenes. In the book of Daniel, the ‘watchers’ or angels are the agents through which God directs the wheels of history.

Daniel 7:4: The LION

*“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.”*

Passive Voice:

“... wings were plucked off”

“... it was lifted up from the earth”

“... it was made to stand”

“... a man's heart was given”

- The prophetic **chain begins** with Babylon, the kingdom in which **Daniel lived**. Thus we have a **definite starting point** to the chain!
- When King Nebuchadnezzar **built the ancient city** of Babylon he placed **lion sphinxes** at many of the **main entrances** to the city.
- In **Jeremiah**, Babylon is described as a lion:

Jeremiah 4:7: *“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 50:17: *“Israel is like scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away. First the king of Assyria devoured him; now at last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.”*

- The **swiftness** of Babylon's conquest is compared to the **flight of an eagle**:

Ezekiel 17:2, 3, 12: *“Son of man, pose a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of*

Israel, ³ and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "A great eagle with large wings and long pinions, full of feathers of various colors, came to Lebanon and took from the cedar the highest branch. . . Say now to the rebellious house: 'Do you not know what these things mean?' Tell them, 'Indeed the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to Babylon."

Lamentations 4:19: "Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heavens. They pursued us on the mountains and lay wait for us in the wilderness."

- In **Deuteronomy 28** we find the covenant blessings and curses. **Eight hundred** years before the Babylonian captivity, God predicted, through **Moses**, that the Babylonians would come against Judah with **eagle's wings**:

Deuteronomy 28:49:

"The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as **swift as the eagle** flies, a nation whose language you will not understand."

- When Babylon ceased to be a conquering power, its **wings were plucked** and the **lion's heart** removed and replaced with the heart of a man (for example, **Richard the Lion Heart**, King of England, was so called because he was known as a great military leader and warrior).

The Bear

Daniel 7:5: The **BEAR**

"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a **bear**. It was raised up on **one side**, and had **three ribs** in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'"

Passive Verb:

"they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh.'"

- The bear in chapter 8 was **higher** on **one side** than the other but **no reason** is given.
- **Daniel 8:3, 4** describes a ram with two horns, **one horn was taller** than the other and the tallest one **came out last**.
- The two horns are identified as the kingdoms of the **Medes and Persians (Daniel 8:20)**.
- History proves that the **first three kings** of the Medo-Persian dynasty were Medes but all the **rest were Persians**. Thus the **tallest kingdom** came out last!!
- 1) **Lydia** (ancient Turkey/Anatolia) was conquered in **547**. 2) **Babylon**, was overcome in **539** and, 3) **Egypt**, was forced to submit in **525**.
- It bears noting that the book of **Daniel itself** identifies the second kingdom as Medo-Persia (**Daniel 5**).

The Leopard

Daniel 7:6: The LEOPARD

"After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Passive Voice:

". . . dominion was given to it". Notice that it does not say that 'it took over dominion' and certainly the bear would not have given it dominion.

- The leopard represents the third kingdom in the prophetic chain.
- A leopard is swift but a flying leopard with four wings is even swifter.
- No explanation is given for the four heads in Daniel 7.

What is left unexplained in Daniel 7 is fully explained in Daniel 8:5-8 where Daniel sees a he-goat that flies through the air without touching the ground and finishes off the ram. The goat has a notable horn on its head and when the horn is broken, four others arise in its place:

- The vision of Daniel 8:5-8 is fully explained in Daniel 8:21-22.
- The notable horn was the first king, Alexander the Great moved with great velocity over the earth and conquered the known world in only 9 years. He died in a drunken stupor when he was only 31 years of age.
- When Alexander the Great died he left no successor so his kingdom was divided into four kingdoms:

The Antigonids (Macedonia)

The Ptolomies (Egypt)

The Seleucids (Greece)

The Attalids (Pergamum)

- The book of Daniel itself identifies the he-goat as the kingdom of Greece (Daniel 8:21).

The Dragon Beast

Daniel 7:7: The DRAGON with ten horns

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns."

- The fourth beast represents a fourth kingdom that ruled after Greece, that was as strong as iron and more violent than the previous beasts

- As we shall see, the **ten horns** were **not on the head** of the fourth beast when it rose to power. The ten horns came up **after** the fourth beast had ruled for a **period of time**.
- We don't even have to go **outside the Bible** to know what the fourth beast represents. This **dragon beast with ten horns** attempted to kill the **male child** as soon as he was born and it was a ruler of the Roman Empire who attempted to do this.

The Little Horn

Daniel 7:8: The little horn rose **after** and among the **ten horns** and uprooted three of them:

*"I was considering the horns, and 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 eyes like the eyes of a man, and **a mouth** speaking pompous words."*

Three Stages of the Fourth Beast

Daniel 7:23, 24: The fourth beast has **three** consecutive stages and each of them **is ROMAN:**

*"Thus he said: The fourth beast shall be a [1] **fourth kingdom** on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who [2] **shall arise from** this kingdom and [3] **another shall rise after them**; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings."*

Three stages:

[1] THE DRAGON

[2] THE TEN HORNS

[3] THE LITTLE HORN

An Apostate System, not a Person

In our next lecture we will identify the **little horn**. We shall find that contrary to what most Protestants believe, the little horn is **not an individual** person but rather an **apostate religious system**.

There is one thing that I want to make absolutely **clear from the start**. There are scores of **sincere persons** within this apostate religious system who **love the Lord** and serve Him to the best of their knowledge and ability. But the system as an **organization** is **corrupt** and its condition is **irreversible**. The Bible describes this system with different names:

- The king of the **north** (Daniel 11)
- The **harlot** (Revelation 17)
- The **man of sin** (2 Thessalonians 2)
- The **little horn** (Daniel 7, 8)
- The **abomination** of desolation (Matthew 24)
- The **beast** (Revelation 13:1-10)
- The **antichrist** (1 John 2)

You might wonder how it is possible to **distinguish** individuals from the system when the individuals are within the system.

Perhaps the best answer to this question is found in the history of the **apostate Jewish Church** when Christ was on earth. The leadership of the **corporate church** composed of **Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees** was incorrigibly corrupt. In fact, the governing **Sanhedrin** on several occasions gathered in council to pronounce the death sentence against Jesus.

Jesus, in a **scathing but loving** rebuke of these leaders, pronounced **woes** upon them (see Matthew 23) calling them:

- Blind **guides**
- Whited **sepulchers**
- **Hypocrites**
- **Murderers**
- Generation of **vipers**
- **Serpents**

And then Jesus asked them how they would be able to escape the **condemnation of hell** and told them that the kingdom would be **taken from them** and given to the Gentiles (Matthew 23:43).

But there were **faithful leaders** and **members** within this apostate church:

- The **apostles**
- **Nicodemus** (a member of the ruling body)
- **Joseph of Arimatea** (who provided Jesus a tomb)
- The wise **Gamaliel** (who spared Peter and John the sentence of death)
- **Saul of Tarsus** (the persecutor of the church)
- The **3,000** that were baptized on the Day of Pentecost

We are told in **Acts 6:7** that shortly after the day of Pentecost, large numbers of **priests** and **members** of the apostate church became followers of Jesus and joined His church:

*“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the **disciples** multiplied **greatly** in Jerusalem, and a **great many** of the **priests** were obedient to the faith.”*

So in the following lecture I will be speaking about **a system**, not all of the **individuals** who are within the system. All that I ask is that you carefully **weigh** the evidence and then decide for yourself if what we have studied is **true**!

Lesson #2: Who is the Little Horn?

by Stephen Bohr

The Prophetic Chain

Review of the prophetic chain of Daniel 7:

- Babylon (605-539 BC)
- Medo-Persia (539-331 BC)
- Greece (331-168 BC)
- Roman Empire (168 BC-476 AD)
- Divided Roman Empire (476-538 AD)
- Little Horn (538-1798 AD)

Characteristics of the Little Horn

I want to share seven characteristics that will help us identify the little horn:

#1: The little horn arose after the ten horns were in place so it must have risen after the Roman Empire was divided.

#2: Because the little horn arose among the ten horns, it must have risen in western Europe. More specifically, it rose from the head of the fourth beast so it must be in some sense Roman.

#3: When the little horn rose to power it uprooted three of the ten kingdoms into which western Europe was divided.

Daniel 7:25 gives us four additional characteristics:

Daniel 7:25:

*“He shall speak **[#4] pompous words** against the Most High, shall **[#5] persecute the saints** of the Most High, and shall intend to **[#6] change times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a **[#7] time and times and half a time**.”*

#4: The horn spoke great words and blasphemies against the Most High.

#5: The horn persecuted the saints of the Most High.

#6: The horn even had the audacity to attempt to change God’s holy Law.

#7: The little horn ruled for time, times and the dividing of time.

The Little Horn Identified

Before identifying the power to which these characteristics point, I want to make something very clear as I have done before. It is not my intention **to offend anyone**. Remember that we are dealing with a **system or organization** and not all the **individuals** who are presently in the system. There are **millions of loving Christians** in this apostate religious organization that are unaware of what I am going to present.

Having said this, there is **only one power** in the world that fulfills **each and every one** of these specifications: The Roman Catholic **Papacy**. Let's examine **the evidence** point by point.

#1 In terms of **time**, the papacy did rise to power **after** the Roman Empire **had been divided** into ten kingdoms in the year **476 AD**.

- In the **fourth and fifth** centuries hosts of **barbarian tribes** invaded the Roman Empire from the north and **carved out** what had been the united empire. For example, the [1] **Anglo-Saxons** settled in England, the [2] **Alemanni** in Germany, the [3] **Lombards** in Italy, the [4] **Franks** in France, and the [5] **Visigoths** in Spain.
- In the **fourth** century **Constantine** had already moved the seat of the empire to **Constantinople** in the east. The fragmentation was completed in the year **476 AD** when the **last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus**, was deposed from the throne of the western empire.
- The **throne of the Caesar** in the western Roman empire from 476 AD onward was **vacant** and would be **filled** by the bishop of Rome, **the pope**.
- The **nations of Europe** today, each with their own **language** and **culture**, are the result of the division of what had been the empire.

#2 In terms of **geography**, the papacy did rise in **western Europe** among the ten kingdoms and more specifically from the head of the fourth beast—**Rome**.

- Its official name is the **Roman Catholic** papacy
- The **geographical** location of the papacy is in the ancient **city of Rome**
- The papacy's official language is **Latin**
- The papacy uses **Roman numerals** in its official documents
- The **architecture** of Vatican City is Roman
- The papacy **inherited** and transformed the **organizational system** of the Roman Empire into an **ecclesiastical empire**:

*"Within three centuries, the Roman Church had **transformed the administrative organization** of the Roman Empire **into an ecclesiastical system** of bishoprics, dioceses, monasteries, colonies, garrisons, schools, libraries, administrative centers, envoys, representatives, courts of justice, and a criminal system of intricate laws all under the direct control of the pope. His Roman Palace, the Lateran, became the **new Senate**. The new senators were the **cardinals**. The bishops who lived in Rome and the*

priests and deacons helped the pope to administer this **new imperium.**” (Malachi Martin, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Church*, p. 105)

- The papacy inherited many of its **religious beliefs and practices** from the pagan Roman empire including the observance of the **day of the Sun.**
- The name of the papal leader, ‘**supreme pontiff**’ (*Pontifex Maximus*), was borrowed **verbatim** from the title of the pagan Roman emperor.
- Scores of **historians** confirm that the Roman empire was **divided into ten kingdoms** and that the papacy **continued the legacy** of the Roman Empire:

“And now that the **temporal power** of the Roman Pontiffs **belongs to the past**, that the head of the Church must under heaven depend for its maintenance upon the **generosity of his spiritual children** throughout the world, that a usurper holds the throne from which the Pope ruled for a thousand years, while its rightful owner is a **prisoner in his own city**, it will be of interest from many points of view to review what Roman people and Rome were like **before 1870** and what they are **to-day**. Long ages ago, when Rome through the **neglect of the Western emperors** was left to the mercy of **barbarous hordes**, Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection and asked him to rule them; and thus in this simple manner, the best title of all to kingly right, commenced the **temporal sovereignty of the Popes**. And meekly stepping to the **throne of Caesar**, the Vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the **emperors and kings** of Europe were **to bow in reverence** through so many ages, from sentiments of respect for the dignity of his office and because he was the **only mediator** whom they recognized in their almost interminable wars.” (Source: *Two Romes*, by James P. Conroy, in *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Volume XXXVI (36), edited by James Andrew Corcoran, Patrick John Ryan, Edmond Francis Prendergast, 1911, pgs. 193-194.

“If we extend our view over the ruins of the **Western Empire**, such is the spectacle that meets us on every side . . . the Pax Romana has ceased; it is **universal confusion**. But wherever a bishop holds his court, religion protects all that is left of the ancient order. **A new Rome ascends slowly above the horizon**. It is the **heir of the religion** which it has overthrown; it assumes the **outward splendors** of the **Caesars** . . . 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.**” (W. F. Barry, *The Papal Monarchy*, pp. 45, 46)

“The Roman Church in this way privily pushed itself **into the place** of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the **empire has not perished**, but has only undergone a **transformation**. . . It is a political creation, and as imposing as a **World-Empire**, because [it is] the **continuation of the Roman Empire**. The Pope, who calls himself ‘King’ and ‘Pontifex Maximus,’ is **Caesar’s successor.**” (Adolph Harnack, *What is Christianity?* pp. 269-270)

#3 After the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 AD there were **three kingdoms** that were **rebellious** to the theology of the church. Between the year **476 and 538** AD the papacy

piggybacked on the eastern Roman emperors encouraging them to uproot the **three heretical kingdoms**

- The **Pope requested** the emperor to do something about the unorthodox **Heruli**. In response, the emperor sent **Theodoric**, king of the Ostrogoths to do battle with **Odoacer**, king of the **Heruli**. Odoacer was slain by Theodoric and the Heruli disappeared from history. The date was **493 AD**.
- Next on the list of undesirables were the **Vandals**. By request of the pope, Justinian sent his trusted general, **Belisarius** to do battle with the Vandals and in **534 AD** the Vandals were **uprooted** once and for all.
- But the **Ostrogoths** still remained. It is of great significance that in **533 A. D.** Justinian wrote a letter to **pope John** legitimizing him as the head of all the churches of east and west. This letter was included in **The Code of Justinian** which means that it had the **force of law**. In fact, the *Code of Justinian* was the standard **law of all Europe** for over one thousand years until it was replaced in the late **1700's** by the **Code of Napoleon**. Justinian's decree reads as follows:

*"Therefore, **we have exerted ourselves [the emperor]** to unite all the priests of the East and **subject them** to the See of Your Holiness. . . because **you are the head** of all the Holy Churches, for **We shall exert Ourselves in every way** (as has already been stated), to increase the honor and authority of your See. . ." (S. P. Scott, *The Civil Law*, vol. 12, pp. 11-13).*

The significance of this decree is that the Roman Emperor **was using the sword of civil power to legitimize** the spiritual authority of the Pope. The state was using its clout to proclaim that only the Pope was the **authentic spokesman** for orthodox Christianity. Though this decree was given in **533 A. D.** it could not be **fully enforced** until the rebel Ostrogoths were devastated and expelled from Rome in **538 A. D.**

#4 The papacy did speak great words and **blasphemies** against the Most High.

WHAT IS **BLASPHEMY**?

In order to answer this question, we must **allow the Bible** to define its own terms. The word does not describe, as some believe, an **infidel atheist** who will rule the world at the end of time, raise his **hand to heaven** and **openly defy** the living God. The Bible defines blasphemy in two ways:

Number 1: Blasphemy is when a **mere man** claims to have the power to **forgive sins**. When Jesus told **a paralytic** that his sins were forgiven, the religious leaders went ballistic:

Mark 2:7

*"Why does this Man speak **blasphemies** like this? Who can forgive sins but **God alone?**"*

In every Roman Catholic Church there are **confessionals** where sinners come to confess their sins to a **human priest** in the hopes of receiving **absolution**. St. Alphonsus **Liguori** described the power of the Roman Catholic priest:

"Were the **Redeemer** to descend into a church, and sit in a confessional to administer the sacrament of penance, and **a priest** to sit in another confessional, Jesus would say over each penitent, 'Ego te absolvo,' the priest would likewise say over each of his penitents, 'Ego te absolvo,' and the penitents of each would be **equally absolved.**" St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, p. 28.

The **Baltimore Catechism** concurs:

"The priest does not have to ask God to forgive your sins. The priest himself **has the power to do so** in Christ's name. Your sins are forgiven by the priest **the same as if** you knelt before Jesus Christ and told them to Christ Himself." Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 197.

It is well known that Pope Francis I has declared **December 8, 2015** to **November 20, 2016** as the **year of mercy**. He has stated that even women who have **aborted children** can be forgiven by the priest as long as their **repentance is sincere**.

Number 2: The Bible also defines blasphemy as a mere human being who **boastfully claims** to occupy **God's place on earth**. Jesus was accused of blasphemy for claiming to be God's representative on earth:

John 10:30-33:

"I and My Father are one." ³¹ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" ³³ The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for **blasphemy**, and because You, being a Man, **make Yourself God.**"

The papacy does claim that the pope is **Vicarius Christi** which means 'the one who occupies the place of Christ'. The pope has also been called **Vicarius Filii Dei** which means 'one who occupies the place of the Son of God.'

Some examples from church history:

In an **oration** offered to the Pope in the fourth session of the **Fifth Lateran Council** (1512) **Christopher Marcellus** stated:

"For thou art the shepherd, thou art the physician, thou art the director, thou art the husbandman; finally, thou art **another God on earth.**" (Labbe and Cossart, *History of the Councils*, Vol. XIV, col. 109).

PROMPTA BIBLIOTHECA:

"Moreover the **superiority and the power** of the Roman Pontiff by no means pertain only to the **heavenly** things, to the **earthly** things, and to the things **under** the earth, but are even over angels than whom **he is greater**. So that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, **they could be judged and excommunicated** by the Pope. For he is of so great dignity and power that he forms one and **the same tribunal** with Christ. So that whatever the Pope does, seems to **proceed from the mouth of God**, as according to most doctors, etc.

*“The Pope is as it were **God on earth**, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the **earthly** [the state] but also of the **heavenly kingdom** [the church].*

*“The Pope is of **so great authority and power** that he can **modify, explain, or interpret** even divine laws. The Pope can **modify** divine law, since his power is **not of man but of God**, and he acts as **vice-regent of God** upon earth with the most ample power of binding and loosing his sheep. Whatever the Lord God himself, and the Redeemer, is said to do, that **his vicar does**, provided that he does nothing contrary to the faith.” (Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica, Juridica, Moralis, Theologica nec non Ascetica, Polemica, Rubricistica, Historica*, article, ‘Papa’.)*

#5 There is abundant evidence that the papacy **did persecute** the saints of the Most High during the heyday of its power:

Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas

*“But on the part of the church is **mercy** in view of the conversion of them that err; and therefore she does not condemn **at once**, but ‘after the first and second admonition,’ as the apostle teaches. After that, however, if the man is still found pertinacious, the church, having no hope of his conversion, provides for the safety of others, cutting him off from the church by the sentence of **excommunication**; and further she leaves him to **the secular tribunal to be exterminated** from the world by death.” (Joseph Rickaby, S. J. (R. C.), *Aquinas Ethicus; or, The Moral Teaching of St. Thomas*, Vol. I, pp. 332, 333. London: Burns and Oates, 1892).*

The Hussites

Notice the words of **Pope Martin V** (1417-31), written in **1429** to the King of **Poland** commanding him to **exterminate the Hussites**:

*“Know that the interests of the Holy See, and those of your crown, make it a duty **to exterminate the Hussites**. Remember that these impious persons dare proclaim principles of **equality**; they maintain that all Christians **are brethren**, and that God has **not given to privileged men** the right of ruling the nations; they hold that Christ came on earth to **abolish slavery**, they call the **people to liberty**, that is to the annihilation of kings and priests.*

*While there is still time, then, turn your forces against Bohemia; **burn, massacre, make deserts** everywhere, for nothing could be more agreeable to God, or more useful to the cause of kings, than the **extermination of the Hussites**.” (Quoted in, Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 247).*

Persecution of the Waldensians

In the **15th century** (**1487**), Pope **Innocent VIII** proclaimed a Bull against the Waldensians. The original text of this Bull is found in the library of the University of Cambridge and an English translation can be found in John Dowling’s *History of Romanism* (1871 edition), book 6, chapter 5, section 62.

In the bull the pope referred to the Waldensians as ‘*that malicious and abominable sect of malignants*,’ and stated that if they ‘*refuse to abjure, [they should] be crushed like venomous snakes*.”

How could one forget the Piedmont Massacre of the year **1655**? On **January 25, 1655** the **Duke of Savoy** gave an edict that the Waldensians must convert to the Catholic faith or **leave the valleys** and have their **properties confiscated** within a few days. If they did not leave, they were subject to a **death decree**. The edict was proclaimed in the middle of the winter.

*“On **April seventeenth**, 15,000 soldiers invaded the valleys of the Piedmont. Thousands of Waldensians were murdered, tortured and enslaved. Hundreds who were able to escape to the most rugged areas of the mountains were caught and thrown off the jagged cliff of Mount Catelluzo near Torre Pellice.”* Salim Japas, *Herejia, Colon y la Inquisicion* (Siloam Springs, Arkansas: Creation Enterprises, 1992), pp. 62-63.

St. Bartholomew Massacre

One of the most infamous acts in the history of Roman Catholicism was the St. Bartholomew Massacre. It took place on **August 24, 1572** with the gleeful approval of **Pope Gregory XIII** and the priesthood.

At the tolling of a bell, Protestants [they were called **Huguenotes**] were slaughtered without mercy, not only in Paris but also throughout the rest of France. In the course of two months, over **70,000** men, women and children perished. The Huguenotes were the ‘**professionals**’ of the day. They were the ‘**crème de la crème**’ of France. At the news of the massacre, Pope Gregory XIII, attended by his **cardinals and other ecclesiastical dignitaries**, went in a long procession to the church of **St. Louis**, where the cardinal of Lorraine chanted a **Te Deum** [an anthem of praise to God]. A **medal was struck** to commemorate the massacre. On one side of the medal was the **face of Gregory XIII** and on the other is the image of the **destroying angel**.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition was established in the twelfth century and during the pontificate of **Innocent IV** (1241-1253), it was **refined**. In the papal bull *Ad Extirpanda* (1252), the following provisions were given the force of law:

- 1) **Torture** must be applied to heretics so as to secure confessions.
- 2) Those found guilty must be **burned at the stake**.
- 3) A **police force** must be established to serve the needs of the Inquisition.
- 4) A proclamation of **a crusade against all heretics in Italy**. Those participating in this crusade were to be extended the same privileges and indulgences as those who went on crusades to the Holy Land.
- 5) The heirs of heretics were to have their **goods confiscated as well**.

“Of eighty popes in a line from the thirteenth century on, not one of them disapproved of the theology and apparatus of the Inquisition. On the contrary, one after another added his own cruel touches to the workings of this deadly machine.” (Peter de Rosa, *Vicars of Christ*, pp. 175-176).

The 14th century inquisitor, Bernard Gui explained the purpose of the Inquisition:

*“... the objective of the Inquisition is to destroy heresy; it is not possible to destroy heresy unless you **eradicate the heretics**; and it is impossible to eradicate the heretics unless you also*

eradicate **those who hide them**, sympathize with them and protect them.” (Salim Japas, *Herejia, Colon y la Inquisicion* (Siloam Springs, Arkansas: Creation Enterprises, 1992), p. 20

Juan Antonio Llorente who himself was a member of the inquisition, **minutely documented** the atrocities that were committed by the papacy in the Spanish Inquisition.

Llorente wrote:

“I was secretary of the Inquisition in the court of Madrid in the years 1789, 1790 and 1791. I knew the establishment well enough **to refute it**. [It was] **vicious** in its origin, constitution and laws in spite of the apologies which have been written in its favor.” (Jean Antoine Llorente, *Historia Critica de la Inquisicion en Espana*, Madrid, 1822, pp. 6-7)

“The horrid conduct of this Holy Office [Inquisition] weakened the power and diminished the population of Spain by **arresting the progress** of the arts, sciences, industry and commerce, and by compelling multitudes of families to abandon the kingdom; by instigating the expulsion of the Jews and Moors, and by immolating on its **flaming shambles** more than **three hundred thousand** victims” (Quoted in, Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 244).

A few years ago I had the privilege of visiting the city of **Lima, Peru**. There was one place I had always wanted to visit in Lima—the palace of the **Inquisition**. You see, Latin America had **three places** where the Inquisition functioned in full force: **Colombia, Mexico** and **Peru**.

At the very entrance of the Palace there was a **large mural** that portrayed an **auto de Fe** in the **Plaza de Armas**. After our **tour guide** explained the parts of the mural, he took us into the **torture chamber**. I was amazed at how our young tour guide described **the methods** that were used to **torture and slay heretics** who disagreed with the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

As we entered the torture chamber on the right side there was the Strappado:

- The victim’s **wrists were bound behind their back** with a rope and then the loose end of the rope was **tossed over a beam**.
- The victim would then be **slowly raised** with the rope with his arms behind his back. When the victim was high above the ground the rope was **abruptly released** and then **stopped** just before the victim got to the ground thus **dislocating** his arms and shoulders.
- The tour guide explained that sometimes weights of up to **25 pounds** were bound to the victim’s feet to make the drop more precipitous and the dislocation more painful

Next on the right was the whipping post:

- With **hands and feet** in the **stocks** the prisoner was beaten a minimum of **50 times** and a maximum of **200 times** on the back with a whip.

A left-turn and on the left hand side was the Rack:

- The victim was **laid upon a table** face up with **arms and legs extended**. The victim’s **ankles and wrists** were then tied with **ropes** that were attached to pulleys at the four ends of the table.

- **Wheels** at **either end** of the board were **turned** pulling the **legs downward** and the **arms upward**. As the ropes got **tighter and tighter** the body was stretched in **opposite directions**.
- The victim was commanded to recant, the **shoulders, elbows, thighs and ankles** were **slowly** dislocated as the prisoner writhed in pain.

On the right hand side was the Garrote

- It was an instrument that **slowly strangled** the victim.
- The **hands and feet** were tied with rope to the arms and legs of the chair and a **noose was put around the neck**.
- In back of the chair was a **wheel** that worked as a **tourniquet**.
- The wheel was **slowly turned** and this **pulled the rope** tighter and tighter around the hands, feet and neck until the victim was **strangled**.

Water boarding was next:

- Another left and we are at a **bench** where the victim was **laid down**, his **nostrils were pinched** shut and water was poured down a **funnel** into the **victim's throat**.
- Sometimes a **cloth** was forced down the throat while **pouring the water** causing the sensation of **suffocation by drowning**.

Then we went down deep into **underground tunnels** where **dungeons** had been hewn into the rock. The **cubicles** were **barely larger than the person** who was placed in them. For days they were shut in by the **cold** and in **absolute darkness** with barely enough room to **wiggle** without their **families even knowing** where they were

As mentioned before, some more fortunate victims were taken to the **Plaza de Armas**, wood was placed **around their bodies**, they were chained to a **stake** and then they were **burned alive**

Other Thinkers

Cardinal **Robert Bellarmine** (1542-1621) of Counter-Reformation fame, wrote the following about punishment due heretics:

*"The only effective means against heretics is to convey them to that place provided for them as quickly as possible. In this way one is only doing them a favor **as the longer they are allowed to live**, the more heresies they will devise, and thus the more believers they will seduce, aggravating their own damnation."* (Quoted in, *Symposium on Revelation*, volume 2, p. 345).

In **Pius IX's** Encyclical and Syllabus (**December 8, 1864**) we find the following words:

*"**Cursed be** they who assert liberty of conscience and of worship, and such as maintain the church should not employ force. The **State has not the right** to leave every man free to embrace whatever religion he shall deem true."*

Or again, listen to the words of **Leo XIII** in his encyclical, *Libertas Humanan*:

*"From what has been said, it follows that it is **quite unlawful** to demand, to defend, or to grant unconditional freedom of thought, of speech, of writing, or of worship, as if these were so many rights **given by nature** to man."* Quoted in, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Students' Source Book*,

'Church and State,' Paragraph 496 (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1962), p. 273.

Notice the words of **Dr. Marianus de Luca**, a Jesuit, formerly professor of Canon Law at the **Gregorian University** in Rome:

*"The Catholic Church has **the right and duty to kill** heretics because it is by fire and sword that **heresy can be extirpated**. Mass excommunication is derided by heretics. If they are imprisoned or exiled, they **corrupt others**. The only recourse is to **put them to death**. Repentance cannot be allowed to save civil criminals; for the highest good of the church is the duty of the faith, and this cannot be preserved unless **heretics are put to death**."* (Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 426).

Dr. de Luca further remarked:

*"Heretics despise **excommunication** and say that that bolt is powerless; if you threaten them with a **pecuniary fine**, they neither fear God nor respect men, knowing that they will find fools enough to believe them and support them. If you **imprison** them or send them into **exile**, they corrupt those near them with their words and those at a distance with their books. So **THE ONLY REMEDY IS TO SEND THEM SOON TO THEIR OWN PLACE** [capitals are the author's]."*

And what does de Luca mean with the expression '**send them soon to their own place**'? He approvingly quotes Tanner:

*"The civil magistrate, by the command and commission of the Church, ought to punish the heretic with the **penalty of death**..."* (Marianus de Luca, *Institutes of Public Ecclesiastical Law*, (1901), volume 1, pp. 143, 261).

The Roman Catholic professor, **Alfred Baudrillart** makes the following comment about the role of the Church in the incitation of violence **during the 1260 years**:

*"She [the Church] has, and she **loudly proclaims** that she has, a 'horror of blood'. Nevertheless, when confronted by heresy she does not content herself with **persuasion**; arguments of an intellectual and moral order appear to her **insufficient** and she has recourse to **force**, to **corporeal punishment**, to **torture**. She creates tribunals like those of the **Inquisition**, she calls the **laws of the State to her aid**, if necessary she encourages **a crusade**, or a **religious war** and all her 'horror of blood' practically culminates into **urging the secular power** to shed it, which proceeding is almost more odious—for it is less frank—than shedding it herself.*

*Especially did she act thus in the sixteenth century with regard to **Protestants**. Not content to reform morally, to preach by example, to convert people by eloquent and holy missionaries, she lit in Italy, in the Low Countries, and above all in Spain the **funeral piles of the Inquisition**. In France under Francis I, and Henry II., in England under Mary Tudor, **she tortured heretics**, while both in France and Germany during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century if she did not actually begin, at any rate she encouraged and actively aided the **religious wars**." (Alfred Baudrillart, *The Catholic Church, the Renaissance and Protestantism*, trans., by Mrs. Philip Gibbs [London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1908], pp. 182, 183.*

Now notice the words of **Alexis M. Lepicier**, professor of sacred theology in the **Pontifical Urban College of the Propaganda** in Rome:

*“He who publicly avows a heresy and tries to pervert others by word or example, speaking absolutely, can not only be **excommunicated** but even **justly put to death**, lest he ruin others by pestilential contagion; for a bad man is worse than a wild beast, and does more harm, as Aristotle says. Hence, as it is **not wrong to kill a wild beast** which does great harm, so it must be right to **deprive of his harmful life a heretic** who withdraws from divine truth and plots against the salvation of others.” (Fr. Alexis M. Lepicier, *De Stabilitate et Progressu Dogmatis*, [printed at the official printing office in Rome in 1910], p. 194.*

The following words from ***The Tablet***, the official newspaper of the Roman Catholic diocese of Brooklyn, New York are very telling:

*“Heresy is an awful crime against God, and those who start a heresy are guiltier than they who are traitors to the civil government. If the State has the right to punish treason with death, the principle is the same which concedes to the spiritual authority the power of **capital punishment** over the arch-traitor to truth and divine revelation. . . A perfect society has the right to its existence. . . and the power of **capital punishment** is acknowledged for a perfect society. Now. . . the Roman Catholic Church is a perfect society, and as such has the right and power to take means to safeguard its existence.” (The Tablet, November 5, 1938).*

The Catholic Encyclopedia admits:

*“. . . judged by contemporary standards, the Inquisition, especially as it developed in Spain toward the close of the Middle Ages, can be classified only as one of the **darker chapters** in the history of the Church.”*

Papal apologies

St. Peter’s Basilica on the first Sunday of Lent, **March 12, 2000**, the Pope, in a carefully choreographed mass, leaning against the crucifix and with agonizing voice, seemed to apologize for the sins which the church has committed against **Protestants, Jews, non-Christians, immigrants, ethnic minorities, women, abused children and the unborn**. We quote the key portion of his homily:

*“We forgive and we ask forgiveness! . . . We cannot not recognize the betrayals of the Gospel committed by **some of our brothers**, especially during the **second millennium**. We ask forgiveness for the divisions between Christians, for the use of violence that **some** have resorted to in the service of truth and for the acts of dissidence and of hostility **sometimes** taken towards followers of other religions.” (As quoted in, *The New York Times*, “Pope Asks Forgiveness for Errors of the Church Over 2,000 Years,” Monday, March 13, 2000, Section A, pp. 1, 10*

*“The document should have put it in **bold print** that ‘children of the church’ includes **popes, cardinals and clergy**, and not just people in the pews. . . The pope had a great idea that some in the Vatican are obscuring with a fog machine.” (Quoted in the *New York Times* article referred to above, Section A, p. 10)*

Even more recently, Pope **Francis I** traveled to **Torre Pelici**, the citadel of the **Waldensians** and apologized for the **bitter persecutions** that were launched against them by the papacy.

On **June 22, 2015**, Pope Francis apologized to *“the oldest evangelical Church”* for the Catholic Church’s persecution during the Middle Ages.

“On the part of the Catholic Church, I ask your forgiveness, I ask it for the non-Christian and even inhuman attitudes and behavior that we have showed you. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us!”

Someone might object: “But the papacy does not persecute today!” True enough but the reason is not that she has **changed her principles** but rather that **her circumstances** have changed. In a future lecture we will see that she will do in the future what she did in the past.

#6 The papacy overtly claims that it had the power to **change God Law**

The reputable Roman Catholic encyclopedia ***Prompta Bibliotheca*** states:

*“... the pope can **modify** divine law, since his power is not of man, **but of God**, and he acts **in the place of God upon earth**, with the fullest power of binding and losing his sheep.” (Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca*, 8 volumes, vol. 2, article ‘Papa’).*

Even though **Roman Catholic Bibles** contain the second commandment, it is absent from **Roman Catholic catechisms**. In order to compensate the removal of one of the commandments in the catechisms, the papacy divides the tenth commandment into two parts.

Furthermore, although Roman Catholic Bibles contain the commandment to keep the seventh day Sabbath holy, the catechisms teach that the Sabbath has been changed to **Sunday** in honor of Christ’s resurrection.

I have **page upon page** of quotations from Roman Catholic **theologians, cardinals and popes** to the effect that Christ gave the Roman Catholic Church the right to change the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday.

St. Thomas Aquinas, a theologian unparalleled in the history of the Roman Catholic Church:

*“In the New Law the keeping of the Sunday **supplants** that of the Sabbath, not in virtue of the precept of the law, but through determination by the **church and the custom** of the Christian people.” (Summa Theologica of Thomas Aquinas, quoted in *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, pp. 205-206*

Lesson #3: The Sword and the Captivity

by Stephen Bohr

Review of the Chain

Review the prophetic **chain** in Daniel 7 from **605 BC** to **1798 AD** with special emphasis on the **three stages** of the fourth beast (a prophecy given in **550 BC**):

- Babylon (605-539 BC)
- Medo-Persia (539-331 BC)
- Greece (331-168 BC)
- **Roman Empire (168 BC-476 AD)**
- **Divided Roman Empire (476-538 AD)**
- **Little Horn (538-1798 AD)**

Six Characteristics

We covered **six characteristics** of the little horn and saw that they fit the Roman Catholic Papacy **to a 'T'**:

- Rises **after** the ten
- Rises in the **midst** of the ten
- Uproots **three**
- Speaks **blasphemies**
- **Persecutes** God's faithful people
- Thinks it can change the **Law** of God

The **seventh characteristic** we left for this lesson but before we go to point # 7 we need to underline one very important fact: The little horn of Daniel 7 is the **same power** as the beast of Revelation 13:1-10

The Little Horn = the Beast

As we begin our study of the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 it would be well for us to remember that the beast represents the **same power** as the **little horn** for at least **three reasons**:

- The little horn and the beast are in the same **exact spot** of the prophetic chain.
- The little horn and the beast perform the **same activities**.
- The little horn and the beast rule for the **same period of time**.

Revelation 13:1, 2: The **same sequence** of events but in **reverse order**:

*“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast that I saw was like a [1] **leopard**, his feet were like the feet of a [2] **bear**, and his mouth like the mouth of a [3] **lion**. The [4] **dragon** [the same dragon that tried to kill the male child] gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.”*

Revelation 13:7, 5: The same actions: War with **the saints** and **great words**:

*“It was granted to him to make **war with the saints** and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. . . “And he was given a mouth speaking great things and **blasphemies**. . .”*

Revelation 13:5: The **same period of time**

*“And he was given a mouth speaking great things and **blasphemies**, and he was given authority to continue for **forty-two months**.”*

Characteristic # 7: The Time Period

#7 Remember that we left identifying characteristic **#7 pending**: The little horn ruled for ‘time, times and the dividing of time’

Fact #1: What is meant by the **word ‘times’**? **Daniel 4** explains that the word ‘times’ refers to **years**. Thus the expression means **three and a half years**.

Alright, the word time, times and the dividing of time means 3.5 years but the question is this: Is this time period **literal or is it symbolic**?

Fact #2: Everything in Daniel 7 is symbolic so the time period must also be symbolic: Waters, winds, lion, bear, leopard, dragon, wings, heads, horns, ribs, iron teeth.

Fact #3: The expression ‘time, times and the dividing of time’ has a **symbolic flavor**. It is obvious that this is not the **usual way** of expressing time. Three and a half years is **normally** expressed as three years and six months (**James 5:17**)

Fact #4: I have written a document titled **“Twenty Reasons for the Year/Day Principle”** that is available from Secrets Unsealed.

Fact #5: The Bible uses the **year for a day principle** in prophetic passages:

Numbers 14:34

*“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, and ye shall know my breach of promise.”*

Ezekiel 4:6

*“And when you have accomplished them, lie again on your right side, and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed you each **day for a year**.”*

Fact #6: The Bible does **not tell us** how many days there are in a year. However, the Bible does tell us **two things** that help us discover **how many days there are in a year**:

- That there are **12 months** in a year (**Esther 8:12**)
- That the biblical month has **30 days**

- If the biblical month has **30 days** and there are **12 months** to a year then all we have to do is multiply **30 times 12** and the result is **360**. So the biblical year has 360 days.

Let me share **two reasons** why the biblical month has 30 days:

First Reason: Because of the **three ways** that this time period is described in Daniel and Revelation:

- Time, times and the dividing of time (**Daniel 7**)
- 42 months (**Revelation 13**)
- Also **1260 days** (**Revelation 12**).

Revelation 12 proves two things:

- **Number One:** The 1260 days and the ‘time, times and the dividing of time’ is the same period.
- **Number Two:** The biblical year has **360 days** and the biblical month has **30 days**.

Second Reason comes from very early in world history:

Genesis 7:11-12

*“In the **six hundredth** year of Noah's life, in the **second month**, the **seventeenth day** of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.”*

Genesis 8:3-5

*“And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the **hundred and fifty days** the waters decreased. ⁴ Then the ark rested in the **seventh month**, the **seventeenth day** of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.”*

End of the Third Stage: Wound and Captivity

Let's review the three stages of the fourth beast:

- The dragon ruling by **itself** (168 BC – 476 AD)
- The dragon with the **ten horns** 476 AD – 538 AD)
- The dragon with the **little horn** (538 AD – 1798 AD)

The little horn ruled from **538 to 1798**. **Revelation 13:10** explains what happened in February of the year **1798**.

Revelation 13:10: When the 42 months concluded, the third stage of the dragon came to an end and two things happened to the little horn/beast:

- It was wounded by the **sword**
- It was taken into **captivity**

*“He who leads into **[1] captivity** shall go into captivity; he who **[2] kills with the sword** must be killed with the sword.”*

The correct understanding of this prophecy revolves around the meaning of the **sword** and

the captivity.

Let's begin with the meaning of the sword. What is represented by **the sword** that gave the deadly wound to the beast and what is the meaning of the **deadly wound**? The Bible describes **two swords**.

The First Sword

Ephesians 6:17: God has given the **church a sword**, the word of God, and this sword is used by **preaching**.

*“And take the helmet of salvation, and the **sword** of the Spirit, which is the **word of God**.”*

It is generally **assumed** that the sword in Revelation 13:10 represents **the Bible** and that the protestant reformation gave the papacy its deadly wound with the clarion call of *Sola Scriptura*. But this is **not possible** for three reasons:

- The sword that the beast **used to kill** is the same sword that gave it the deadly wound and he papacy **did not use the Bible to kill**.
- The Bible that was brought to light by the **protestant reformation** cannot be the sword that wounded the beast because the protestant reformation began in **1517** and not in **1798**.
- The beast was taken **captive** when it was wounded by the sword. If the papacy had been led into captivity in 1517 then it would **not have ruled 1260 years**.

Symbols are Flexible

If the sword in Revelation 13:10 is not the Bible, then what was the sword that wounded the beast? We must remember that **symbols are flexible** in the Bible. That is to say, symbols do not always have the same meaning. The **context** must dictate the meaning.

- **Lion** (can represent Christ, Satan, Babylon and Judah)
- **Leaven** (can represent sin and the Holy Spirit)
- **Sons of God** (in Job they are angels and in Genesis they are the righteous)

Second Sword

Romans 13:1-4: The second sword is given to the **civil power**:

*“Let every soul be subject to the **governing authorities**. For there is no **authority** except from God and the **authorities** that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the **authority** resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves for **rulers** are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the **authority**? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same for he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear **the sword** in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”*

The civil power uses this sword by punishing violations of civil laws with **finer, community service, confiscation of goods, imprisonment** and in some states, **death**.

Did not Close its Doors

During the 1260 years the papacy **used the sword** of the civil powers to kill those who did not agree with its **beliefs and practices**. But in 1798 France **took away** the sword of civil power and gave the papacy its deadly wound. France had been the **first nation** to give the papacy the sword and now it was the first to take it away.

The deadly wound with the sword **does not mean** that the Roman Catholic church **closed its doors** in 1798 and ceased to **function as a church**. The fact is that after pope **Pius VI** was deposed the Roman Catholic Church, as a church, **continued to function**. The faithful continued baptizing their **infants**, attending **mass** and **confessing their sins** to the priest. What was taken from the papacy was the power to use **the civil sword** to persecute as it had done in the past.

Historians and the Deadly Wound

*"The **papacy** was **extinct [not the church]; not a vestige of its existence [of the papacy]** remained; and among all the Roman Catholic powers **not a finger was stirred** in its defense **[because it no longer had the support of the state]**. The Eternal City had no longer prince **[state]** or pontiff **[church]**; its bishop was a dying captive in foreign lands; and the decree was already announced that **no successor** would be allowed in its place." George Trevor, *Rome: From the Fall of the Western Empire* pp. 439, 440.*

*"No wonder that half of Europe thought Napoleon's veto would be obeyed, and that with the Pope **the Papacy [not the church]** was **dead**." (Joseph Rickaby, *Lectures on the History of Religion*, 'The Modern Papacy,' volume 3, p. 1.*

*"Multitudes imagined that **the papacy [not the church]** was **at the point of death** and asked, would Pius VI be the last pontiff, and if the close of the eighteenth century would be signaled by **the fall** of the papal dynasty." T. H. Gill, *The Papal Drama*, book 10.*

*"... **the Papacy [not the church]** had suffered its deepest humiliation. . . [and] appeared to be **annihilated** . . . The Revolution also dealt it the **wound** which, it seemed did not want to **heal** until **far into** the twentieth century." (M. Weitlauff, quoted in, Frank B. Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation*, volume 2 (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 1992), p. 337*

*"The object of the French directory was the **destruction of the pontifical government, [not the church]** as the irreconcilable enemy of the republic . . . The aged pope **[Pius VI]** was summoned to **surrender the temporal government [not the church]**; on his refusal, he was dragged from the altar . . . His rings were torn from his fingers, and finally, after declaring **the temporal power abolished**, the victors carried the pope prisoner into Tuscany, whence he never returned (1798)." George Trevor, *Rome: From the Fall of the Western Empire* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1868), pp. 439, 440.*

End of the Third Stage: The Captivity

What is meant by the **captivity** of the beast?

The captivity of the beast is **usually** explained as **Pope Pius VI** being taken captive to France in 1798 where he **died in exile**. But the meaning is much broader. We must remember that the beast does not represent **any pope in particular** but rather **the entire system** that ruled

for 1260 years, from 538-1798 AD. The **entire system** was taken **captive** and thrown into prison in 1798.

While the civil power lent the papacy the power of the sword to impose its doctrines and practices the papacy was **free and alive**. But when it **lost the ability** to use the civil sword, it was **wounded and bound**.

The **best parallel** to understand the captivity of the beast is found in the book of **Revelation itself**. In the **final days** of earth's history Satan will be alive and free because he is able to influence the **civil powers** of the world to do his bidding. Satan has always accomplished his purposes by **using the rulers** of the world. We can see this in **Revelation 12** where the dragon stood before the woman to devour the child as soon as he was born. The instrument that Satan used to attempt this was **Herod**, a civil ruler of the Roman Empire. Satan is **well and free** now because the kings of the earth are at his disposal.

But when Jesus comes, all the **kings of the earth** that supported Satan's agenda will die (Revelation 19:21). Thus Satan will receive a **deadly wound** and will be cast into the prison of **inactivity**. But after the thousand years the wicked kings will resurrect and they will **once again** give Satan their support. In this way Satan's wound will be **healed** and he will be **released** from his prison (Revelation 20:1-3, 7-9). In short, when Satan loses the support of the kings of the earth at the second coming he is **wounded and in captivity** but when he regains their support after the millennium he is **healed and free** of captivity.

Edward Manning on the Captivity

Cardinal Henry **Edward Manning** understood what the binding and unbinding of the papacy means. He describes what happened when the barbarians invaded the western empire and the roman emperors vacated Caesar' throne and went to the east:

*"Now the **abandonment of Rome** was the **liberation** [because there was no longer an emperor to restrain them] of the pontiffs. Whatsoever claims to obedience the emperors may have made, and whatsoever compliance the Pontiff may have yielded, the whole previous relation, anomalous, and annulled again and again by the vices and outrages of the emperors, was finally dissolved by a **higher power**. The providence of God permitted a succession of **irruptions**, Gothic, Lombard, and Hungarian, to desolate Italy, and to **efface from it every remnant of the empire**. The pontiffs found themselves **alone**, the **sole fountains of order, peace, law, and safety**. And from the hour of this providential **liberation**, when, by a divine intervention, the **chains fell off** from the hands of the successor of St. Peter [because there was no longer any civil ruler to restrain], as once before from his own, no sovereign has ever **reigned in Rome** except the Vicar of Jesus Christ." Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, Preface, pp. xxviii, xxix. London: Burns and Lambert, 1862*

*"It [the papacy] waited until such a time as God should break its **bonds** asunder, and should **liberate it from subjection to civil powers**, and **enthroned it** in the possession of a **temporal sovereignty** of its own." Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ (London: Burns & Lambert, second edition, 1862), pp. 11-13*

*"I say, then, that it was God's own act which **liberated** His Vicar upon earth **from subjection to temporal power**; and that for **twelve hundred years** the Bishops of Rome have **reigned** as temporal princes." P 16*

*“The conversion of the empire to Christianity, and then its **removal**, its banishment into the far East, **freed** the Vicar of Jesus Christ **from temporal subjection**; and then, by the action of the same Providence, he was clothed with the prerogatives of a **true and proper local sovereignty over that state and territory** and people so committed to his charge. From that hour, which I might say was fifteen hundred years ago, or, to speak within limit, I will say was **twelve hundred**, the Supreme Pontiff has been a **true and proper sovereign**, exercising the prerogatives of **royalty** committed to him by the will of God over the people to whom he is father in all things both **spiritual and temporal**.” P. 182*

Source: *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, by Henry Edward Manning, D.D. (appointed Archbishop of Westminster in 1865 and Cardinal in 1875), second edition with a preface, published in 1862 in London by Burns & Lambert, 17 & 18 Portman Street.*

In 2 Thessalonians 2 the apostle Paul had already explained what would happen when the **restraint** of the emperor and the empire was removed: The **man of sin** would sit in the temple of God—the church—claiming to occupy the **place of God**.

The Fourth Stage: The Wound is Healed

Revelation 13:3: So, after **ruling for 1260** years, the papacy received a deadly wound and was led into **captivity** when the French government **took away the sword** of civil power. But prophecy affirms that the **wound will heal** and the papacy **will be freed** from her captivity to exercise global power. The **entire world** will wonder after the beast.

*“And I saw one of his heads as if it had been **mortally wounded**, and his deadly wound **was healed**. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.”*

How will the wounded beast recover the **sword** that it lost and how will it be freed from its **captivity**?

What nation in its **right mind** would restore the sword of **civil power** and **release** this system from captivity?

The answer is that it is the **elephant in the room** and hardly anyone can see it because their prophetic method has them looking in the wrong place!

Lesson #4: But He Spoke Like a Dragon

by Stephen Bohr

Review the Prophetic Chain

Review the prophetic **chain** in Daniel 7 from **605** BC to **1798** AD (a prophecy given in **550** BC):

- Babylon (605-539 BC)
- Medo-Persia (539-331 BC)
- Greece (331-168 BC)
- Roman Empire (168 BC-476 AD)
- Divided Roman Empire (476-538 AD)
- **Little Horn/Beast (538-1798 AD)**
- **Deadly Wound/Captivity in 1798**
- Does the **prophetic chain continue** after 1798?

The Beast from the Earth

Revelation 13:11: In Revelation the verse that begins a **new sections** gives the starting and ending point. This verse summarizes the **entire career** of the land beast. That is to say, the beast does not speak like a dragon **at its beginning** but rather at its end. For **much of its career** it is characterized by the two horns like a lamb but **at the end** of its history it will speak like a dragon while it still has the horns on its head.

*“Then I saw another beast coming up out of **the earth**, and he had **two horns** like a **lamb** and spoke **like a dragon**.”*

It is clear that this beast has a **positive** and a **negative** side. The two lamblike horns constitute the **positive or favorable side** of the land beast while the dragon’s voice is the **negative or unfavorable side**. The two lamblike horns indicate that while the earth beast **professes** to believe in the two kingdoms that Jesus believed in it **contradicts its profession** in actual practice.

What nation is represented by this beast from the earth?

Characteristics of the Land Beast

Characteristic #1: It is universally agreed among students of apocalyptic prophecy that **beasts** represent **kingdoms** or **nations**. In the book of Daniel, the [1] lion, the [2] bear, the [3] leopard, the [4] dragon, the [5] ram and the [6] he-goat all represent **nations** or empires.

The noted Bible commentator, **Adam Clarke** wisely remarked about this lamb-horned beast:

*“As a beast has already been shown to be the **symbol of a kingdom** or empire, the rising up of this second beast must consequently represent the rising up of **another empire**.”*

Characteristic #2: The **Historical flow** of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13:1-10 **reveals the time** in the prophetic chain when the beast from the earth would rise to power:

- Lion: Babylon (605-539 BC)
- Bear: Medes and Persians (539-331 BC)
- Leopard: Greece (331-168 BC)
- Dragon: Rome (168 BC-476 AD)
- Ten Horns: Divided Rome (476 AD)
- Little horn/Sea Beast: Papal Rome during its 1260-year stage (538-1798 AD)
- Little Horn/Beast **wounded** with the sword and sent into **captivity** in **1798**
- **Immediately after** the deadly wound, the beast from the earth **sprouts up**
- We are **now** in the deadly **wound/captivity stage** from 1798 till the present (secular governments restrain)
- **Yet to occur:** The deadly **wound will be healed** when the secular governments will **remove** the restraint)

Characteristic #3: The land beast rose at the time **when** the first beast received its deadly wound and was led into captivity in 1798.

Revelation 13:10, 11:

*“He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. **Then** I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.”*

Characteristic #4: The **earth** must represent a **sparsely populated** area because all of the other beasts arose from the sea of multitudes, nations, tongues and peoples (Revelation 17:15; Isaiah 17:12, 13). In Revelation 13:11 there is no reference to **waters, winds** or **savage beasts**. The land beast **did not have to war** against a **previous empire**.

Daniel J. Boorstin (for many years the librarian of Congress) in his **1975 Reith Lectures** in London stated:

*“... the **vacancy** of North America [was] to prove to be its peculiar promise to the world. . . **Emptiness** was America’s special fertility.”* Quoted in *Signs of the Times*, October, 1976, p. 25

Characteristic #5: The land beast rose **like a plant in silence** and not in the midst of tumult of nations and war. It was **just sprouting** in 1798. The expression ‘coming up’ is used in the **Parable of the Sower** to describe the sprouting of plants:

Matthew 13:7:

*“And some fell among thorns, and the thorns **sprang up** and choked them.”*

*“The history of the United States was separated by a beneficent Providence from the wild and cruel history of the rest of the continent, and like a **silent seed** we grew into **an empire**.”* G. A. Townsend, *The New World Compared with the Old*, quoted in *“Why America Happened,”* *Signs of the Times*, October 1976, p. 26

Characteristic #6: The four beasts of Daniel 7 arose **from the sea** (Daniel 7:2; 13:1, 2). The first two beasts were **Asiatic** powers (Babylon and Medo-Persia). The next two beasts were **European** powers (Greece and Rome). The land beast with lamblike horns could not then rise in **Europe or Asia**.

The beast with lamblike horns **rose from the earth** and thus it must have risen in a **different place** than the first four beasts. The fulfillment of prophecy seems to move from **east to west**, so this nation must arise **further west** than the nations of Daniel 7. Notably, the **American continent** is directly west of Europe.

Characteristic #7: The **territory** in which this nation later arose, **provided refuge** for the woman who was persecuted by the sea beast during the **1260 years** (Revelation 12:13-16).

Characteristic #8: Later in its history this nation would grow into a **worldwide superpower economically** (forbidding to buy or sell), **militarily** (enforcing the mark of the beast on pain of death) and **politically** (leading all the nations of the world to worship the first beast).

Population of the United States:

- 1701: 260,000
- 1776: 2.8 million
- 1800: 5,236,000
- 1900: 76,212,000
- 1950: 151,325,000
- 2016: Over 340 million

Characteristic #9: Whereas the beasts of Daniel 7 ruled in succession, the land beast is **contemporaneous** or **co-existent** with the sea beast but the sea beast is much **older**.

Characteristic #10: While the land beast has **two lamblike horns** it will end up speaking like a **dragon**. Who is the dragon and what are the lamblike horns?

The Dragon

Revelation 13:11: Speaks **like a dragon** and the dragon in Revelation represents Satan working through **Rome**:

*“Then I saw another beast coming up out of **the earth**, and he had **two horns** like a **lamb** and spoke [1] **like a dragon**.”*

Dragon Stage #1:

It was **Satan** who stood next to the woman to **devour her child** as soon as He was born. But Satan operated through the instrumentality of **Herod**, a ruler of the **Roman Empire**. Satan also used the power of Rome to **condemn Jesus** to death (Revelation 12:3 [Daniel 7:23] Matthew 2:16).

Dragon Stage #2:

When the Roman Empire disintegrated, it gave its **seat**, its **power** and its **great authority** to the beast (Revelation 13:2) and then the beast persecuted the woman for 1260 years. Thus the papacy continued to exercise the powers of the dragon—Satan and Rome.

Dragon Stage #3:

Revelation 13:11 informs us that the beast from the earth will speak like a dragon. Thus the land beast will not only be a spokesman for Satan but also **Satan working through Rome**. And so, the **dragon**, the **sea beast** and the **land beast** are all agents of Satan operating through **Rome**.

An Ally of the First Beast

In contrast to the previous beasts, the land beast becomes an **ally** of the first and **helps it recover** its power. Thus the land beast will become the first beast's **enforcer** and help its **wound to heal**. It will force people to worship the beast, the image and to receive the mark.

Revelation 13:12: All the **authority of the first beast** on its behalf and makes **all worship** the first beast.

*"And he [2] **exercises all the authority** of the **first beast** [3] **in his presence**, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to [4] **worship the first beast**, whose deadly wound was healed."*

Revelation 13:14: **Makes an image** of and to the first beast. It will be a **reflection of the first beast**, a union of **church and state**

*"And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth [5] **to make an image to the beast** who was **wounded by the sword** and lived."*

Revelation 13:16: It will enforce the **mark of the beast**.

*"He **causes** all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, [6] **to receive a mark** on their right hand or on their foreheads."*

The Two Lamblike Horns

What we want to **especially focus** on the two horns like a lamb on the head of this beast. The **closest parallel** to the beast with two lamb-like horns is found in Daniel 8:3:

Daniel 8:3: One **ram** with **two horns**

*"Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was **a ram** which had **two horns**, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last."*

Daniel 8:20: The **two horns** represent **two kingdoms** in **one nation**, the **Medes and Persians**

*"The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the **kings [kingdoms] of Media and Persia**."*

Matthew 22:19-21: **Which two** kingdoms did Jesus, **the Lamb**, recognize?

*"Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius. ²⁰ And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" ²¹ They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to **Caesar** the things that are Caesar's, and to **God** the things that are God's."*

Jesus Separated the Two Kingdoms

Matthew 4:8-10: Jesus refused to rule over the kingdoms of this world

*"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the **kingdoms of the world** [same expression as in **John 18:36**] and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God and Him only you shall serve.'"*

John 18:36: Jesus recognized two separate kingdoms in one nation. Pilate recognized the same when he told the Jews to judge Jesus according to their law.

*"Jesus answered, "**My kingdom** is not of **this world**. If My kingdom were **of this world**, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now **My kingdom is not from here**."*

- Jesus called His kingdom 'the kingdom of heaven' or the 'kingdom of the church'.
- He **never appealed** to the **Roman state** to aid Him in the preaching of His message.
- He **rebuked James and John** when they wished to destroy the Samaritan villages that refused to allow Jesus to pass through them.
- He refused to be made king after He fed **the 5,000**.
- He severely **rebuked Peter** for using his sword to defend Jesus when the temple guard came to arrest Him. Jesus did not come to take over the reins of the state.

Luke 17:20-21: Jesus **did not come** to take over the reins of civil power but to implant the principles of His kingdom in the human heart:

*"Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation [**with an external display of power**]; ²¹ nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is **within you**."*

Ellen White's analysis of Luke 17:20, 21:

*"The kingdom of God comes not with **outward show**. The gospel of the grace of God, with its spirit of self-abnegation, can never be in harmony with the spirit of the world. The two principles are antagonistic. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" 1 Corinthians 2:14.*

*But today in the religious world there are multitudes who, as they believe, are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and **temporal dominion**. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdoms of this world, the ruler in its courts and camps, its legislative halls, its palaces and market places. They expect Him to rule through **legal***

enactments, enforced by human authority. Since Christ is not now here in person, they themselves will undertake to act in His stead, to execute the laws of His kingdom. The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ. They would have received Jesus, had He been willing to establish a **temporal dominion**, to enforce what they regarded as the laws of God, and to make them the expositors of His will and the agents of His authority. But He said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36. He would not accept the earthly throne.

The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses--extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet **the Saviour attempted no civil reforms**. He attacked no **national abuses**, nor condemned the **national enemies**. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept **aloof from earthly governments**. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in **merely human and external measures**. To be efficient, the cure must reach men **individually**, and must **regenerate the heart**." *DA*, pp. 509, 510

So, clearly, Jesus the Lamb recognized the existence of **two kingdoms, separate** from one another. So the two lamblike horns on the head of the land beast represent **two kingdoms** in one nation. You might say: The United States is certainly **one nation** but does it have **two kingdoms**?

The United States ratified its Declaration of Independence in **1776**, its Constitution in **1787** and its Bill of Rights in **1791** AD. Did the **Founding Fathers** recognize **two kingdoms** in **one nation**?

Lesson #5: Congress Shall Make no Law

by Stephen Bohr

Constitutional Fathers and the Bible

Even though the Founding Fathers of the United States were **not churchgoers**, they were well acquainted with the **Bible** and with **history**.

#1 They had great admiration for Christ and knew all about His **trial, sentencing and execution** by a union of the **apostate Jewish Church** with the Roman State.

#2 They were also well aware of the persecution that befell the **apostolic church** at the hands of the Roman State by the instigation of the **apostate Jewish Church**.

#3 They knew about how the **papacy persecuted** those who disagreed with its doctrines and practices.

#4 They knew all about the **Colonial period** where people who were not member of the established religion were deprived of their civil and religious liberty.

The Founding Documents

The emergence of the United States as a nation cannot be seen in a vacuum. It must be seen **within the preceding historical context** of the experience of **Jesus**, the **early church**, the **Colonial period** and the **1260-years** of papal supremacy.

The documents that founded the United States are remarkable indeed. Shortly before 1798, in **1776**, the ***Declaration of Independence*** affirmed that all men are created equal and have certain **inalienable rights** among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In **1787** the **Constitution** of the United States was ratified that established a government **of** the people, **by** the people and **for** the people.

And in **1791** the **Bill of Rights** (the first Ten Amendments to the Constitution) was ratified which guarantees **religious and civil liberties**.

All of these documents were ratified **immediately before** the papacy received its deadly wound in **1798**. Just as prophecy predicted, God, in His providence, was preparing the **next world super power** to appear on the stage even as the previous power **was about to be** mortally wounded. The United States would prove to be the **perfect place** to keep the beast wounded and in captivity in order to facilitate the preaching of the three angels' message to the world with full religious freedom.

Two Kingdoms in One Nation

An examination of the writings of the constitutional Fathers reveals that they firmly believed in the existence of **two kingdoms** in the **United States** that were to forever **remain separate**. According to their view the church was to use the **spiritual sword** of the Spirit to persuade through the preaching of the Word while the state was to use the **material sword** to preserve the civil order.

The **new nation** was established upon **two great principles** that were in turn based on the idea of **two separate kingdoms**:

- **Republicanism** (representative civil government with the civil sword)
- **Protestantism** (representative religious government with the religious sword)

During the Middle Ages all civil matters were decided and imposed by the **king** and all religious matters were decided and enforced by the **pope**. The power flowed from **top to bottom**. When the king spoke in civil matters and the pope spoke in religious matters, the people were simply expected to **obey without question**.

The constitutional fathers established a **revolutionary system** of government that flowed from **the bottom up**—a government **of the people, by the people and for the people** in which citizens would enjoy full civil and religious liberty.

The **foundational idea** behind this concept was that of **two kingdoms in one nation**, each with its own sword and operating separate from one another. This was one of the most revolutionary experiments in the history of the world. Ellen White, who was born only **29 years** after the **deadly wound** wrote:

*“The **founders** of the nation wisely sought to guard against the **employment of secular power** on the part of the church, with its inevitable result--intolerance and persecution.” GC, p. 442*

In this way the founding fathers **rejected the Roman Catholic view** that it is legitimate for the church to use the power of the state to enforce its beliefs and practices. Instead, the Founding Fathers established a government that **returned to the view of church and state** that had characterized Jesus and the earliest church, one that separated church and state and guaranteed freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.

Let’s take a look at several statements from the writings of the Founders of the Nation.

George Washington

George Washington was the most important of the founders. He was:

- The **Liberator** of the United States from **British rule**
- The **first president** of the United States
- The person who presided over the **Constitutional Convention**

The **Baptist Delegation of Virginia** wrote a letter to Washington on **August 8, 1789** **congratulating** him for being elected the first president of the United States and **asking him** if the Constitution that had been ratified in **1787 without a Bill of Rights** was sufficient to guarantee civil and religious liberty.

Washington **wrote back**, reassuring the Baptist churches in Virginia that the new Constitution would provide **sufficient guarantees** of religious freedom, despite the absence of a Bill of Rights. Here is George Washington's response to the United Baptist churches of Virginia, also known as the **Baptist Delegation**:

*"If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution framed by the convention where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the religious rights of **any ecclesiastical society**, certainly I **would never have placed my signature on it**; and if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish **effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution**. For, you doubtless remember, I have often expressed my sentiments that any man, conducting himself as a **good citizen [civil kingdom]** and being **accountable to God alone for his religious opinions [religious kingdom]**, ought to be **protected** in worshiping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience."*

Benjamin Franklin

*"When religion is good, I conceive that it will **support itself**; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for the **help of the civil powers**, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of it being **a bad one**."* (Quoted in Clifford Goldstein, *Day of the Dragon*, p. 77)

Thomas Jefferson

I have had the privilege of visiting the **Jefferson Memorial** in Washington D. C. several times. **Etched** on the white marble of the Monument are the following words:

*"Almighty God hath created the **mind free**. All attempts to influence it by **temporal punishment or burdens**. . . are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion. . . No man shall be **compelled** to frequent or support any religious worship or ministry or shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but all men **shall be free** to profess and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion. I know but one code of morality for men whether acting singly or collectively."*

Jefferson once wrote:

*"The **legitimate powers of government** extend to such acts **only** as are **injurious to others**. It does me no injury for my neighbor to say that there are twenty gods, or no gods. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg."* (Thomas Jefferson, *Writings*, p. 285)

Jefferson also wrote in **1782**:

*"It is error alone which needs the support of government. **Truth can stand by itself**."* (Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on Virginia*, 1782; from George Seldes, ed., *The Great Quotations*, Secaucus, New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1983, p. 363)

Jefferson warned about the dangers of the **clergy using the power of the state** to enforce religion:

*"The **clergy**, by getting themselves established by law and **ingrafted into the machine of government**, have been a very formidable engine against the **civil and religious** rights of man." (Letter to J. Moor, 1800).*

*“History, I believe, furnishes **no example** of a **priest-ridden people maintaining a free civil government**.” (Letter to von Humboldt, 1813)*

*“In every country and in every age, **the priest has been hostile to liberty**. He is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own.” (Letter to H. Spafford, 1814)*

Danbury Baptism Association

The Danbury Baptist Association of Connecticut wrote to President Thomas Jefferson on **October 7, 1801**, to complain about the **infringement** of their religious liberty by their **state legislature**:

*“What religious privileges we enjoy (as a minor **[minority]** part of the State) we enjoy as favors **granted**, and not as **inalienable rights**: and these favors we receive at the expense of such **degrading acknowledgments**, as are inconsistent with the rights of freemen.”*

In a letter addressed to the **Danbury Baptist Association in January of 1802**, Thomas Jefferson expressed his understanding of the **first two clauses** of the first amendment by using the **metaphor of the wall** which he most likely borrowed from Roger Williams:

*“Believing with you **[the Danbury Baptists]** that **religion** is a matter which lies solely between Man and his God, that he owes account to none other for **his faith** or **his worship**, that the **legitimate powers** of government reach **actions only**, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should “make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;” thus **building a wall of separation between Church and State**.”*

James Madison Statements

James Madison, who is called the ‘**Father of the Constitution**,’ expressed his views on the relationship between religion and the government:

*“There is **not a shadow of right** in the general government to **intermeddle with religion**. Its **least interference** with it **[religion]** would be a most flagrant usurpation. I can appeal to my uniform conduct on this subject that I have warmly supported religious freedom.”*

Madison affirmed in **1822** that the United States was teaching the world **two most important truths**:

*“We are teaching the world the great truth that Governments do better without Kings and Nobles than with them **[republicanism]**. The merit will be doubled by the **other lesson** that Religion flourishes in greater purity, **without** than with the aid of Government **[Protestantism]**.” [James Madison, Letter to Edward Livingston, July 10, 1822 The Writings of James Madison, Gaillard Hunt].*

Sometimes when I am lecturing on this subject I ask the question: **To how many kingdoms** do Christians belong? They actually belong to **two**.

The fact is that Christians are **citizens of two kingdoms** in the **same country**. We are citizens of the United States **by birth** and we are citizens of the heavenly kingdom by the **new birth**. We have an **earthly passport** that identifies our earthly country of origin and we

have a **heavenly passport**, the blood of the Lamb, which identifies us as citizens of Christ's heavenly kingdom, the church.

The First Amendment

Frequently Christian activists will say that separation of church and state appears **nowhere in the Constitution**. This is true if we mean that the **actual expression**: "separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution. However, although the actual expression is not found in the Constitution, **the concept is clearly and explicitly contained** in the First Amendment to the Constitution:

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an **establishment of religion** [clause #1], or prohibiting the **free exercise thereof** [clause #2]; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances [clause #3]."*

Notice that the **intent** of the First Amendment is not to forbid the establishment of **a church** or **a religion** over and above another church or another religion. The word 'religion' in the First Amendment is not preceded by a **definite or an indefinite** article.

Clearly, the First Amendment forbids Congress from drawing up laws that mandate or prohibit free religious expression. In this sense the Constitution clearly contains the concept of the **separation of church and state** because the state is forbidden to **make laws** that **establish** religion or **prohibit** its free exercise. Thus the state can have **nothing to do with religion** except to protect everyone's right to practice it freely according to the dictates of their own conscience.

Notably, the **third clause** of the First Amendment guarantees **full civil rights**. Thus the First Amendment contains the idea of **full civil and religious liberty!!**

The Supreme Court

It seems preposterous that the United States could ever write into law a **Sunday law** and an **anti-Sabbath law** especially in light of the fact that the First Amendment **strictly forbids** congress from making any law that establishes religion or forbids its free exercise. **How** could this ever happen? The answer is found in how our system of government works. Our government is composed of **three branches**:

- **Legislative**: Writes and passes the laws
- **Executive**: Enforces the laws
- **Judicial**: Interprets the laws

The **most powerful** branch of government in the United States is the **judicial branch**, particularly the Supreme Court. This tribunal has **nine justices** and it is their role to determine if a law passed by congress is **constitutional**. It can **strike down laws** that have been written by congress and **executive orders** that have been given by the president such as the immigration executive order proclaimed by **president Obama**.

- At present the Supreme Court has **nine** members. **Five** are Roman Catholic, **three** are Jewish and one position is vacant. It is amazing that in a nation that is predominantly protestant there is **not a single protestant** on the court.

- The year **2000 election** reveals how much power resides in the Supreme Court. Basically, the Supreme Court elected the president of the United States.
- The Supreme Court on **June 26, 2015** legalized **gay marriage** on a federal level and there is **no court of appeal**.
- At some point in the future the Supreme Court will declare **unconstitutional laws** constitutional. Congress will pass a law that establishes **Sunday** as the national day of worship and congress will eventually pass a law that forbids the free exercise right to keep the Sabbath—and the **Supreme Court** will declare these laws **constitutional!!**
- The nation that claims to respect civil and religious liberty (the two horns like a lamb) will deny its profession in practice by speaking like a dragon, **like Rome**.
- In a time of a **national emergency** the Supreme Court will not eliminate the First Amendment but rather contradict it in practice.
- The stories of **Daniel 3 and 6** clearly show that the establishment of religion and the restriction of its free exercise by the civil power ends-up in persecution.

John Adams and the Treaty of Tripoli

On **June 10, 1797**, the **year before** the deadly wound was given to the Roman Catholic papacy, president **John Adams** signed into law the **Treaty of Tripoli** that unambiguously stated:

*“The Government of the United States is **not in any sense** founded upon the Christian religion.”*

Some have been **troubled** by the **wording** in this treaty strongly arguing that the United States was founded upon the **Christian religion**. However, if the constitutional Fathers had founded the United States upon the Christian religion, this would have been an **establishment of religion** which is unconstitutional!! When the United States was founded it was not a Christian Nation but rather a **nation composed mostly of Christians**.

Notably, President Adams sent this treaty to the Senate in **May of 1797** where it was **read aloud** to all of the senators who were present and **printed copies** were also given to each Senator. The vote to ratify the treaty **was unanimous!** Notably, the treaty was printed in full in several **newspapers** in **Philadelphia and New York** City and there was not even a whimper of protest from the general public. None of the Senators paid a **heavy price** for signing the treaty.

Ellen White, who was born only **29 years** after the deadly wound, wrote in **1888** about the **secret** of the power and prosperity of the United States:

*“Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America and sought an asylum from **royal oppression** and **priestly intolerance** were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of **civil** and **religious** liberty. Their views found place in the **Declaration of Independence**, which sets forth the great truth that “all men are created equal” and endowed with the inalienable right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” And the **Constitution** guarantees to the people the right of self-government, providing that representatives elected by the popular vote shall enact and administer the laws. Freedom of **religious faith [First Amendment]** was also granted, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. **Republicanism [a state without a king]** and*

Protestantism [a church without a pope] became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles **are the secret** of its **power** and **prosperity**.”

Definitions of Republicanism and Protestantism

“Republicanism is an ideology of being a citizen in a state as a republic (rather than as a monarchy or dictatorship) under which the people hold popular sovereignty. Many countries are “republics” in the sense that they are not monarchies.”

“Protestantism means that individuals are free to profess and by argument to proclaim and defend the religious convictions of their conscience without the interference of government.”

Who has the Upper Hand?

Right now the **state seems to be flexing** its muscles to **strong arm the church** but prophecy tells us that religion will end up **strong arming the state** to impose its agenda.

California’s **SB 1146** is only one recent example where the state is attempting to force **religious universities** to **violate** their religious convictions to accommodate those who embrace the **LGBT agenda**. One source describes what will happen if the bill is passed:

*“Faith-based institutions in California would no longer be able to require a **profession of faith** of their students...to integrate faith throughout the **teaching curriculum**...to require **chapel attendance** for students... to require **core units of Bible courses** [and] athletic teams would no longer be able to **lead faith-based** community service programs.”*

It would now appear that the **state has the upper hand**. But prophecy teaches that it is not the state that will control the church but rather the church that will control the state. There will be an image of what happened during the **1260 years** when the church influenced the state to do its bidding. We can be sure of this because Daniel 7 was **given in 550 BC** and all has been fulfilled with absolute mathematical precision.

The **emergence of the United States** has made it possible to proclaim God’s end time message to the world with **full freedom**. But in extremely **turbulent times** ahead people will **become very religious**. Just remember how religious people became immediately after 9/11. Even **football and baseball** games were cancelled, **Bible supplies** were depleted and **church attendance** significantly increased.

Civil and religious liberty are based on the **separation of church and state**. When the state gets involved in religious legislation the result is a loss of both religious and civil liberties for those who dissent from the majority view. Just look at what happened in **Daniel 3 and 6** as examples. When the state imposed religious observances the result was the loss of both religious and civil liberty.

Lesson #6: Let us Bow Down and Worship

by Stephen Bohr

Introduction

As we examine the book of Revelation one thing is absolutely clear: The final crisis will involve **two objects** of worship each with **their respective sign of authority**. On the one side will be the **true creator God** and His **seal** while on the other will be a **false pretender** who has his **mark of his authority**. Being that the final conflict will be **over worship** and two respective signs we must dedicate some time to discuss the **foundation of all worship**.

God and the False Pretenders

1 Chronicles 16:26 The true God is **distinguished** from all **false pretenders** by the fact that He is the **Creator**:

*“For all the gods of the peoples are idols, **but** the LORD made the heavens.”*

Why we Worship

Psalms 95:1-6: We **worship**, we **bow down**, we **kneel** before God because He is the **Creator**:

*“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. ² Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. ³ **For [the reason: why we are to praise Him]** the LORD is the great God, and the great King **above all gods**. ⁴ **[the reason why He above all gods?]** In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the heights of the hills are **His** also. ⁵ The sea is **His**, for He **made it**; and His hands formed the dry land. ⁶ Oh come, let us **worship** and **bow down**; let us **kneel** before the LORD our **Maker**.”*

Nehemiah 9:6: Heaven and earth **worship** God because He is the **Creator**

*“**You alone** are the LORD; You have **made heaven**, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, **the earth** and **everything on it**, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. The host of heaven **worships You**.”*

Work Finished in Six Days

Genesis 1:31-2:1: God **finished** His work in **six days**

*“Then God saw everything that **He had made**, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were **finished**.”*

Work Finished the Seventh Day

Genesis 2:2-3: God **rested** (ceased), and **then blessed** the **seventh day** and made it **holy**:

*“And on the **seventh day** God **ended** His work which He had done, and He [1] **rested** [**‘ceased’**] on the **seventh day** from all His work which He had done. ³ **Then** God [2] **blessed** the **seventh day** and [3] **sanctified** it, **because** in it He rested [**‘ceased’**] from all His work which God had created and made.”*

Facts about the Days

- The days of creation were **literal** 24 hour days just like those we experience **today**
- Each day had an **evening and morning**
- Language of **immediacy**: God **spoke and it was done**
- The expression **‘and it was so’** does not indicate long periods of time
- The **fourth commandment** would be absurd if the days were long periods
- There was **no Jew**
- There was **no sin**

The Weekly Cycle

Henry Morris, the renowned staunch creationist, stated that the **weekly cycle of seven days** was established at creation **as a pattern** for all successive weeks:

*“The Lord himself had worked six days, then rested on the seventh, setting thereby a **permanent pattern** for the benefit of mankind.”* Henry Morris, *Biblical Creationism*, p. 62

Ellen White concurs:

*“Like the Sabbath, **the week** originated at creation, and it **has been preserved** and brought down to us through Bible history. **God Himself measured off** the first week as a **sample** for **successive weeks** to the close of time. Like every other, it consisted of **seven literal days**. Six days were employed in the work of creation; upon the seventh, **God rested**, and He **then** blessed this day and set it apart as a day of rest for man.”* PP, p. 111

How do we know that the **Sabbath today** is the **same Sabbath** of creation? There is no evidence that the weekly cycle has ever been broken.

Contrary to Ellen White, **Henry Morris** in the same book, *Biblical Creationism* affirms that **any day** in seven will do because we have no way of knowing if the **weekly cycle** today is the **same as at creation**.

Can we know that the Sabbath of Creation is the **same Sabbath** as today? Christians celebrate Sunday in honor of the resurrection. If Sunday is the same Sunday as today, then the Sabbath is the same Sabbath. **European countries** have used a little trickery giving the impression that Monday is the first day and Sunday is the seventh day but this is a clear contradiction of the Bible.

God is Owner because He is the Creator

Psalm 24:1, 2:

*“The earth **is the LORD 's**, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein **for [because]** He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters.*

Review each day and ask the question: To whom does the **light**, the **firmament**, the **vegetation**, the **heavenly lights**, the **birds**, the **fish**, the **land animals**, **man and woman** belong?

All that God made is **His** because **He made it** so the **Sabbath** must also be **His** because He made it at the same time He made everything else! The Sabbath was made for man (**Mark 2:27**). It does not say that the Sabbath was made for the Jews but for **anthropos**.

In order for the Sabbath to be the Sabbath of the **Jews they must have made it**. The Bible calls the Sabbath **‘the Sabbath of the Lord’** and God referred to it as **‘my holy day.’**

God Commands Man to Keep the Memorial

Exodus 20:8-11: God commands man to keep the **memorial** of creation

*“Remember [points to a past event] the Sabbath day, to keep it **holy**.⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all **your** work,¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath **of the LORD your God**. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.¹¹ **For [the reason: ‘because’]** in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and [1] rested the **seventh day**, **therefore** the LORD [2] **blessed** the Sabbath day and [3] **hallowed** it.”*

- The fourth commandment repeats the **same thoughts** as the creation account. The fourth commandment inform us that God **rested** and then **blessed** and **sanctified** the seventh day. The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the **same Sabbath of Genesis!**
- The days of creation were literal because the fourth commandment tells us to **follow God's example**. How could God tell us to work six days and rest the seventh as He did at creation if the days were **not literal**?
- The word **‘remember’** at the very beginning of the fourth commandment indicates that it existed **before the law** was spoken by God at Sinai and written with His own finger. **Memorials** are meant to **commemorate past events**. When I say **‘remember the Alamo’** is calls my attention to an event that occurred in history.

Christians would agree that we should **worship God** because He is **our Creator** but would it be logical for them to say: “*But I don’t need to be reminded of it!*” God made a **memorial in time** that **comes to us** every week no matter **where we are!!**

The **Creator is also the Redeemer**. Jesus **finished** the work of creation on the **sixth day** and **rested** the seventh. The same Jesus said ‘it is finished’ **on the cross** and then **rested** from His **works of redemption** in the tomb on the Sabbath.

Why Man was not Commanded to Rest or Cease

But **protestant theologians** are quick to point out that **God did not command Adam and Eve** to keep that first Sabbath and therefore the Sabbath is **not a creation institution**. If the Sabbath is a creation institution, **why didn’t God** give Adam and Eve **a clear command** to keep it? To understand **the reason**, we must first discover **when** God blessed and sanctified the Sabbath:

Genesis 2:3: God rested and **then** sanctified the Sabbath:

*“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it He **rested** from all His work which God had created and made.”* [See the cause and effect use of the word “because” in Genesis 2:23]

Exodus 20:11: God rested and **then** sanctified the Sabbath:

*“For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and **rested** the seventh day. **Therefore** the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”* (See the cause and effect use of the word “therefore” in Genesis 2:24)

Genesis 2:24

*“**Therefore** a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”*

Summary

- It was **God who rested** that **first** Sabbath because by His rest, He ‘made the Sabbath’. The Sabbath was **made for man** but God could not have given it to man before He made it!!
- The Sabbath was made **holy** when it **ended**. Adam and Eve could not keep the Sabbath holy until it was **made holy**.
- Adam and Eve could not follow God’s **example** until He had **first given it**

*“God made man in His own image and then **gave him an example** of observing the seventh day [Adam and Eve were present watching God’s delight in creation], which He sanctified and made holy.”* *Lift Him Up*, p. 38

*“**After resting** upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or **set it apart**, as a day of rest for man. **Following the example** of the Creator, **man was to rest** upon this sacred day, that as he should look upon the heavens and the earth, he might reflect upon God’s great work*

of creation; and that as he should behold the evidences of God's wisdom and goodness, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker." PP, p. 47

*"Because He **had** rested upon the Sabbath, "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,"--**set it apart** to a holy use. He **gave it** to Adam as a day of rest. It was a **memorial** of the work of creation, and thus **a sign** of God's power and His love." DA, p. 281*

- The **fourth commandment** applies to Adam and Eve beginning with the **second Sabbath** of human history because, according to the commandment, they had to **work six** first in order to keep the **fourth commandment**. At creation God could not command man to **cease from His works** because he had not worked!!

Sign of a New Creation: Three Ideas

Isaiah 66:22, 23: The prophet Jeremiah tells us that at the second coming the earth will return to the condition it was in before creation week—empty and void (Jeremiah 4:23). For this reason, God will have to make a new heavens and a new earth. **Three ideas** are linked with the new creation: **[1] creation**, **[2] worship** and **[3] the Sabbath**.

*"For as the **[1]** new heavens and the new earth which **I will make** shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. **23** And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one **[2]** **Sabbath** to another, all flesh shall come **[3]** to **worship** before Me," says the LORD."*

The Sign between God and His People

Exodus 31:16, 17: The Sabbath is **the sign** between God and His people

*"Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. **17** It is a **sign** between Me and the children of Israel forever; **for [because: The reason is creation before sin]** in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the **seventh day** He **rested** and was refreshed."*

First, God gave **all** Ten Commandments **to Israel**. Does this mean that the Ten Commandments were binding **only** upon Israel because they were given to them? To answer yes would be absurd! It defies logic to say that nine commandments apply to everyone but only **one applies to the Jews**. God gave the Ten Commandments to Israel because they were His people at the time, but that does not mean that they were binding **only** upon **literal** Israel. The text does not say that the Sabbath was a sign **exclusively** between God and literal Israel.

Second, these verses clearly transcend literal Israel because **creation** is given as the reason why the Sabbath is a sign between God and His people. That is to say, the Sabbath is to be observed because God established it as a sign **of creation**. Would it make any sense to think that **Israel alone** was required to keep the Sabbath in **commemoration of creation**? Do not all human beings need to be reminded that God created the heavens, the earth and everything in them?

Third, **Galatians 3:28, 29** states that those who are 'in Christ' are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. If Christians are Abraham's seed, then they are members of Israel and as such should keep the Sabbath.

Finally, **Isaiah 56:4-7** clearly states that the Sabbath was intended for **Gentiles** as well as Jews and Jesus explicitly affirmed that the Sabbath **was made for man** (**Mark 2:27**). Thus our Lord taught that the Sabbath was a creation institution that was made for the benefit of man. The use of the word **anthropos** by Jesus is significant. He did not say that the Sabbath was made for Israel but rather for '**humankind**' (NRSV).

Ezekiel 20:12, 20:

*"Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be **a sign** between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who **sanctifies them** . . . hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be **a sign** between Me and you, that **you may know** that **I am the LORD your God.**"*

Note: Some have wondered whether these 'Sabbaths' might be the **yearly sabbaths** that belonged to the **ceremonial law**. The answer is no for at least three reasons:

- First, there is no evidence that the **ceremonial Sabbaths** were ever given to be a sign between God and His people.
- Second, **Ezekiel 20:12, 20** uses the identical **Hebrew word** for 'sign' as does **Exodus 31:16, 17**, and in Exodus the word indisputably refers to the seventh day Sabbath.
- Finally, the creation account as well as the Fourth Commandment explicitly state that **God sanctified** the seventh day Sabbath and in Ezekiel we are told that the Sabbaths were a sign that God **sanctifies** His people.

Final Message and Sign

Revelation 14:6, 7:

- The **last message** of God to the World calls upon us to **worship the Creator**
- These verses harken back to **creation** and the **Fourth Commandment**

*"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 ⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **[1] worship Him** who **[2] made** heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." **[a reference to creation and the fourth commandment]***

Revelation 7:1-3: God has a mark that **identifies His people**

*"After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the **seal of the living God**. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our **God** on their foreheads."*

Summary:

[1] We **worship** God . . .

[2] . . . because He is the **Creator** . . .

[3] . . . and the **sign** of the Creator is the **Sabbath**.

In the book of Revelation, we find a **usurper** who claims to be God, demands **worship** and has a **sign** of its authority. This will be the next exciting chapter of our study. The first angel's message commands us to worship the creator but the third warns us not to worship the beast.

Lesson #7: And the Whole World Wondered

by Stephen Bohr

Introduction

I would like to begin our study today by reviewing the main points of what we covered in our last lecture:

- There is only one true God who is distinguished from all false pretenders by the fact that He is the Creator
- God created the world in six literal 24-hour days just as we know them today
- Because God is the Creator, He is entitled to the worship of His creatures
- God established the Sabbath as a weekly sign or memorial that He is the Creator

The Functions and Power of God

The Bible mentions several titles and functions that belong to the Creator God alone:

- The representative of Christ on earth is the Holy Spirit (John 14-16)
- God alone is our Father (Matthew 23:9)
- We can only bow in reverence to God (Acts 10:25, 26)
- God alone can forgive sins (Mark 2:7)
- God alone is infallible in his proclamations (James 1:17)
- God alone has the right to set up kings and depose them (Daniel 2:21)
- God alone can judge all but can be judged by none (John 5:22, 27)
- God established the seventh day as His memorial of creation (Exodus 20:8-11)

The Third Message Contrasts with the First

Revelation 14:6, 7: The first angel's message commands people from every nation to worship the Creator:

"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 [1] worship Him who [2] made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." [a reference to creation and the fourth commandment]

Revelation 14:9-11: The third angel's message contrasts with the first:

*"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, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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."*

The third angel's message informs us that:

- The little horn/beast claims to occupy **God's place on earth** because he demands **worship**
- We should choose **not to worship** the beast
- We should **not receive the sign** of the beast's **authority**
- This is a matter of **life and death** because whoever worships the beast and receives his mark will be **eternally lost!**

Claims the Power and Rights of God

Who is the beast and what is its mark?

We have already identified the little horn/beast as the **Roman Catholic papacy**. This identification was not made by **guesswork** but rather by following **systematically, link by link**, God's **prophetic chain** of events. The **sign or mark** of the beast must still be identified.

At this point someone might object: The present day **papacy does not claim** to occupy God's place on earth neither does it demand worship and therefore the warning of the **third angel's message** does not apply to it.

But is this objection **true to fact**? Clearly not, because there is **unmistakable evidence** that in **its history** the papacy has claimed to:

- Occupy the **place** of God
- Have the right to the **titles** of God
- Possess the **rights** of God
- Exercise the **power** and **functions** of God

The question is, how can the papacy make all these boastful claims without **at the same time claiming** to occupy God's place on earth?

In the Temple of God

2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4: The papacy sits in the temple of God claiming to be God:

*"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the **falling away [the apostasy]** comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and*

exalts himself **above all that is called God** or that is worshiped, so that he sits **as God** in the **temple of God, showing** himself that **he is God.**”

When the apostle Paul uses the word ‘temple’ (naos), he always applies it spiritually **to the Christian church** and **never to the literal** Jewish temple (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21).

At the end of the **triumphal entry** of Jesus to Jerusalem we are told that He entered the ‘*temple of God*’ and when He cast out the money changers he referred to the temple as ‘*my house*’. But when Jesus **left the temple** He told the Jewish leaders: ‘**Your house** is left unto you desolate.” (Matthew 21:12, 13; 23:38, 39)

Paul explained to the **Ephesians** what he meant by the word ‘temple’:

Ephesians 2:19-22

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the **chief cornerstone**, ²¹ in whom the **whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord, ²² in whom you also **are being built** together for a **dwelling place of God** in the Spirit.”

In this passage the apostle Paul clearly explains that the temple is spiritual:

- **Foundations** of the temple: Apostles and Prophets
- **Chief Cornerstone**: Jesus
- **Stones**: Believers
- **Shekinah**: The Holy Spirit (invisible)

In conclusion, the man of sin who sits in the temple of God must **sit within the Christian Church**.

In Place of Christ

The **succession** of Roman Catholic popes has claimed to be **Vicarius Filii Dei** and **Vicarius Christi**. The word vicar means one who ‘**occupies the place of**’ someone else. Jesus did not send a **visible** representative to take His place on earth. In **John 14-16** Jesus explicitly stated that the when He left for heaven, the **Holy Spirit** would be His **successor** on earth.

The word ‘**antichrist**’ does not necessarily mean one who is **against Christ**. The **Greek** word *antichristos* has the same basic meaning as does *Vicarius Filii Dei* in **Latin**. Most people assume that the word antichrist means ‘*one who is against Christ.*’ It is true that in Greek the preposition *anti* can mean ‘against’ when it is used with a verb. But it is equally true that this preposition, when it is used as a **prefix to a noun** frequently means ‘*instead of,*’ or ‘*in place of.*’

In **classical Greek**, for example, the word *antibasileus* means ‘*one who occupies the place of the king.*’ In the New Testament, the name Herod **Antipas** means that Herod ruled ‘*in place of his father.*’ (**Revelation 2:13**) The word **antitype** means ‘*that which takes the place of the*

type.' Christ is spoken of as having given His life as a ransom **in place of** (*antilutron*) all (**I Timothy 2:6**). Thus the word *antichristos* in Greek and *Vicarius Filii Dei* in Latin bear a very similar meaning!

Pope Leo XIII stated in an **Encyclical Letter** dated **June 20, 1894**:

*"We hold upon this earth **the place of God Almighty.**"* (The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII, p. 304)

Once again, **Pope Leo XIII** stated:

*"But the **supreme teacher** in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires, together with a perfect accord in the one faith, **complete submission and obedience** of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, **as to God Himself.**"* (Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, 'On the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens', dated **January 10, 1890**, trans. in The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, p. 193)

Prompta Bibliotheca edited by **Lucius Ferraris**:

*"The Pope is of so great authority and power that he can **modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws.** The Pope can **modify** divine law, since his power is **not of man but of God**, and he acts as **vice-regent of God** upon earth with most ample power of binding and loosing his sheep. Whatever the Lord God himself, and the Redeemer, is said to do, that **his vicar does**, provided that he does nothing contrary to the faith."* (Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica, Juridica, Moralis, Theologica nec non Ascetica, Polemica, Rubricistica, Historica, article, 'Papa')

This encyclopedia is **not some offshoot** production. The Catholic Encyclopedia, **volume VI, p. 48** in its article, 'Ferraris' lauds the virtues of this encyclopedia with the following glowing words: It is 'a veritable encyclopedia of religious knowledge' and 'a precious mine of information.'

Holy Father

Jesus instructed His followers to call **no man on earth** their spiritual Father because God alone is our Father (Matthew 23:9). In spite of this prohibition, popes are addressed not only as 'father' but as 'holy father'.

Bowing in Reverence

Popes encourage individuals to bow before them and during the 1260 years even civil rulers **kissed their ring** and **feet!** In contrast, **Peter** refused to allow **Cornelius** to bow before him (Acts 10:25, 26). Not even angels allow human beings to bow before them (Revelation 19:10; 22:8, 9)

Dictatus Papae is a compilation of **27 statements** on the powers that belong to the pope. It was written by pope **Gregory VII** in the year **1075** at the height of papal power. In article 9 of *Dictatus Papae*, Gregory stated:

*“That of the pope alone all princes shall **kiss the feet**.”*

Forgiving Sins

While the Bible teaches that God alone can forgive sins the papacy claims to have such power. Roman Catholic churches are filled with confessionals where the penitents confess their sins to the priest and receive absolution.

St. Alphonsus di Liguori lived in the 17th century. He was canonized as a saint by Pope **Gregory XIV** in 1839 and was declared one of the 33 doctors of the church by Pope **Pius IX**. The doctors of the church are those whose writings are especially trustworthy and authoritative. To date at least 22 volumes of Liguori’s work have been published.

*“When he ascended into heaven, Jesus Christ left his priests after him **to hold on earth his place of mediator** between God and men, particularly on the altar. . . The Priest holds **the place of the Saviour himself**, when, by saying ‘Ego te absolvo,’ he absolves from sin.” St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, p. 34.*

December 8, 2015 to November 20, 2016 has been proclaimed the year of mercy by **pope Francis I**. During this year the pope has promised that even women who have aborted babies can receive forgiveness from a priest as long as their repentance is genuine.

The whole matter of indulgences was the catalyst of the protestant reformation and believe it or not, the papacy along with the Lutherans are planning a special joint celebration of the 500th anniversary the last week of October 2017!

Infallible

At the First Vatican Council in 1870 the dogma of Papal Infallibility was proclaimed. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith explains what this dogma means:

*“We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks **ex cathedra**, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is **possessed of that infallibility** with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals; and that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are **irreformable** of themselves, and **not from the consent of the Church**. But if any one—which may God avert—presume to contradict this our definition: let him be **anathema**.” Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 2, chapter 4, pp. 270-271).*

Pope **Nicholas I**, who ruled from 858 to 867 A. D. pronounced the following awesome words:

*“It is evident that the popes can neither be bound nor unbound by any earthly power, nor even by that of the apostle [Peter], if he should return upon the earth; since Constantine the Great has recognized that the pontiffs **held the place of God upon earth**, **divinity** not being able to*

be judged by any living man. We are, then, **infallible**, and whatever may be our acts, we are not accountable for them **but to ourselves.**" (Cormenin, *History of the Popes*, p. 243)

The Roman Catholic theologian, **Fritz Leist**, comments on this dogma:

"The infallibility of the pope is the **infallibility of Jesus Christ** Himself. . . whenever the pope thinks, it is **God Himself**, who is thinking in him." (Fritz Leist, *Der Gefangene des Vatikanus*, p. 344. Quoted in *Symposium on Revelation*, pp. 340-341).

Lord of Kings

In the long history of its dominion, the papacy has claimed the right to set up and remove kings.

The **Council of Trent** affirmed:

"All **temporal power is his [the pope's]**; the dominion, jurisdiction, and government of the whole Earth is **his by divine right**. All rulers of the Earth **are his subjects** and must submit to him." John W. Robbins, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania*, p. 131

Pope **Gregory VII** in *Dictatus Papae*, **Article 12** claimed:

"That it may be permitted to him [the pope] to depose emperors."

In the year **1302** pope **Boniface VIII** wrote the papal bull ***Unam Sanctam*** where he developed the two sword concept that was proposed originally by **St. Bernard**:

"In this Church and in its power are two swords, to wit, a **spiritual** and a **temporal** . . . Both, therefore, the spiritual and the material swords, are in the power of the Church, the latter [**the spiritual**] indeed to be used **for** the Church, the former [**the temporal**] by the Church, the one by the priest [**the spiritual**], the other [**the temporal**] by the hand of kings and soldiers, but **by the will and sufferance of the priest**. It is fitting, moreover, that one sword should be under the other, and the **temporal authority subject to the spiritual power** . . . It behooves us, therefore, the more freely to confess that the spiritual power excels in dignity and nobility any form whatsoever of earthly power, as spiritual interests exceed the temporal in importance. For the truth bearing witness, **it is for the spiritual power to establish the earthly power and judge it**, if it be not good . . . Therefore, if the earthly power shall err, it shall be **judged by the spiritual power**; if the lesser spiritual power err it shall be judged by the higher. But if the supreme power err it can be judged by God alone and not by man, the apostles bearing witness saying, the spiritual man judges all things but he himself is judged by no one. Hence this power, although given to man and exercised by man, is **not human, but rather a divine power**, given by the divine lips to Peter, and founded on a rock for Him and his successors in Him [Christ] whom he confessed, the Lord saying to Peter himself, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind,' etc. Whoever, therefore, shall resist this power, ordained by God, resists the ordination of God . . . We moreover, proclaim, declare and pronounce that it is altogether **necessary to salvation** for every human being to be **subject to the Roman Pontiff.**"

Supreme Judge

In *Dictatus Papae*, Pope **Gregory VII** affirmed that the pope has the **right to judge** anyone but no one has the right to judge the pope:

Dictatus Papae, **Article 18**:

*“That his [the Pope’s] sentence is **not to be reviewed by any one**; while **he alone can review** the decisions of all others.”*

Article 19 states:

“That he [the Pope] can be judged by no one.”

St. Alphonsus Liguori adds his testimony:

*“So that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, they could be **judged and excommunicated** by the Pope. For he is of so great dignity and power that he forms **one and the same tribunal** with Christ.” (Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca*, article, ‘Papa’, II, vol. 6, pp. 26-29).*

Creator of the Creator

The papacy claims to have the power to **create the creator** in the sacrifice of the **Mass**:

*“Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called **the creator of his Creator**, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates, as it were, Jesus in the sacrament, by giving him a sacramental existence, and produces him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. As in creating the world it was sufficient for God to have said: ‘Let it be made, and it was created—He spoke, and they were made’—so it is sufficient for the priest to say, ‘Hoc est corpus meum,’ and behold the bread is no longer bread, but the body of Jesus Christ. ‘The power of the priest,’ says St. Bernardine of Sienna, ‘is the power of the divine person; for the transubstantiation of the bread requires **as much power as the creation of the world.**” St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, pp. 33-34.*

Has the Papacy Changed?

But the papacy does not claim **these things today**, does she? It is true that she has **toned down** the rhetoric to seem more palatable but **at her core** she is the **same system** as she was in the past. She cannot **change her DNA** or she **would cease** to be the Roman Catholic Church. Almost one hundred and thirty years ago **Ellen White** wrote:

*“The Roman Church now presents a **fair front [Her Motto: Semper Idem] to the world**, covering **with apologies** her record of horrible cruelties. She has **clothed herself in Christlike** garments; but she is **unchanged. Every principle** of the papacy that existed in past ages **exists today**. The doctrines devised in the darkest ages **are still held**. Let none **deceive** themselves. The papacy that Protestants are now so ready to honor **is the same** that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. She possesses the **same pride and arrogant assumption** that lorded it over kings and princes, and **claimed the prerogatives** of God. Her spirit is **no less cruel and despotic** now than when she crushed out human liberty and slew the saints of the Most High. The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the **apostasy of the latter times**. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. It is a part of her policy to **assume the character** which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the **variable appearance** of the chameleon she conceals the **invariable venom** of the serpent.” GC, p. 571*

The Papacy's Sign of Authority

But now we must turn to the **most arrogant claim** that the papacy has made concerning its **right to exercise** the power and prerogatives of God. As we have already seen, during the **1260 years** the little **horn/beast** thought it **could change** God's law. The papacy, **without shame or apology**, claims that God **conferred upon her** the authority to change the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday.

On **May 31, 1998** Pope **John Paul II** published the document: "*Apostolic Letter Dies Domini of **John Paul II** to the Clergy, the Episcopate and the Faithful on Keeping Sunday Holy*". In this document the pope admonished all Catholics, **laity and clergy** alike, to keep Sunday holy. The pope began his letter by appealing to the **creation story** in Genesis 1 and 2 and correctly stated:

*"In the first place, therefore, the day of rest is so because it is the day '**blessed**' by God and '**made holy**' by him, **set apart** from the other days to be, among all of them, '**the Lord's Day.**"* Paragraph #14.

The problem is that John Paul II, in the **rest of his letter**, applies to Sunday the qualities that belong to the Sabbath. There are **multiple places** where the letter **overtly contradicts** the testimony of Scripture, let's notice some of them.

#1: On repeated occasions the pope refers to the seventh day Sabbath as '**the Jewish Sabbath**'. In no place of Scripture are we told that the Sabbath is a Jewish institution. To the contrary; **without exception** the Bible refers to the day of rest as '**the Sabbath of the LORD your God**' (Exodus 20:10), '**the holy day of the LORD**' (Isaiah 58:13), and God refers to it as '**my holy day**'. To **expropriate** the Sabbath from God and give it to the Jews is a **gross injustice**.

#2: John Paul confidently states that the Sabbath was part of the **old covenant** but in the **new covenant** we should keep Sunday in honor of the resurrection:

*"In the light of this mystery [**the resurrection**], the meaning of the Old Testament precept concerning the Lord's Day is recovered, perfected and fully revealed in the glory which shines on the face of the Risen Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 4:6). We move **from the 'Sabbath' to the 'first day after the Sabbath'**, from the **seventh day** to the **first day**: the dies Domini becomes the dies Christi!"* Paragraph 18

The pope has **borrowed** this argument **from protestants** who have always created a **dichotomy** between the two covenants. **Nowhere in Scripture** are we told that the Sabbath was **exclusively** part of the old covenant. It is a **conjecture** without any biblical foundation. God instituted the Sabbath **before sin** when there was **no old covenant**.

It is significant that the Roman Catholic church **continues many of the customs** of the old covenant that have no mandate in the New Testament such as **lighting candles**, sprinkling **holy water**, sacrificing **at altars**, robing themselves with **priestly vestments**, burning **incense** and using **miters**. In this the papacy **strains the gnat** and swallows the camel!!

#3: John Paul insists that the Catholic faithful should honor the resurrection of Jesus by keeping Sunday holy **every week**. Where does the Bible instruct us to keep Sunday in honor of the resurrection **once a week**? The papacy celebrates **Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday,**

Holy Thursday and **Good Friday** once a year. So why do they celebrate the resurrection every week?

#4: John Paul quotes **St. Augustine** approvingly to the effect that God has placed **His seal** upon Sunday:

*"Saint Augustine notes in turn: "Therefore the Lord too **has placed his seal** on his day, which is the third after the Passion." Paragraph #23*

To the contrary. The Bible teaches that the **Sabbath is the sign or seal** (Romans 4:11) of the relationship between God and His people (Exodus 31:16, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20). The Sabbath commandment is the **only one** that has the **three** necessary components of a seal:

- **Name:** "The Lord thy God"
- **Office:** "Creator"
- **Territory:** "Heaven, earth, the sea and everything in them"

This is why Ellen White correctly stated that when the papacy changed the day of rest, it **removed the seal** from the law of God:

*"The **seal** of God's law is found in the **fourth commandment**. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the **name and the title** of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was **changed by the papal power**, **the seal was taken** from the law." GC, p. 452*

In **paragraph 55** John Paul makes the following **blasphemous claim**:

*"**Blessed be he** who has raised the great day of **Sunday above all other days**. The heavens and the earth, angels and of men give themselves **over to joy**".*

Once more the pope openly contradicts the clear testimony of Scripture. The Bible affirms that **the Sabbath** is the day above all other days. When the pope pronounces a blessing upon 'he who has raised the great day of Sunday above all other days' he is pronouncing a blessing upon **the papacy** because the papacy claims to have changed the day!

#5: John Paul assures his faithful that in the **coming kingdom** there will be an endless Sunday:

*"From Sunday to Sunday, enlightened by Christ, she goes forward towards the **unending Sunday** of the heavenly Jerusalem, which "has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev 21:23)." Paragraph #84*

The pope **once more contradicts** the clear testimony of Scripture. The Bible never even hints that in the coming kingdom there will be an **endless Sunday**. The Bible tells us that on the new earth there will be **months** and **days** because God's people will come to eat from the tree of life 'every month' (**Revelation 22:2**) and will worship before the LORD from Sabbath to Sabbath (**Isaiah 66:22, 23**).

#6: Although the pastoral letter was purportedly meant for the Roman Catholic faithful, the pope attempted also to **please protestants** by using the same 'biblical' arguments that they have used in favor of Sunday.

In **times past**, papal writers consistently admitted that the observance of Sunday is **not found anywhere** in Scripture, that it is based solely on **Tradition**. Times were when Roman Catholic writers **chided protestants** for following the Tradition of the Roman Catholic church in Sunday observance. But pope John Paul knew that **he could not win over protestants** with such an argument so in his pastoral letter he did his utmost to provide 'proof' that Sunday was **already the holy day** of rest in the New Testament. In **paragraphs 20 and 21** the pope provides what appears to be an **impressive list** of events that occurred on Sunday:

- **Six times** we are told in the New Testament that Jesus **resurrected** on the first day of the week.
- On the first day of the week Jesus walked and talked with **two followers** on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:36).
- On the first day Jesus appeared to the **11 apostles** the evening of resurrection day (John 20:19).
- A **week later** on a Sunday, Jesus appeared to the apostles once again (John 20:24-28).
- The Day of Pentecost was on a Sunday and on that day the church was established and the **Holy Spirit** was poured out.
- The **first proclamation** of the gospel took place on Sunday.
- The **first baptisms** took place on Sunday.
- Christians were taking their **offerings to church** on the first day of the week (I Corinthians 16:1, 2).
- The apostle Paul met with **the church at Troas** on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7-9).
- At the end of the first century the apostle John referred to **Sunday as the Lord's Day** (Revelation 1:10).

But nowhere does it say that Sunday was **made holy and blessed** by God, that **we must keep it** in honor of the resurrection or that we are to attend **church** on that day.

Not Literal Days

Even more serious than John Paul's tepid arguments in favor of Sunday, is the fact that neither **John Paul** nor **Francis I** even believe that the days of creation **were literal** 24-hour days as we know them today. Both have gone on the record that the world came into existence by a **long and cruel process of evolution**. In fact, in **Laudato Si** Francis refers to the story of creation as **symbolic**.

John Paul in a speech to the Papal Academy of the Sciences stated:

*"Today, almost half a century after the publication of the encyclical (Pope Pius XII, Humane Generis, 1950), **new knowledge** has led to the recognition of the theory of evolution as **more than a hypothesis**. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself **a significant argument in favor of the theory**."*

In typical **Jesuit fashion**, Pope Francis I has also attempted to **reconcile** the creation story with the evolutionary theory by **synthesizing them**. In this way he has attempted to please, both theologians and naturalist scientists, the secular and the religious. In his own words:

*“The **Big Bang**, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, **does not contradict** the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, **requires it** . . . Evolution in nature is **not inconsistent** with the notion of creation, because **evolution requires the creation** of beings that **evolve**. When we read about Creation in Genesis, we run the risk of imagining **God was a magician**, with a magic wand able to do everything. But that is not so . . . He created human beings and **let them develop** according to the **internal laws** that he gave to each one so they would **reach their fulfillment** . . . “*

Marriage and the **Sabbath** are the **two institutions** that describe the **relationship** between God and His people. If the days of creation were **not literal**, then both lose their **divine foundation**.

Catholic Testimony about Authority

The **Roman Catholic Papacy** itself admits that it is a **matter of authority** and claims that by keeping Sunday, Protestants are accepting and following the authority of the Catholic Church:

*“It was the **Catholic Church** which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has **transferred** this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by Protestants is an **homage** they pay, in spite of themselves, to the **authority of the Church**.”* Monsignor Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today* (Boston: Thomas B. Noonan & Co., 1868), p. 213.

*“A word about Sunday. God said: ‘Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day!’ The Sabbath was Saturday, not Sunday; why, then, do we keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday? The **Church altered** the observance of the Sabbath to the observance of Sunday. . . Protestants who say that they go by the Bible and the Bible only, and that they do not believe anything that is not in the Bible, must be rather puzzled by the keeping of Sunday when God distinctly said, ‘Keep holy the Sabbath day.’ The word Sunday does not come anywhere in the Bible so, without knowing it, they are **obeying the authority of the Catholic Church**.”* H. Canon Cafferata, *The Catechism Simply Explained* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1938), p. 89

*“But since Saturday, not Sunday, is specified in the Bible, isn’t it curious that non-Catholics who profess to take their religion directly from the Bible and not from the Church, observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Yes, of course, it is inconsistent; but this **change** was made about fifteen centuries before Protestantism was born, and by that time the custom was universally observed. They have continued the custom, even though it rests upon the **authority of the Catholic Church** and not upon an explicit text in the Bible. That observance remains as a reminder of the **Mother Church** from which the non-Catholic sects broke away—like a boy running away*

from home but still carrying in his pocket a picture of his mother or a lock of her hair.” John O’Brien, *The Faith of Millions* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1974) p. 400, 401.

“It was the **Holy Catholic Church** that **changed** the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday, the first day of the week. And it not only compelled all to keep Sunday, but urged all persons to labor on the seventh day under pain of anathema. Protestants... profess great reverence for the Bible, and yet by their solemn act of keeping Sunday, they **acknowledge the power of the Catholic Church**. The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ But the **Catholic Church says**, ‘NO: Keep 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.” Words of Father Enright, longtime President of Redemptorist College in America, quoted in, Joe Crews, *The Beast, the Dragon and the Woman* (Frederick, Maryland: Amazing Facts, Inc., thirteenth edition, June 1991), p. 33.

A Matter of Authority

If God’s [1] **sign or seal** is the [2] **Sabbath** [3] created as a day of worship by God, then the [1] sign or seal of the beast must be an [2] **opposite day** [3] created as a day of worship by man. Sabbath and Sunday stand at the **two extremes** of the calendar—Sunday is #1 and Sunday is #7. Further, the **genuine** comes first in time and the **counterfeit** comes afterwards. Thus the Sabbath is God’s original day and Sunday is a counterfeit!

The final conflict is far more profound than **just a contrast of days**. The day a person keeps is the sign of the **authority that person accepts**. If we keep the Sabbath we are announcing to the world that we **accept the authority** of the one who created the **Sabbath for worship**. If we keep Sunday, we are announcing to the world that we have **accepted the authority** of the one who created Sunday as the day of worship.

In the Days of Christ

In the days of Jesus there were **two Sabbaths**—one created by God and the other created by the rabbis.

The **rabbi’s** of Christ’s day:

Made...

... a **counterfeit sabbath**...

based on **human tradition**...

... by keeping it, the people...

... **chose to obey the authority** of the rabbis...

... and practiced **false worship**.”

Christian **ministers** at the end of time:

Made...

... a **counterfeit Sabbath**...

... based on **human tradition**...

... by keeping it, the people...

... will choose to **obey the authority** of their ministers...

... and thus practice **false worship**.

The conflict at the end will be similar to the conflict in the days of Jesus:

- In the times of **Jesus**: the populace kept the Sabbath in **the wrong way** based on tradition.
- At the **end of time**: the populace will keep the **wrong day** based on tradition.

Lesson #8: En Route to A New World Order

by Stephen Bohr

What, then are the **objectives** of the Roman Catholic papacy? **If Sunday is the sign** of papal authority, then we would **expect** the papacy to **seek and ensure** its enforcement. For the last **120 years** (since the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII in 1891) the papacy' social literature has consistently used four terms:

- The '**common good**' (**individualism** is an enemy to be dreaded).
- '**Solidarity**' (we are all in this together so we must **unite** in one ecumenical body and **avoid sectarianism**).
- '**Subsidiarity**' (our personal interests are **subsidiary** to the common good of the whole).
- The '**universal destination of goods**' (**private property** is not necessarily personal but rather belongs to **all of humanity** and should be redistributed according to need).

Benedict XVI explained the papal objectives in his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, **paragraph #67**:

*"To [1] manage the **global economy**; to [2] **revive economies** hit by the crisis; to [3] avoid any **deterioration** of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result; [4] to bring about integral and timely **disarmament**, [5] **food security and peace**; [6] to guarantee the protection of the **environment** and to [7] **regulate migration**: for all this, there is **urgent need** of a true **world political authority**, as my predecessor Blessed John XXIII indicated some years ago. Such an authority would need to be **regulated by law**, to observe consistently the principles of **subsidiarity** and **solidarity**, to seek to establish the **common good**, and to make a commitment to securing **authentic integral human development** inspired by the values of charity in truth. Furthermore, such an authority would need to be **universally recognized** and to be **vested with the effective power** to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for rights. Obviously it would have to have the authority to **ensure compliance** with its decisions from all parties, and also with the **coordinated measures** adopted in various **international forums**."*

The question is: **Who will be responsible** for the implementation of this **global socialist ideal**? Current events clearly indicate that it will be implemented and enforced by the **political leaders** of the world at the **behest of the papacy**. Benedict was saying that the international community **must accept and enforce** the social moral theory of the papacy.

It is the papacy's objective to **reestablish** the **union of church and state** as it existed during the **1260 years** of papal supremacy. The ultimate papal objective is for the civil powers of the world to **enforce the sign** of papal authority—**Sunday observance**. It is no coincidence that the international community is promoting the **identical causes** as the Roman Catholic papacy.

Pope Francis I has found **three causes** that resonate also with world leaders:

- The need to eradicate **poverty** which leads to **massive migration**
- The need to save the **family**, however you define it
- The need to solve the severe problem of **climate change**

And Francis has linked all three causes with the **need for a Sunday rest**

- The **environment** needs a **good Sunday rest** to help alleviate the problem of **climate change**
- The **capitalist overlords** need to give their **overworked poor** a Sunday rest
- The **family needs** Sunday to **attend church** and connect with their **spiritual roots**

Danger Signals

In **September of 2015** pope Francis I made a visit to the **United States** and participated in four very important events:

- The Pope was invited to visit the **White House** and sat down with president Obama to discuss the problems of **poverty, immigration and climate change**.
- The Pope then read a speech to a **joint session of the congress** of the United States where he addressed the same issues.
- Next the Pope presented the **inaugural address** to inaugurate the **70th anniversary** of the United Nations where he addressed the same issues. At the conclusion of his address he received a **standing ovation** from the delegates of the **193 nations** in attendance that lasted for **several minutes**.
- At the very end of September, the pope traveled to **Philadelphia**. **Millions** of persons from every **religion and nation** traveled to the city of brotherly love to see the pope. More than a million persons attended an **outdoor mass on Sunday**, September 27. The pope also gave a speech on the porch of **Constitution Hall** where the founding documents of the nations were drafted and ratified.
- The relationship between the papacy and the United States has **grown ever closer** in the last few decades. **Ronald Reagan** and pope John Paul formed a **secret alliance** that was successful in **breaking apart** the Soviet Union. Francis I helped president Obama establish diplomatic **relations with Cuba** and promised to help the United States close the prison in **Guantanamo**.

An Example of How will it Happen: Climate Change

Let's **take an example** of how the papacy has gotten its **foot in the door** to impact the civil powers of the world. By far, the item that is at the **top of the papal agenda** is the problem of climate change. Here the pope has **found a theme** that he shares in common with the political powers of the world and with which he can get his **foot in the door**.

In **April of 2015** the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences published a report titled "***Climate Change and the Common Good***". In this document the papacy presented a **doomsday scenario** of what would happen if the problem of climate change is not urgently addressed by **all nations**. The clear intent of the document was **to scare** world political leaders into action.

Then, on **May 24, 2015** Pope Francis I published his much anticipated encyclical on climate change, ***Laudato Si'***. World leaders, almost **in unison**, lauded the encyclical as just what the world needs at this critical time.

On **September 22, 2015** the Pope met with **President Obama** in the White House and one of the principal subjects discussed was the need to address **climate change**.

And in the Pope's address to a **joint session** of the United States Congress on **September 24, 2015** the subject of climate change was once more at the top of the agenda.

But the pope saved his best for last! On **September 28, 2015** the Pope gave the keynote **inaugural speech** to open the **70th Session** of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The speech contained the **usual papal talking points**, [1] poverty, [2] immigration, [3] family and above all, [4] climate change. At the conclusion of his address the delegates of the **193 nations** in attendance gave the pope a **thunderous standing ovation** that lasted for several **minutes**. The UN then took up the business at hand and all the nations represented unanimously approved the *Sustainable Development Agenda* with its **17 global goals and 169 targets**.

Even a cursory reading of the *2030 Agenda*, as it is called, reveals that its goal is to **eliminate national autonomy** and establish a **centralized global socialist authority** that will control the [1] **world economy**, [2] **wipe out individualism**, [3] **eliminate sectarianism**, [4] determine the **curriculum** to be used in the education of children, [5] promote **gender equality**, [6] propose a **redistribution of wealth**, and [7] impose **severe global penalties** upon nations that refuse to address the problem of climate change.

Concerning the 2030 agenda, the UN General Secretary, **Ban Ki-Moon** said:

*"The new agenda is a promise by leaders to **all people everywhere**. It is a **universal, integrated and transformative vision for a better world.**"*

*"Institutions will have to become fit for a **grand new purpose**. . . We must engage **all actors**, as we did in shaping the Agenda. We must include **parliaments**, and **local governments**, and*

work with **cities** and **rural** areas. We must rally **businesses and entrepreneurs**. We must involve **civil society** in defining and implementing policies—and give the space to **hold us to account**. We must listen to **scientists and academia**. We will need to embrace a **data revolution**. Most important, we must set to work—now.”

The delegates from **196 nations** met in **Paris** from **November 30 to December 12, 2015** to hammer out what is known as the **Paris Agreement**, a global pact on the reduction of climate change. The agreement became **legally binding on April 22, 2016** when **174 nations** signed the agreement at the United Nations in New York. **Other nations** promised to sign the agreement in the immediate future. Secretary of State **John Kerry**, with his little granddaughter on his lap, signed the agreement in representation of the United States and President Barack Obama.

As is well known, Francis is the first Jesuit pope in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Concerning the objectives and methods of the Jesuits **Ellen White** remarks:

*“At this time the order of the Jesuits was created, the most cruel, unscrupulous, and powerful of all the champions of popery. . . There was no **crime** too great for them to commit, no **deception** too base for them to practice, no **disguise** too difficult for them to assume. Vowed to perpetual **poverty and humility**, it was their studied aim to secure wealth and power, to be devoted to the **overthrow of Protestantism**, and the **re-establishment of the papal supremacy**. When appearing as members of their order, they wore a **garb of sanctity**, visiting **prisons** and **hospitals**, ministering to the **sick and the poor**, **professing to have renounced the world**, and bearing the sacred name of Jesus, who went about doing good... Under various **disguises** the Jesuits worked their way into **offices of state**, climbing up to be the counselors of kings, and shaping the **policy of nations**. . . The Jesuits rapidly spread themselves over Europe, and wherever they went, there followed a **revival of popery**.” GC, pp. 234, 235*

Non-Adventist Dire Warnings

*“I am convinced that Roman Babylon **will again regain** all of its **previous power** before the last judgment overtakes it. I fear that most of the nations, intimidated by its power and terrified by its brutality, will **allow the yoke shaken off some two hundred years ago to be lain upon them again**.” Words of Ph. J. Spener in *Symposium on Revelation*, volume 2, p. 388*

Evangelical researcher **Dave Hunt** wrote:

*“Why do world leaders want to **get into bed** [to commit spiritual adultery] with the Vatican? The **heads of state** in today’s world all recognize that the Pope **wields a power** which in many ways is even greater than their own. It is not only Catholicism’s 900 million subjects and enormous wealth that causes the world’s **most powerful governments** to cultivate friendly relations with the Roman Catholic Church; it is because Vatican City’s citizens are found in great numbers in nearly every country. They constitute an **international network** that reaches into the **inside circles** of the **world’s power centers**.” (Dave Hunt, *Global Peace*, p. 116)*

“What the Roman Catholic Church-State accomplished on a **small scale** during the Middle Ages is what it desires to achieve on a **global scale** in the coming millennium.” John W. Robbins, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania*, p. 187 (1999)

John Robbins approvingly quoting American **novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand**:

‘The Catholic Church has never given up the hope to **re-establish** [she must have once had it and lost it] the medieval **union of church and state**, with a **global state** and a **global theocracy** as its ultimate goal.’ The **Roman Church-State** is a **hybrid—a monster of ecclesiastical and political power**. Its political thought is totalitarian, and whenever it has had the opportunity to apply its principles, the result has been **bloody repression**. If, during the last 30 years, it has softened its assertions of full, supreme, and irresponsible power, and has murdered fewer people than before, such changes in behavior are not due to a change in its ideas, but to **a change in its circumstances [the secular governments keep her at arms’ length]** . . . The **Roman Church-State** in the twentieth century, however, is an institution **recovering from a mortal wound**. If and when it **regains [so it must have lost it]** its full power and authority, it will impose a regime more sinister than any the planet has yet seen **[the deadly wound will be healed]**.” John W. Robbins, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania*, p. 195.

Sequence of Powers in the Chain

Where are we right now in the course of prophetic history? We are in a **period of respite** from persecution just before the **last two stages** of history as we know it:

- **Babylon** (605-539)
- **Medes and Persians** (539-331)
- **Greece** (331-168)
- **Roman Empire** (168-476)
- **Divided Roman Empire** (476-538)
- **Papal Rome** rules for **1260 years** (538-1798)
- **Deadly wound** by France (1798)
- The rise of the beast with **lamblike horns** (1798)
- **WE ARE HERE**: A **period of respite** from persecution (the last **200+ years**)
- The **next event** in the drama: THE LAND BEAST RETURNS POWER TO THE SEA BEAST and the whole **world will follow**
- The **time of trouble** such as never was
- The **glorious deliverance** (our next two lectures) of God’s people

Malachi Martin and the Healing of the Deadly Wound

Why hasn’t the deadly wound **healed yet**? What is keeping the papacy in **captivity**? Jesuit scholar, **Malachi Martin**, who wrote the best-selling book, *The Keys of this Blood* explained the reason in 1986:

*"[For] **fifteen hundred years** and more, [papal] Rome had kept as **strong a hand** as possible in each local community around the wide world. By and large, and admitting some exceptions, that had been the **Roman view** [Ellen White calls it the 'Roman element' GC 581] until **two hundred years of inactivity** had been **imposed** upon the papacy by the **major secular powers** of the world." Quoted in *Christianity Today* (November 21, 1986), p. 26.*

There are **three main points** in this statement by Martin:

- The papacy kept a **strong hand** in each local community around the wide world for **fifteen hundred years**.
- During the last **200 years** the papacy the papacy has **not been able** to exert this power around the wide world because it has been **inactive**.
- The **reason** the papacy has been inactive for two hundred years is because the **great secular powers** of the world have **imposed it** upon her.

It is obvious that Martin **does not realize** that he is describing the deadly wound and the **captivity** of the papacy that is described in **Revelation 13:10**. **What happened** two hundred years before 1986 when Martin wrote this statement? The answer is unmistakable: The **French Revolution** when the French government took away the power of the sword, **emancipated itself** from papal power and established **a republic**. As a result, one nation after another in the **western hemisphere** formed democratic governments that have **not allowed the papacy** to use them to accomplish her own ends.

The French Revolution did **more than just deliver France** from the iron fist of the papacy. It actually led to **all the major powers of Europe** within a brief period of time to proclaim their emancipation from papal dominance. As a result, **nation after nation** in Europe formed democratic governments that guaranteed civil and religious liberty. For this reason, Cardinal Henry **Cardinal Manning** in **1862** (even before the Papal States were confiscated by Victor Emmanuel II in 1870) lamented that the nations of Europe had forsaken the papacy:

*"See this Catholic Church, this Church of God, feeble and weak, rejected even by the **very nations called Catholic**. There is Catholic **France**, and Catholic **Germany**, and Catholic **Italy giving up** this exploded figment of the **temporal power** of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.' And so, because the Church **seems weak**, and the Vicar of the Son of God is renewing the Passion of his Master upon earth, therefore we are scandalized, therefore we **turn our faces from him**." (*The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ*, pp. 140, 141, emphasis mine)*

Ellen White and the Healing of the Wound

But prophecy tells us that the **history of the papacy** has is **not yet complete**. Prophecy tells us that the **civil rulers** of the world will **once again** allow the papacy to determine and dictate its agenda. The striking prophecy of **Revelation 13** tells us that the papacy will be **released from captivity** and will **recover the sword** of civil power and then the papacy will behave as it did in its **heyday**.

Revelation 17 presents a vivid portrayal of the time when the prophecy of Revelation 13:11-18 will be fulfilled. In this passage we see a [1] **harlot woman** whose name is [2] **Babylon** (17:5) who sits on [3] **many waters**, that is, upon nations, multitudes, tongues and people (17:1, 15). She sustains an [4] **adulterous spiritual relationship** with the **civil rulers** of the earth (17:2). She is garbed in [5] **purple and scarlet, gold and precious stones** (17:4). The kings of the world gladly drink her [6] **fermented wine** of false doctrine (17:2) and give decrees against those who refuse to drink with them. She has [7] **daughters** that were born from her at some point because she is called the 'mother of harlots' (17:5). And most significantly, she [8] **sheds the blood** of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus (17:6).

Ellen G. White, who wrote **one hundred years before** Martin and uses virtually **identical terminology**, predicted that the restraints now imposed by the secular governments of the world will be **removed** and the papacy will recover the civil sword:

*"Let the **restraints** now **imposed** by **secular governments** be **removed** and Rome be **reinstated** in her former power, and there would speedily be a **revival** of her tyranny and persecution."* GC, p. 564

Two things must be said about Ellen White's statement:

- When Ellen White wrote the papacy was **wounded and in captivity** because the civil powers **no longer supported her**. In the case of the United States, the restraint was provided by the **First Amendment** to the Constitution which forbids congress from making laws that **establish** or forbid the **free exercise** of religion. As long as the United States **respects** its Constitution there can be no Sunday law instigated by the papacy.
- When the civil governments **remove the restraints**, the papacy will resurrect from its deadly wound and will once more be free from captivity to act as it did in the past.

A Parasite and a Leech

Without intending to be **disrespectful** to the many **sincere individuals** in the Roman Catholic communion, the papacy, as a system, is a **parasite or a leech**. The dictionary defines a **parasite** as:

*"an animal or plant that lives **in or on** another animal or plant and gets food or protection from it; a person or thing that **takes** something from someone or something else and does not do anything to **earn it or deserve it**."*

And the **dictionary** defines a **leech** as:

*"a person who clings to another for **personal gain**, especially **without giving anything** in return, and usually with the implication or effect of **exhausting the other's resources**."*

The papacy gathers its **strength from the civil powers** of the world by **attaching herself** to them **without contributing anything** of value to them in return. Although the papacy has **no military might**, she uses **diplomacy** to influence the rulers of the world to do her bidding. This has been the **indelible stain** of her historical track record and will be **the blotch** in her prophetic future.

When the papacy is **unable to attach** herself to the political systems of the world, she is **wounded and restrained** but when the political systems allow her to **reattach** herself to them she is **healed and free**, but not in her own strength but in theirs.

Ironically, prophecy tells us that the **beast with lamblike horns** (the United States) will be foremost in helping the first beast recover its power. And then **every country on the globe** will jump on board:

*“As America, the land of religious liberty, shall **unite with the papacy** in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, **the people of every country on the globe [the United Nations]** will be led to follow **her example**.” 6T, p. 18*

Right now we are at the **very end of the prophetic chain**—the time when the deadly wound has almost healed! There are clear and unmistakable signs that the United States is **cozying up with the papacy**.

The Demise of the USA

On **Independence Day, 1899** Ellen White explained how the United States will fill up the cup of its iniquity:

*“The **greatest and most favored** nation upon the earth is the United States. A **gracious Providence** has shielded this country, and poured upon her the choicest of Heaven's blessings. Here the persecuted and oppressed have found refuge. Here the Christian faith in its purity has been taught. This people have been the recipients of great light and unrivaled mercies. But these gifts have been repaid by **ingratitude and forgetfulness** of God. The Infinite One keeps a **reckoning with the nations**, and their guilt is proportioned to the **light rejected**. A fearful record now stands in the register of heaven against our land; but the crime which shall **fill up the measure** of her iniquity is that of making void the law of God.” ST, July 4, 1899*

Protestants are no More

And **who will warn** the world about the issues at stake in the final conflict? Certainly **not the Protestants!** They have already **capitulated** to the papacy!

- **Self-proclaimed** Bible believing Protestants are looking to the **Middle East** for the rise of the beast, and for his image and mark. They are expecting a **blasphemous individual** who will sit in a rebuilt Jewish temple.

- And Protestants are on the **same page** with the papacy on which is the proper **day of worship**—Sunday.

Protestants **used to have it right**. The **Scottish** church historian and **Presbyterian** minister, **James A. Wylie** understood how the papacy would fulfill the prophecy about the little horn and the beast:

- *“It is clear that Antichrist, as depicted by our Lord and by his apostle John, is to **wear a mask**, and to **profess** one thing and **act** another. He is to enter **the church** as Judas entered the garden—professedly to **kiss his Master**, but in reality to **betray him**. He is to come with **words of peace in his mouth**, but war in his heart. He is to be a **counterfeit Christ**—Christ’s likeness stamped on base metal. He is to be an **imitation of Christ**—a close, clever, and astute imitation, which **will deceive the world** for ages, those only excepted who, taught by the Holy Spirit, shall be able to **see through the disguise** and detect the enemy under the **mask of the friend**.” J. A. Wylie, *The Papacy is the Antichrist* (Edinburgh: George M’Gibbon), pp. 17, 18.*
- Pope Francis I has made an **overt effort** to unite all Christians. **Protestants have gravitated** toward the papacy. As is well known, **great Protestant leaders** have lined up to go to the **Vatican** and have expressed admiration for this system among which are **Billy Graham, Tony Palmer, Kenneth Copland, James Robison, Joel Osteen, Rick Warren**, the **Reformed Church**, the **Waldensians**, etc. I have heard that the RESET million Christian March will take place at the Mall in Washington D. C. on July 16, 2016. The organizers state that the only agenda is Jesus. I have been told that the pope will address the crowd via **Skype**. He has also reached out to **Shimon Peres, Muslims** and **Orthodox leaders**.
- Protestants have **lost all fear** of the papacy because they **do not believe** that the **papacy fulfills** prophecy. Thus a misunderstanding of prophecy will lead the Protestant world to **render homage** to the papacy.
- For these reasons the powers that are playing a role in the fulfillment of prophecy are **hidden from sight** and as a result all the world will **marvel** after the papacy.

Why do we Exist?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been called by God to proclaim the warning message to the world. If we don’t do it, God will call the **eleventh-hour remnant** to do it:

*“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as **watchmen** and **light bearers**. To them has been entrusted the **last warning** for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the **most solemn import**--the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of **so great importance**. They are to allow **nothing else** to absorb their attention.” 9T, p. 19*

This includes calling the world to worship **the Creator** and receive His sign and warning the world **not to worship the Beast** and receive his mark.

Jesus and Fulton Sheen

It was **Thursday evening** of passion week and Jesus was **about to agonize** in **Gethsemane** and die on the **cross**. In preparation for His ordeal, Jesus uttered an **intercessory prayer** to His Father. He did not pray for **strength for Himself** in the terrible ordeal that He was about to face. No! His prayer focused rather on His disciples. In the middle of His prayer Jesus explained that His followers would be **hated by the world** because they were not of the world:

John 17:14:

*"I have given them Your word; and the world has **hated them** because they are **not of the world**, just as I am not of the world."*

Here is the **central reason** why God's faithful people have been hated by both the **religious and secular**—they live by **God's word** and though they live in the world they are **not of the world**. On the same evening Jesus had already told His disciples what would happen **if they were** of the world:

John 15:19:

*"If you **were of the world**, the **world would love its own**. Yet because you are **not of the world**, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the **world hates you**."*

Bottom line: If you are of the world the world will **love you** but if you are not of the world, the world will **hate you**. The Bible is clear that all the world will love the beast and follow after him when its deadly wound is healed:

Revelation 13:3

*"And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world **marveled and followed the beast**."*

In the decade of the **1950's** Protestants in the United States were extremely **suspicious** of the Roman Catholic papacy and **strongly disliked** it. It was in this context in **1955** (61 years ago) that **Fulton Sheen, apologist** and **radio and television pioneer** of Roman Catholicism, came on the airwaves and sought to use this dislike to his advantage. Here are his own words:

*"If I were **not** a Catholic, and were looking for the true Church in the world today, I would look for the one Church which **did not get along well with the world**; in other words, I would look for the Church which **the world hated**. My reason for doing this would be, that if Christ is in any one of the churches of the world today, He **must still be hated** as He was when He was on earth in the flesh. If you would find Christ today, then find the Church that **does not get along***

with the world. Look for the Church that is **hated by the world** as Christ was hated by the world. Taken from Radio Replies, Vol. 1, p IX, Rumble & Carty, Tan Publishing

Would Sheen give the same speech today when the papacy is loved by the world? The papacy is now loved by world leaders so we should ask: Is the papal system now a counterfeit church **because the world loves it?**

For a while the kings of the earth will do the harlot's bidding and that of her daughters. But the love fest between the beast/harlot, the kings of the earth and the harlot will not last. At the climactic moment, when she appears to be seated as queen and will not see widowhood, the adulterous relationship will come to a crashing end when *"these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire"* (Revelation 17:16). Thus, the sword of the kings that the harlot used to slay the saints of the Most High will finally be used by the kings to slay her.

Reflections on Bad Advice

- Daniel 3: Bad advice led to persecution
- Daniel 6: Bad advice led to persecution
- Days of Esther: Bad advice led to persecution
- Pontius Pilate: Received good advice but chose the bad
- At the End: The political leaders will follow the bad advice of the papacy

Lesson #9: Michael Shall Stand Up

by Stephen Bohr

Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church holds some **unique beliefs** that, as far as I know, are not held by any other **Christian denomination**. One of those is the **pre-Advent Investigative Judgment** during which Jesus examines the life of every single person who has ever professed His name. Adventists believe that this judgment has three stages just like the earthly judgments among human beings on earth.

- **Investigation** of the evidence
- **Verdict** based on the evidence
- **Execution** of the Verdict

This process is described in the prophetic chain **after the 1260-year rule** of the little horn:

Daniel 7:9-10, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22:

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days [in heaven]** 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; ¹⁰ 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 [in heaven]**, and the **books were opened [the investigation]**. . . ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He **came to the Ancient of Days [in heaven]**, and they brought Him near before Him **[before the Father in heaven]**. ¹⁴ Then **to Him [to Jesus] was given [in heaven] dominion and glory and a kingdom [clearly Jesus receives the kingdom in heaven before the second coming]**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and **His kingdom** the one which shall not be destroyed. . . **[the execution of the sentence]** But the **saints** of the Most High **shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom** forever, even forever and ever.' ²¹ "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²² **until the Ancient of Days came**, and a judgment was made **in favor of the saints [in heaven]** of the Most High **[in heaven]**, and **the time came [at the second coming]** for the **saints to possess** the kingdom **[when Jesus comes]**."*

Summary of the **three stages** in Daniel 7:

- Books are opened and the **records examined**
- **Christ is given** in heaven the kingdom composed of His subjects
- The **subjects** of Christ's kingdom then **receive the kingdom**

Ellen White, in full harmony with the Bible understood that when the investigation is over, the **kingdom of Jesus will be made up** or complete:

*"Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the [investigative] judgment had been going on for the **righteous** dead, and then for the **righteous** living. Christ had **received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were **made up**. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, **was given to Jesus** and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords." *EW*, p. 280*

As soon as the investigative judgment is over, **three successive events** will transpire:

- The close of human **probation**
- The time of **trouble**
- The second **coming**

The view that human probation will close **before** the second coming and God's people will be on earth **during** the tribulation is **another unique belief** of Adventists. In contrast, Evangelical Christians teach that believers will be **caught up** to heaven **before** the tribulation and will **return with Jesus** at the second coming.

In this study and the next we will look at several **snapshots** of events that will transpire **after** the close of human probation and **before** the **glorious deliverance** of God's people at the second coming.

The Pattern in Genesis

Noah preached a **judgment message** for 120 years.

His message was accompanied by the **Holy Spirit**.

Decisions were made **for and against** the truth.

When Noah finished preaching God's message **three successive events** transpired:

#1: The **closing of the door** of human probation—all cases were decided:

Genesis 7:16:

*"So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the **LORD shut him in.**"*

#2: The faith of Noah and his family inside the ark was severely tested while those outside became more violent for each day that passed.

#3: The **destruction** of the wicked and the salvation of Noah and his family.

Matthew 24:37-39: Jesus drew a parallel with what **will happen at the end:**

*“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ 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, ³⁹ and did not know **until** the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”*

Note: Jesus explained that His coming would be as a thief in the night. Let’s pursue this thought. The coming of the thief has **two stages:**

- The first is when the **thief comes** to the house and **finds everyone sleeping**.
- The second is when the people in the house **wake up** and realize that the **thief has come**.
- **Between** these two points there is a **time interval** during which those in the house **do not know** that it is **too late to do anything** about the coming of the thief.

Common Denominators

- A **faithful remnant**
- **Enemies** of the remnant
- A time of **trouble** and anguish for the remnant
- The **faith of the remnant** is severely **tested** during the time of trouble
- The remnant is not immediately delivered—God **delays** to them
- The remnant is finally **delivered by God**

A Foundational Verse: Daniel 12:1

The **previous context** of **Daniel 11:44, 45** describes the **king of the north** going out ‘with great fury to destroy and annihilate many’. The king of the north represents the same end time power as:

- The **clay** (Daniel 2)
- The **little horn** (Daniel 7, 8)
- The **beast** (Revelation 13)
- The **man of sin** (2 Thessalonians 2)
- The **abomination of desolation** (Matthew 24)
- The **harlot** (Revelation 17)
- The **antichrist** (1 John 2)

Daniel 12:1: The **key word** in Daniel 12:1 is ‘**delivered**’. It appears in only **two other chapters** in the book of Daniel (chapters 3 and 6) so these three chapters must be **related**. In the course of our study we will find that Daniel 3 and 6 provide **historical examples** of the future fulfillment of Daniel 12:1. There are **four elements** in this verse that we want to focus on:

*“At **that time** [when the wicked king of the north decrees the destruction of God’s people] Michael shall [1] **stand up**, the great prince who **stands watch** [‘stands guard’ (NIV);*

*'protects', NASB] over the sons of your people; and there shall be a [2] **time of trouble**, such as never was **since there was a nation [reminiscent of Matthew 24:21, 22]**, even to that time and **at that time [at the time of trouble]** your people [3] **shall be delivered**, every one who is found [4] **written in the book [their names must have been confirmed there in the judgment].**"*

Standing Up

Daniel 11:2, 3, KJV: What is meant by '**standing up**'

*"And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there **shall stand up** yet three **kings** in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. ³ And a mighty **king shall stand up**, that **shall rule** with great dominion, and do according to his will.*

Daniel 8:22

*"Now that being broken, whereas four **stood up** for it, four kingdoms **shall stand up** out of the nation, but not in his power."*

*"**Every case** had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the **judgment had been going on** for the **righteous** dead, and then for the **righteous** living. Christ had **received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were made up." EW, p. 280*

Names retained in the book of life:

*"Christ says of the overcomer, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." The names of all those who **have once given themselves** to God are written in the book of life, and their characters are now passing in **review** before Him. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. They are watching the development of character in those now living, to see if their names can be **retained in the book of life.**"*

Source of the Expression 'Jacob's Trouble'

- A **faithful remnant**: Spiritual Israel
- The **enemy** of the remnant: The king of the north
- The time of **trouble** for the remnant
- **Delay** in God to deliver the remnant
- The **Faith tested** of the remnant severely tested
- The remnant is finally **delivered**

The story of Jacob in **Genesis 32**:

- Jacob was **returning** to the promised land after a **20-year exile**.
- Esau, Jacob's **enemy** (**Genesis 27:41**: "I will kill him") was coming with **400 men armed** to their teeth with the **intention of destroying** Jacob and his family.
- Jacob and his family were totally **defenseless**.

- Jacob feared that his brother would **destroy him and his family** and that God would **not protect him** because of the sin he committed 20 years earlier.
- He wanted assurance that his sin was **forgiven** and he could claim God's **protection** from the wrath of his brother.
- **Jacob** crossed the brook **Jabbok** and **alone** poured out his heart to God in **prayer** for deliverance:

*"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. ¹¹ **Deliver [the key word]** me, I pray, from the **hand of my brother**, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and **attack me** and the mother with the children."*

- Jacob struggled with **a mysterious person all night** till the **dawn of day**.
- He refused to let the mysterious being go until he **blessed him**.
- The being blessed him and **changed his name**.
- In the end Jacob was **delivered** from the **wrath** of his brother.

Genesis 32:24-29:

*"Then Jacob was **left alone**; and a **Man wrestled** with him until the breaking of day. ²⁵ Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as **He wrestled with him**. ²⁶ And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said: "I will not let You go unless **You bless me!**" ²⁷ So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." ²⁸ And He said: "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but **Israel**; for you have **struggled with God** and with men, and have **prevailed**." ²⁹ Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said: "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there."*

Who was the **mysterious being** that **blessed** Jacob and **changed his name**?

Hosea 12:4: The person was the **Angel of the Lord**

*"Yes, he struggled with the **Angel [capitalized: 'Michael']** and **prevailed**; he **wept**, and **sought favor** from Him."*

Genesis 32:30: But the **Angel was God** because Jacob called the place '**Peniel**' which means 'face of God'.

*"So Jacob called the name of the place **Peniel**: "For I have **seen God face to face**, and my life is preserved."*

The Babylonian Captivity

Jeremiah 30:7: The Babylonian **captivity**

- A **faithful remnant**: The **faithful** who were taken into **Babylonian captivity**.
- An **enemy** of the remnant: Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.
- The time of **trouble** for the remnant: The anguish of being captive.

- **God's Delay** to deliver the remnant: The **anguish** of the faithful lasted **70 years**.
- The **Faith tested** of the remnant severely tested.
- The remnant was finally **delivered** when **Cyrus** gave the decree to return.

*"For thus says the LORD: 'We have heard a voice of **trembling, of fear**, and not of peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever **in labor** with child? So why do I see every man with his **hands on his loins** like a woman in labor, and all **faces turned pale**? ⁷ Alas! For that day is **great**, so that none is like it; and it is **the time of Jacob's trouble**, but he shall be **saved** out of it. ⁸ 'For it shall come to pass in that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'that I will **break his yoke** from your neck, and will **burst your bonds**; foreigners shall no more **enslave them**. ⁹ But they shall serve the LORD their God, and **David their king**, whom I will raise up for them."*

Matthew 24 and the Great Tribulation

When the abomination of desolation is set up, God's faithful people **have to flee** to the **desolate places** of the earth because they will be **persecuted**:

Matthew 24:21, 22: Tribulation

*²¹ For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, **nor ever shall be**. ²² And unless those days were **shortened**, no flesh would be saved; but for the **elect's sake** those days will be shortened."*

Matthew 24:29-31: The deliverance

*"**Immediately after the tribulation** of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And He will **send His angels** with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together **His elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*

The Persistent Widow of Luke 18:1-8

This parable illustrates **Matthew 24** because of the word '**elect**'

The **when** of the parable (it appears **between two** second coming passages)

The **Protagonists**:

- The **judge**
- The **widow**
- **Crying out** for **justice** over the **adversary**
- The **adversary**
- The **delay**

*"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and **not lose heart**, ² saying: "There was in a certain city a **judge** who did not fear God nor regard man. ³ Now there was a **widow** [destitute of all human support] in that city; and she **came** [kept coming] to him,*

saying, 'Get justice for me from my **adversary [who had cleaned her out].'** ⁴ And he would **not for a while [delay]**; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her **continual coming** she weary me.'" ⁶ Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷ And shall **God [the judge]** not avenge His own elect **[the widow]** who cry out day and night **[this is clear evidence that God does not respond immediately; there is a delay]** to Him **[continual coming]**, though He **bears long** with them? **[though He delays to answer them]** ⁸ I tell you that He will **avenge [a key word in Revelation 6:9-11 and 19:2]** them speedily **[will deliver them]**. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man **comes**, will He really find faith on the earth?"

- The **faithful remnant**: The widow/elect.
- The **enemy** of the widow: The Adversary/Satan.
- The time of **trouble** for the remnant: The widow/elect destitute of all earthly support.
- The **faith** of the widow/elect severely tested.
- **God's Delay** to deliver the remnant: kept coming/elect crying out day and night.
- **Deliverance** when the judge/God **executes justice** in **favor** of the widow/elect and **against** the **adversary**.

Lesson #10: Fire, Lions and Deliverance

by Stephen Bohr

Review of the Prophetic Chain

- **Babylon** (605-539)
- **Medes and Persians** (539-331)
- **Greece** (331-168)
- **Roman Empire** (168-476)
- **Divided Roman Empire** (476-538)
- **Papal Rome** rules for **1260 years** (538-1798)
- **Deadly wound** by France (1798)
- The rise of the beast with **lamblike horns** (1798)
- **WE ARE HERE**: A **period of respite** from persecution (for the last **218 years**)
- The **next event** in the drama: THE LAND BEAST RETURNS POWER TO THE SEA BEAST and the whole **world will follow**
- The close of **human probation**
- The **time of trouble** such as never was
- The **glorious deliverance** of God's people

Let's review a few details about the beast with **lamblike horns** that ends up speaking **like a dragon**. We have clearly identified this beast as a symbol of the **United States**. We noted that the two lamblike horns represent **civil and religious liberty** which are based on the foundational idea of the **separation of church and state**. These two principles are found in the **first amendment** to the Constitution.

The First Amendment

But we also noticed that the beast with lamblike horns will **make an image** of the first beast and **speak like a dragon—like Rome**. In other words, it will help the **first beast recover** its **sword** and **freedom** and will **restrict** civil and religious liberty—it will profess one thing and act another!

- Speaks like a **dragon**
- Exercises **all the authority** of the first beast
- Does all **in the presence** (on behalf of) the first beast
- Commands all to **worship** the first beast

- Makes an **image** of the first beast
- Enforces the **mark** of the first beast

We are reminded that the **first two clauses** of the first amendment guarantee **religious liberty** and the **third** guarantees **civil liberty**. The first two clauses forbid congress from making any law that:

- **Establishes** religion
- Forbids the **free exercise** of religion

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an [1] **establishment of religion** [first clause], or prohibiting [2] **the free exercise thereof** [second clause];*

The **third clause** guarantees civil liberty:

*“... or [3] abridging the freedom of **speech**, or of the **press**; or the right of the people **peaceably to assemble**, and to petition the Government for a **redress of grievances** [third clause].”*

We also noted that when the **religious clauses** are **violated** the result is the **loss of civil liberties**. The time is coming when a national Sunday law will curtail freedom to speak against it, publications will be censored, assembly on the Sabbath will be forbidden and there will be no possibility of asking the government for a redress of grievances.

In our last study we noted that the time of trouble that awaits God’s people has several common denominators. Let’s review them.

Common Denominators

- A **faithful remnant**
- The **enemies** of the remnant
- A time of **trouble** and anguish for the remnant
- The remnant’s **faith is tested**
- **God delays** to deliver the remnant
- The remnant is finally **delivered**

Daniel 3: Illustrates the Violation of the Establishment Clause

Daniel 3 **is a vivid illustration** of what happens when the **civil power** violates the **Establishment Clause** of the first amendment:

In Daniel 3 the civil power established a religious observance and whoever did not comply with the religious law lost all civil rights:

- The **beast** (the civil power)
- Makes an **image**
- The image has a **number** (60X6)
- The civil power **commands** everyone to worship the image
- The civil power proclaims a **death decree** against those who refuse to worship. There is no right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness!

This entire scenario becomes **symbolic** and **global** at the end of time. Babylon will be a **spiritual and global** union of **church and state** and the faithful Hebrew worthies represent God's faithful **global remnant**. In fact, the fulfillment of the story of Daniel 3 is found in Daniel 12:1 where the key word 'deliver' is used.

Daniel 3:15: The **king's challenge**

*"But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And **who is the god who will deliver** you from my hands?"*

Daniel 3:16-18: The **Hebrew worthies** answer

*"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ If that is the case, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver** us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."*

Daniel 3:25, 28: Jesus **intervenes to deliver** and He is described as "**His Angel**"

*"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the **Son of God**. . . Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent **His Angel [this is Michael]** and **delivered** His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!"*

Daniel 3:28-29: The **king extols God's ability to deliver**

*"Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and **delivered** His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree [**illegitimate**] that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who **can deliver** like this."*

Hebrews 11:33, 34: Their **faith was tested** and by faith they **overcame**

*"And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who **through faith** subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the **mouths of lions**, ³⁴ **quenched the violence of fire**. . ."*

Common Denominators

- A **faithful remnant**: The three Hebrew worthies.
- The **enemy** of the remnant: The **king** and his **religious advisors**.

- Time of **trouble** for the remnant: Facing the **death decree** and having to go through the furnace experience.
- The **faith tested** of the Hebrew worthies was **severely tested**.
- **Delay** in God to deliver the remnant: **Not delivered from the anguish** of the furnace but protected in the midst of the furnace.
- The remnant was finally **delivered** by Jesus Christ in person.

Daniel 6: Illustrates the Violation of the Free-Exercise Clause

Remember that once again the Key word is 'deliver'

Daniel 6:5: The conflict was **over the law and worship**

*"Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the **law of his God**."*

Daniel 6:7-9: The law of the king forbade the **free exercise** of Daniel's religion:

*"All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever **petitions any god or man** for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.
⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the written decree."*

Daniel 6:10: Daniel **worshiped the same** way that he had before the law was given. He was not **politically correct**.

*"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his **windows open** toward Jerusalem, he **knelt down on his knees** three times that day, and prayed and **gave thanks** before his God, as was **his custom** since early days."*

Daniel 6:14-23: The key word is '**deliver**'

*"And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to **deliver** him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to **deliver** him.
¹⁶ So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you **serve continually**, He will **deliver** you."¹⁹ Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom **you serve continually**, been **able to deliver** you from the lions?"²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!²² My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was **found innocent** before Him; and also, O king, I have done **no wrong before you**."²³ Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was*

found on him, **because he believed in his God.** ²⁵ Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶ I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel for He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end. ²⁷ He **delivers** and **rescues**, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has **delivered** Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Common Denominators

- The **faithful remnant**: Daniel
- The **enemies** of Daniel: The **king's advisors**
- The time of **trouble** for Daniel: Facing the **death decree** in the lion's den
- Daniel's **faith** was **severely tested**
- God **delayed** to deliver Daniel: He was **kept from** the lion's den but rather was **protected in** the den.
- Daniel was finally **delivered** by Jesus Christ in person.

The Book of Esther

The crisis: Law and worship: The king gave a religious decree commanding Mordecai to bow before Haman but Mordecai **refused to bow:**

Esther 3:1-3

“After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set **his seat above** all the princes who were with him. ² And all the king's servants who were within the king's gate **bowed and paid homage** to Haman, for so the **king had commanded** concerning him. But Mordecai would **not bow or pay homage.** ³ Then the king's servants who were within the king's gate said to Mordecai, “Why do you **transgress the king's command?**”

Haman was **filled with wrath** against Mordecai for not bowing to him as the king had commanded so he decided to wipe out all of the Jews:

“Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people **scattered and dispersed** among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their **laws are different** from all other people's, and they **do not keep the king's laws**, therefore it is **not fitting** for the king to let them remain. ⁹ If it pleases the king, let a **decree be written** that **they be destroyed.**”

- A **faithful remnant**: Mordecai
- An **enemy**: Haman
- Time of **trouble**:

Esther 4:3:

“And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was **great**

mourning among the Jews, with **fasting, weeping, and wailing**; and many lay in **sackcloth and ashes**." Esther 4:3

- The faith of the people in God was **severely tested**
- **Delay**: God did not uncover the plot **immediately**
- The remnant was **delivered**

*"The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be **very similar** to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther. The Persian edict sprang from the malice of Haman toward Mordecai. Not that Mordecai had done him harm, but he had refused to show him reverence which **belongs only to God**. The king's decision against the Jews was secured under **false pretenses** through **misrepresentation** of that peculiar people. Satan instigated the scheme in order to **rid the earth** of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. But **his plots were defeated** by a counter power that reigns among the children of men. **Angels** that excel in strength were commissioned to protect the people of God, and the plots of their adversaries **returned upon their own heads**. The Protestant world today see in the **little company** keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put **out of the way**." 5T, p. 450*

The Experience of Jesus

By far the best example of the **common denominators** is found in the passion of Jesus:

#1: The faithful **remnant**: Jesus

#2: **The enemies**: Satan, Judas, Caiaphas, the religious leaders who instigate the populace

#3: The time of **Trouble**: The anguish in Gethsemane and on the cross

#4: The **faith** of Jesus in His Father was **severely tested**

Matthew 26:37:

"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death."

- He begged His Father to take **away the cup** of His wrath **if possible**
- In anguish Jesus sweated great **drops of blood**
- On the cross He **cried out**: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- **Hebrews 5:7** describes the **perseverant faith** of Jesus:

*"... who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up **prayers and supplications**, with **vehement cries and tears** to Him who was able to save Him from death, and **was heard** because of His godly fear..."*

Ellen White remarks:

*"Amid the **awful darkness**, **apparently forsaken of God**, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those **dreadful hours** He had relied upon the **evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore [up to this point]** given Him. **He was acquainted** with the character of His Father; **He understood** His justice, His mercy, and His great love. **By faith** He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as **in submission** He committed Himself to God, the **sense of the loss** of His Father's favor was withdrawn. **By faith, Christ was victor.**" DA, p. 756*

Jesus did not depend on His **feelings and emotions** in His time of trouble. He **felt separated** from his Father, He **felt that the burden** of sin would separate Him from His Father forever yet **He trusted in the promise** of His Father.

This is the 'faith of Jesus'

#5: **The delay**: The Father did not answer the pleas of Jesus immediately. Jesus was **heard** by His Father but there **was a delay**. **Why the delay?**

Hebrews 5:8:

*"... though He was a Son, yet He **learned obedience** by the things which He **suffered.**"*

#6: The **Deliverance**:

*"He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb for the allotted time. He was in that stony prison house as a **prisoner of divine justice**, and he was **responsible to the Judge** of the universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, and his Father only could **release [deliver]** him." YL, May 2, 1901*

John 10:17, 18: Jesus resurrected by the life that was **within Himself** but the **Father gave Him permission** to do so:

*"Therefore My Father loves Me, because **I lay down My life** that **I may take it again**. **18 No one takes** it from Me, but **I lay it down of Myself**. I have power [**authority**] to lay it down, and I have power [**authority**] to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

Repeating the Experience of Jesus

Ellen White explains that God's **people will** repeat the experience of Jesus and we will need His faith.

*"The forces of the powers of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves unto the control of Satan, and **the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection and crucifixion of Christ will be revived**. Through yielding to satanic influences men will be merged into fiends, and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an*

apostate race his masterpiece of evil--men who reflect his own image." *Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896

The Faithful Generation

The question that Jesus asked at the conclusion of the parable of the **persistent widow will be** answered with a resounding '**yes**' by the **end time generation**.

The faithful generation will have the 'faith of Jesus'

Revelation 13:10: When God's people are **about to face the crisis** of **Revelation 13:11-18**

*"He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the **patience** and the **faith** of the saints."*

Revelation 14:12: **Immediately after** warning about the beast, his image and his mark:

*"Here is the **patience** of the saints; here are those who keep the **commandments** of God and the **faith** of Jesus."*

Why the Delay: The Story of Job

Now we come to the **crucial question**: **Why** will God allow His people to go through the time of trouble? **Why the delay**? If he really **loves them**, why would He allow them to lose all earthly support and to suffer the **excruciating anguish** of the time of trouble?

- #1: The **faithful remnant**: Job
- #2: The **enemy**: Satan

In the heavenly council Satan complains that God has not given him full access to **test Job**. Satan basically says to God: *"Let me **test him** and I will **prove** that he serves you for the **loaves and fishes**."*

- #3: The time of **trouble**: The adversary takes all human support from Job. He lost his possessions, servants, children, health, wife, friends and it appeared that even **God has forsaken him**. From **chapters 3 to 38** Job cried out **in anguish** to God for deliverance
- #4: **Job's faith** was severely **tested**:
- #5: **The delay**: God did not deliver Job from his distress immediately
- #6: God finally spoke and **Job was delivered** from the **hand of his enemy**

Why the Delay?

Why did God allow Job to go through this grueling trial? **Why** will He allow His people to go through the time of trouble such as never has been seen in the history of the world?

Reason #1: God is trying to prove a point to the **heavenly jury**: My people love Me because of **who I am**. Even if I gave them nothing they would **still love me** and be **loyal to me**.

The **three Hebrew worthies** are an example of this. They said to the king: “**God will deliver** us from your hand, but **if He does not** we will still serve Him.”

Reason #2: To **refine the character** of His people; to **consume all earthliness** and prepare them for heaven

Job 23:10:

*“When he [God] has tried me, I shall **come forth as gold.**”*

Isaiah 48:10

*“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have **tested you** in the **furnace of affliction.**”*

*“Their faith does not fail because their prayers are **not immediately answered.** Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, **they do not cease their intercessions.** They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” *GC*, pp. 619, 620*

*“Their affliction is great; the **flames of the furnace** seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth **as gold tried in the fire.** God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the **furnace of fire;** their **earthliness** must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be **perfectly reflected.**” *GC*, p. 621*

What about Us?

Faithfulness in the small trials of life prepare us for the great trial ahead:

Luke 16:10: Faithfulness in the small trials will prepare us for larger ones

Daniel 3: The minds of the Hebrew worthies were made up before the crisis came

Jeremiah 12:5: If we can't run with men, what makes us think we can run with horses?

Lesson #11: Christ or Antichrist - Part 1

by Stephen Bohr

A Wrong Impression

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17: When Paul wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians they misunderstood that the **second coming** of Jesus would take place during **their lifetime**:

*“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain** until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then **we who are alive and remain** shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2: In order to clear up the misconception the apostle Paul sent them a **second letter** to explain that **certain things must transpire** before the *parousia* (second coming) of Jesus.

*“Now, brethren, concerning the **coming [parousia]** of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together **to Him**, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by **spirit [a vision]** or by **word [an oral report]** or by **letter [a written communication]**, as if from us, as though **the day of Christ had come.**”*

“The Apostasy”

2 Thessalonians 2:3: **The ‘apostasy’** had to take place **before** the second coming of Jesus:

*“Let no one **deceive you** by any means [if you believe that Jesus will come before the apostasy you will be deceived]; for **that Day [the parousia]** will not come unless **the [the definite article denotes a specific apostasy] falling away [the word is *apostasia* with the definite article] comes **first**...***”

Note: The apostle Paul assured the Thessalonians that **the** apostasy would take place **before** the *Parousia* of Jesus. The expression ‘falling away’ (*apostasia* in Greek) is used **classical Greek** to describe a boat that is **not well anchored** at port and is **slowly drifting away**. A boat **cannot drift away** from the port unless it was at the port in the first place. This verse is referring to a drifting away from the **apostolic gospel**. It is notable that the word

'apostasy' is preceded by the **definite article**. This was not simply **an** apostasy but **the** apostasy—an apostasy that was already predicted in the Old Testament **book of Daniel**.

“The Man of Sin”

2 Thessalonians 2:3:

*“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 **leader** of the apostasy is called '*the man of sin*' so we must determine the **biblical definition** of sin:

1 John 3:4 NKJV:

*“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and **sin is lawlessness.**”*

The Bible defines sin as '*the **transgression of the law***' (*anomias*) so the antichrist must in some way **encourage people to transgress God's law**. This is further confirmed by the fact that later on in this chapter the apostasy is called '*the mystery of **lawlessness***'. The word 'lawlessness' is the identical word that is translated in the KJV '*transgression of the law*' (1 John 3:4).

Daniel 7:25: One is reminded of the **little horn** (the Antichrist) that was to arise after the fragmentation of the **Roman Empire** and would think to **change God's Law**:

*“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and **shall intend to change times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.”*

The Man of Sin is “Revealed”

2 Thessalonians 2:3:

*“Let no one deceive you by any means; for **that Day [of Christ's coming]** will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin **is revealed** . . .”*

The antonym of the word 'revealed' is '**concealed**'. In the days of Paul this Antichrist was **under the radar** or **concealed**. That is, the spirit of the man of sin already existed in the days of Paul but was **under the radar** until the **specific time** that prophecy indicated he would **reveal** himself. Paul had already warned the **Ephesian elders** that from among believers themselves would come individuals who would **teach heresies** to lead the faithful astray from the truth:

Acts 20:28-30

*“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. **29** For*

I know this, that **after my departure** savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also **from among yourselves** men will rise up, **speaking perverse things**, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”

“The Son of Perdition”

2 Thessalonians 2:3: The ‘man of sin’ is also called ‘**the son of perdition**’ so we must pursue the meaning of this enigmatic name:

“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** . . .”

The Character of Judas

John 17:12: Jesus said concerning Judas:

“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except **the son of perdition**, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

The specific name ‘son of perdition’ appears only here and in 2 Thessalonians 2. In the Bible, a **name** is indicative of a **person’s character**:

“In Biblical thought a name is **not a mere label** of identification; it is an expression of the **essential nature** of its bearer. A man’s name **reveals his character**. Adam was able to give names to the beasts and birds (Gen. 2:20) because, as Milton says, he understood their nature.” *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, volume 3, pp. 500, 501

Jesus referred to Judas Iscariot with the **identical name** of the ‘man of sin’ so the character of the ‘man of sin’ must bear a **marked resemblance** to the character of Judas.

The Nature of the Antichrist

There is a fundamental **misconception** in the Christian World about the **nature** of the Antichrist. Most **conservative Protestants** teach that the antichrist will be a **wicked individual** who will sit in a rebuilt **Jewish temple** for three and a half **literal years**, persecute the Jews and **openly defy God** and blaspheme His name. But this is an erroneous assessment of the evidence for the following reasons:

- Practically all Bible scholars agree that the **man of sin** (2 Thessalonians 2), the **little horn** (Daniel 7) and **the beast** (Revelation 13:1-10) all represent **the same power**. It is noteworthy that in prophecy a beast always **represents a kingdom** and not an individual person.
- Prophecy informs us that the little horn would rule for a period of **1260 years**. It is rather obvious that **no individual** has lived that long!
- The man of sin was underground **in the days of the apostle Paul** and was being **restrained**. According to 2 Thessalonians 2:8, 9 the same man of sin will be

destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. There is not a person on planet earth who was alive in the days of Paul and will still be alive when Jesus comes.

- The expression 'the man of sin' (masculine/singular) would seem to refer to an **individual**. However, the **masculine singular** is used in **other contexts** for a **succession** of persons and not for lone individuals. For example, in **Hebrews 9:7** the expression '**the priest**' (masculine/singular) describes a succession of priests. Likewise, in **1 Samuel 8:11** the expression '**the king**' (masculine/singular) is used of a succession of kings. Finally, **2 Timothy 3:17** uses the expression '**the man of God**' to describe all Christians of all times.

The Scriptures teach that the antichrist will be a **political/religious system** possessing the identical **character qualities as Judas**. It will be **ambitious**, covetous of **power and money**, and desirous of an **earthly kingdom**. While **overtly** professing loyalty to Christ, the antichrist will work **covertly** to betray Him.

Although **Dave Hunt** was a dyed in the wool **futurist**, he captured well the character of the antichrist:

*"While the Greek prefix 'anti' generally means 'against' or 'opposed to,' it can also mean '**in the place of**' or '**a substitute for**.' The Antichrist will embody both meanings. He will **oppose Christ while pretending to be Christ**. Instead of a **frontal assault** against Christianity, the evil one will **pervert the church from within** by posing as its founder. He will cunningly misrepresent Christ while **pretending to be Christ**. And right here is where the plot thickens. If the Antichrist will indeed pretend to be the Christ, then his **followers must be 'Christians!'**" Dave Hunt, Global Peace, p. 7-8.*

The Greek word **antichristos** has the same basic meaning, as does **Vicarius Christi** in Latin. Most people assume that the word antichrist means '**one who is against Christ**.' It is true that in Greek the preposition *anti* can mean 'against' when it is used with a verb. But it is equally true that this preposition, when it is used as a **prefix to a noun** quite frequently means '*instead of,*' or '*in place of*'

- In classical Greek, for example, the word **antibasileus** means '*one who occupies the place of the king.*'
- In the New Testament, the name Herod **Antipas** means that Herod ruled '*in place of his father.*' (Revelation 2:13)
- The word **antitype** means '*that which takes the place of the type.*'
- Christ is spoken of as having given His life as a ransom '*in place of*' (**antilutron**) all (I Timothy 2:6).
- Thus the word *antichristos* in Greek and *Vicarius Filii Dei* in Latin bear a very similar meaning!

So the antichrist will **not be** an **atheistic and blasphemous** individual **openly attacking** Christianity but rather a system claims to act **in the place of and in the name of** Christ. In

this context it would be well to remember that **Francis I** is the **first Jesuit pope** in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Francis comes across as a **very pious person** who seems to manifest great regard the **poor and outcast** of society. Ellen White gave us a portrait of the Jesuit Order:

*“When appearing as members of their order, they wore a **garb of sanctity**, visiting **prisons and hospitals**, ministering to the **sick and the poor**, professing to have **renounced the world**, and bearing the sacred name of Jesus, who went about **doing good**. But **under** this blameless **exterior** the most criminal and deadly purposes were **concealed**.”* GC, pp. 234, 235

The **best description** of the stealth character of the Papacy that I have ever read is in the book The Great Controversy:

*“It is a part of her **[the papacy’s]** policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but **beneath** the variable **appearance** of the chameleon she **conceals** the invariable **venom** of the serpent.”* GC, p. 571

Let’s examine the character qualities of **Judas Iscariot**.

A Shrewd Administrator

The gospels portray Judas as a **shrewd politician and a sharp businessman** who carried the **money bag** and **craved the praise** of the world. Ellen White describes this quality:

*“He had come more into contact with the world than they **[the other disciples]**, he was a man of **good address**, of **discernment** and **executive ability**, and, having a **high estimate of his own qualifications**, he had led the disciples to hold him in the same regard. But the methods he desired to introduce into Christ’s work were based upon **worldly principles** and were controlled by **worldly policy**.”* Education, p. 93.

*“But Judas was a **speculator**. He thought that he could manage the **finances of the church**, and by his **sharpness in business** get gain. He was divided in heart. He **loved the praise of the world**. He refused **to give up the world** for Christ. He never committed his eternal interests to Christ. He had a **superficial religion**, and therefore he speculated upon his Master and betrayed Him to the priests, being fully persuaded that **Christ would not allow** Himself to be taken. Judas was a **religious fraud**. He held up a high standard for others, but he himself utterly failed to reach the Bible standard. He did not bring the religion of Christ into his life.”* 5BC, pp. 1101, 1102

*“Judas summed up all the disciples, and flattered himself that the church would often be brought into **perplexity and embarrassment** if it were not for **his ability as a manager**. Judas regarded himself as the **capable one**, who could not be overreached. In his own estimation he was **an honor to the cause**, and as such he always represented himself.”* DA, p. 717

Judas Coveted an Earthly Kingdom

It was Judas' **strong desire** that Jesus would establish an **earthly kingdom**. Contrary to what many think, Judas did not deliver Jesus so that He would die. He betrayed Jesus in the hopes that He would deliver Himself, **destroy the hated romans** and establish an **earthly kingdom**.

John 6:15:

When Jesus fed the **five thousand** it was Judas who **encouraged the crowd** to take Jesus by force to make Him King. But Jesus would have **none of it**:

*"Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him **by force** to **make Him king**, He departed again to the mountain by Himself **alone**."*

*"Judas **was first** to take advantage of the enthusiasm excited by the miracle of the loaves. **It was he** who set on foot the project to take Christ by force and make Him king. **His hopes were high**. His disappointment was bitter" *DA*, pp. 718, 719.*

*'Notwithstanding the Savior's own teaching, Judas was **continually advancing** the idea that Christ would reign as **king in Jerusalem**. At the feeding of the five thousand he tried to bring this about . . .'" *DA*, pp. 718, 719*

When Jesus **washed the feet** of the disciples, it was the straw that broke the camel's back:

*"If Jesus could so humble Himself, he thought, **He could not be Israel's king**. All hope of **worldly honor** in a **temporal kingdom** was destroyed. Judas was satisfied that there was nothing to be gained by following Christ. After seeing Him **degrade Himself**, as he thought, he was confirmed in his purpose to disown Him, and confess himself deceived. He was **possessed by a demon**, and he resolved to complete the work he had agreed to do in betraying his Lord." *DA*, p. 645*

Judas Coveted Money and Feigned Love for the Poor

According to **Matthew 8:19-21** Judas **offered himself to become** one of Jesus' disciples and Jesus informed him that there would be **no financial benefit** if he did:

*"Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You, wherever You go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the **Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head**."*

John 12:4-6: Judas not only coveted earthly **political power** but he also **coveted money**. When Jesus **refused both**, Judas chose to betray Him:

*"But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and **given to the poor?**" ⁶ This he said, **not that he cared for the poor**, but because he was **a thief**, and had the **money box**; and he used to take what was put in it."*

Luke 22:3-6: Judas betrayed Jesus **for money**

*“Then **Satan entered Judas**, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. ⁴ So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and **agreed to give him money**. ⁶ So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.”*

*“Judas had naturally a strong **love for money**; but he had not always been corrupt enough to do such a deed as this. He had fostered the evil spirit of **avarice** until it had become the ruling motive of his life. The **love of mammon** overbalanced his love for Christ. Through becoming the slave of one vice he gave himself to Satan, to be driven to any lengths in sin.” DA, p. 716*

Became Satan’s Vicar

After feeding the 5,000 Jesus referred to **Judas as ‘a devil’**. Jesus knew that Judas was the **ringleader** in the movement to force Him to take over the reins of the **civil government** to become King.

John 6:70, 71: Jesus referred to Judas **as a devil**:

*“Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is **a devil**?” ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who **would betray Him**, being one of the twelve.”*

John 13:2: As Satan had done in heaven, Judas **feigned support** for Jesus while he was **secretly undermining** Him. At this point the devil had merely put into the **heart of Judas** the idea of betraying Jesus but he had **not yet passed** the point of no return:

*“And supper being ended, **the devil** having already **put it into the heart** of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him . . .”*

John 13:27: **At the end of the Last Supper,** Satan possessed Judas and he became the vicar of Satan:

*“Now after the piece of bread, **Satan entered him**. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”*

*“Judas became **a representative** [bears the same meaning as ‘vicar’] of the enemy of Christ.” DA, p. 295*

His Hypocrisy Deceived even the Disciples

It is important to realize that during the entire ministry of Jesus, Judas did not reveal himself for what he really was. Like the man of sin, he had not revealed his true character. He constantly worked at cross purposes with Jesus while claiming to support Him. As with the ‘man of sin’ His opposition to Christ was not openly revealed until the very end.

Judas had the variable appearance of a chameleon. He did not openly war against Jesus, but as Ellen White explains it, he manifested a '**continuous, secret and subtle antagonism**' (Education, p. 92).

*"Judas possessed a **form of godliness**, while his character was **more satanic** than divine. He **professed** to be a disciple of Christ, but in words and in works **denied Him.**" *The Sanctified Life, p. 59**

Judas was on **Jesus' left** at the last supper. The parable of the **sheep and the goats** reveals the significance of the right and the left sides. The right side is the side of God's favor and the left side is the side of His disfavor:

*"Judas pressed next to Christ on the **left side**; John was on the right. If there was a **highest place**, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be **next to Christ**. And Judas was a traitor." *DA, p. 644**

Matthew 26:25: Judas had the other disciples deceived **until the very end:**

The word '**traitor**' refers to a person who professes loyalty to someone and yet works by subterfuge to undermine him:

*"Then Judas, who was **betraying** Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, **is it I?**" He said to him, "You have said it."*

John 13:26-29: Judas had a **form of godliness** and deceived his **own colleagues**. He was the instrument in the hands of Satan to betray Jesus:

*"Jesus answered, "**It is he** to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ Now after the piece of bread, **Satan entered him**. Then Jesus said to him, "**What you do, do quickly.**" ²⁸ But no one at the table **knew for what reason** He said this to him. ²⁹ For **some thought**, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give **something to the poor.**"*

Betrayed Jesus with a Kiss

Luke 22:47, 48: Jesus delivered Jesus **with a kiss:**

*"And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus **to kiss Him.**" ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you **betraying** the Son of Man **with a kiss?**"*

Judas went to Perdition (destruction)

Matthew 27:3-5: Judas went to **perdition**

*"Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, **was remorseful** and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" ⁵ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and **hanged himself**."*

Summary of Characteristics:

- A shrewd **politician** and sharp **administrator**
- Coveted **political power** and desired Christ to set up an **earthly kingdom**
- Was **covetous of money** and **earthly display**
- He feigned an interest for **the poor**
- He became the **vicar** or representative of Satan
- His hypocrisy deceived even those who were in the **inner circle**
- He betrayed Jesus with **a kiss**
- He was an **enemy from the inside** who feigned a love for Jesus

Opposes God

2 Thessalonians 2:4: We are told that the Antichrist would '**oppose God**':

*"... who **opposes** and **exalts himself above** all that is called God or that is worshiped..."*

What does it mean to 'oppose God'? Most conservative protestant scholars see the antichrist as one who **will openly defy** God. But the character of Judas clearly shows that the opposition is **not overt** but rather **covert**. Judas professed to love Jesus and support Him but stealthily opposed Him.

The greatest enemies of Jesus were those who **professed to serve** God. **Saul of Tarsus** claimed to defend God's cause but was actually **betraying it**. The system we are talking about **claims to serve the true God** but in its history it has persecuted and **killed millions** in the name of God. The Roman Catholic Church would never admit that in killing the saints **it was opposing God**.

John 16:2: Jesus predicted that **after His departure** many of His followers would be killed in the name of God:

*"They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he **offers God service** [when they are really opposing God]."*

Acts 5:38, 39: Gamaliel warned the members of the Sanhedrin that in professing to serve God, they might **actually be opposing Him**:

*"And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to **fight against God**."*

According to the book Education, p. 92, *Judas manifested a '**continuous, secret and subtle antagonism**' against Christ. He did not war **openly** but rather opposed Jesus by stealth. In this manner, Judas had a character similar to Lucifer:*

*"Working with **mysterious secrecy**, and for a time **concealing** his real purpose under an **appearance** of reverence for God. . ." GC, p. 495*

The Act of Sitting

2 Thessalonians 2:4: We are told that the Antichrist would '**sit**' in the temple of God. What does it mean 'to sit'?

*"... who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he **sits [kathizo]** as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."*

Matthew 23:2:

*"The scribes and the Pharisees **sit in Moses' seat.**"*

We are told that the Scribes and Pharisees **sat (kathizo)** on Moses' **seat (kathedra)**. This expression is **not to be understood literally**. Actually, sitting on Moses' Seat was a symbolic expression meaning that when the scribes and Pharisees spoke **ex-cathedra, (from the throne)** their teachings were to be accepted **as infallible** because they had supposedly received them in an **unbroken line** of oral tradition from Moses. The Roman Catholic Jerome Bible Commentary explains the meaning of the expression:

*"The phrase [**sit on Moses' Seat**] is most probably a **metaphor** for the **authority** of the scribes to teach. In rabbinical tradition the interpretation of the Law was carried on in a scribal tradition that theoretically went back through an **unbroken chain** of scribes to Moses. This view is, of course, entirely **unhistorical.**" (The Jerome Bible Commentary, volume 2 (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 102)*

In the Temple of God as God

2 Thessalonians 2:4:

*"... who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in **the temple of God**, showing himself that he is God."*

We are also told that the man of sin sits **as God 'in the temple of God' claiming** to be God. Is the expression 'temple of God' a reference to the **literal rebuilt** Jerusalem temple?

Matthew 21:12, 13: When Jesus entered the Jewish temple at the **triumphal entry** He described the temple as 'the temple of God' and 'My house':

*"Then Jesus went into the **temple of God** and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.*

¹³ And He said to them, "It is written, '**My house** shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

Matthew 23:38: But when Jesus **forsook** the temple a short while later, He said to the Jewish leadership:

"See! **Your house** is left to you desolate."

Clearly, the Jewish temple was **no longer God's temple** after Jesus left it. When the **apostle Paul** used the word 'temple' (naos), he always applied it spiritually **to the Christian church** and **never to the literal** Jewish temple (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21).

There are **two Greek words** that are translated 'temple' in the New Testament. One is **hieron** and the other is **naos**. The apostle Paul **never** used the word *naos* to refer to the Jewish temple. Without exception he used the word *naos* as a reference to the spiritual temple, the Christian church. In the **book of Acts**, the Jewish 'temple' is referred to **25 times** and it is never called *naos*. Furthermore, not even once in any of the **epistles** is the word *naos* applied to the literal Jewish temple.

Paul explained to the **Ephesians** what he meant by the word 'temple':

Ephesians 2:19-22

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the **chief cornerstone**, ²¹ in whom the **whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord, ²² in whom you also **are being built** together for a **dwelling place of God** in the Spirit."*

In this passage the apostle Paul clearly explains that the temple is spiritual:

- **Foundations** of the temple: Apostles and Prophets
- **Chief Cornerstone:** Jesus
- **Stones:** Believers
- **Shekinah:** The Holy Spirit (invisible)

In conclusion, the man of sin who sits in the temple of God must **sit within the Christian Church**. The link between the **little horn** and the **man of sin** can be clearly seen by the fact that the little horn/beast speaks **blasphemies** against the Most High and **demands worship**.

It is hardly a coincidence that Pope **Benedict XVI**, at the conclusion of the week for Christian unity in **St. Paul's Outside the Wall**, sat on a great **white throne** and on each side of the throne was a **cherub**. This is a usurpation of the position of the **great YHWH** because it is He who sits between the cherubim (Psalm 80:1).

Paul had warned them

2 Thessalonians 2:5 Paul was not to blame for the misunderstanding of the Thessalonians. He **was surprised** that they did not remember that he had taught them these things when he was with them:

*“Do you not remember that when I was still with you **I told you these things?**”*

Lesson #12: Christ or Antichrist - Part 2

by Stephen Bohr

In our first lecture we discussed **the emergence** of the man of sin. We noticed that the **spirit** of the man of sin was **already operational** during the lifetime of the apostle Paul but was **under the radar**, just waiting for the proper time to **fully reveal** himself. In the lesson today we will notice that in the days of the apostle Paul something/someone **was restraining** the man of sin from **openly revealing** himself.

Paul's Mysterious Restrainer

2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7:

*"And now you know **what** [neuter: 'something'] **is restraining**, that **he** [masculine singular: 'someone'] may be revealed in **his** [masculine singular: 'someone'] own time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is **already** at work; only **He** [masculine: someone] who **now restrains** will do so until **He** [masculine: someone] is **taken out of the way**."*

In the times of the apostle Paul **someone/something** was preventing the 'man of sin' from **openly** rising to power. So to speak, the 'man of sin' was **anxious to openly reveal himself** but he was **chained** or in **captivity**. The question is: What was restraining the 'man of sin' in the days of Paul?

The answer is that the **Roman Empire/emperors** ruled the world and had the reins of **civil power** and **the sword**. The man of sin **could not occupy the throne** of civil power until the Roman **Empire/emperor** were taken out of the way. Here is how the apostle Paul describes the power that ruled in his day:

Romans 13:4:

*"For **he** [the civil authority] is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for **he** [the civil authority] does not bear **the sword** in vain; for **he** [the civil authority] is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on **him** who practices evil."*

The critical question at his point is this: How was the 'man of sin' **released from his captivity**? How was he able to escape his chains in order to fully reveal himself? The answer is found in the books of **Daniel and Revelation**.

The Transfer of Civil Power

Daniel 7:23, 24: Paul was referring to this **specific prophecy** in 2 Thessalonians 2:

*"Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be a **fourth kingdom [the Roman empire]** on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces.²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise **from this kingdom [the divided Roman empire]** and another shall rise **after them [papal Rome]**; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings."*

According to these verses, the **[1] Roman Empire** would be fragmented into **[2] ten kingdoms** and then the **[3] man of sin** would rise to power from this kingdom. Cyril of Jerusalem (318-386 AD) who was living in the period when the Roman Empire was falling apart, understood very well the link between Daniel 7 and 2 Thessalonians 2:

*"But this aforesaid Antichrist is to come when the **[1] times of the Roman Empire shall have been fulfilled**, and the end of the world is drawing near. There shall rise up together **[2] ten kings of the Romans**, reigning in different parts perhaps, but all **about the same time**; and after those an eleventh, the Antichrist, who by his magical craft shall **[3] seize upon the Roman power**; and of the kings who reigned before him, 'three he shall humble,' and the remaining seven he shall keep in subjection to himself." (‘Catechetical Lectures’ Section 15, on II Thessalonians 2:4; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII, p. 108 [New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1895])*

The book of Revelation describes this transfer of power:

Revelation 13:2: The ten-horned dragon gave his throne and authority to the beast:

*"Now the **beast [symbol of the papacy]** which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The **dragon [pagan Rome] gave him [the papacy] his power, his throne, and great authority.**"*

Ellen White describes this **transfer of power** from pagan Rome to papal Rome:

*"In the **sixth century [538]** the papacy had become firmly established. Its **seat** of power was **fixed in the imperial city**, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the **head over the entire church**. Paganism had **given place** to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority" **Revelation 13:2**. And **now began** the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7." GC, p. 54*

Thus, Daniel, John and Ellen White all agree that the **vacancy** of the imperial throne in the west led to the **rise of the papacy**.

How the 'Man of Sin' was Released

In the year **330 AD** emperor Constantine moved the seat of the Roman Empire to Constantinople thus weakening the political power of the Roman emperor/empire in the west.

Then, around the **end of the fourth** and **early fifth** centuries, hordes of **barbarian tribes** from the north invaded and carved up the Roman Empire. **Romulus Augustulus**, the last emperor of the west was deposed in the year **476 AD**. Says a historian about the significance of the year 476 AD:

*"When the insignificant Romulus Augustulus was deposed (476), there was **no longer even a titular emperor.**" (Paul Hutchinson & Winnifred E. Garrison, 20 Centuries of Christianity: A Concise History. First edition, p. 93, 1959, Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., New York)*

Without an emperor on the throne, the **civil society** of the empire was thrown into turmoil. The abandonment of Rome by Constantine and the barbarian incursions into the western Roman Empire turned it **upside down** and left it **without a civil ruler** who could preserve law and order.

In the midst of this **chaotic situation**, the **Bishop of Rome** was **enticed** by the Barbarian tribes to take the reins of civil power and bring about **order** in the empire. As a result, the bishop of Rome was not only the **spiritual leader** of the church but also became the **temporal ruler** of the state. In this way, the Roman Empire was taken out of the way to give way to the papacy. This is how historians describe this transfer of power:

*"But **from the hour** when Constantine, in the language of the Roman law, 'Deo jubente,' by the command of God, **translated the seat** of power to Constantinople, from that moment there **never reigned in Rome** a temporal prince to whom the Bishops of Rome owed a permanent allegiance." (The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, Second edition, London: Burns & Lambert, pp. 11, 12)*

The Roman Catholic, **James P. Conroy** explains it this way:

*"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, in this simple manner, the best title of all to **kingly right**, commenced the **temporal sovereignty** of the popes. And meekly stepping to the **throne of Caesar**, the vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the emperors and kings of Europe were **to bow in reverence** through so many ages." James P. Conroy, *American Quarterly Catholic Quarterly Review*, April, 1911*

*"Under the [stage #1: the dragon] the popes had **no temporal powers**. But when the Roman Empire had **disintegrated** [stage #2: the ten horns] and its place had been taken by a number of rude, barbarous kingdoms, the **Roman Catholic Church** [stage #3: the little horn] not only*

became independent of the states in religious affairs but **dominated secular affairs** as well.” Carl Conrad Eckhardt, *The Papacy and World Affairs* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1937), p. 1

“During the **whole medieval period** there was **in Rome a single spiritual and temporal authority [the papacy]** exercising powers which in the end exceeded those that had ever lain within the grasp of the Roman emperor.” (R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, volume 2), pp. 24-25

“[In] the Middle Ages the church was not a State, **it was the State**; or rather, the civil authority (for a separate society was not recognized), was merely **the police department of the Church**.” John N. Figgis, *From Gerson to Grotius*, p. 4

This idea of the church ruling in **temporal** as well as in **spiritual** affairs was explained in **1302** when pope **Boniface VIII** wrote a significant bull (personal letter) titled **Unam Sanctam**:

“We are informed by the texts of the gospels that in this **[Roman Catholic] Church** and in its power are **two swords**; namely, the **spiritual** and the **temporal**. **Both**, therefore, are in the **power of the Church**, that is to say, the spiritual and the material sword, but the former **[the spiritual]** is to be administered for the Church but the latter **[the temporal]** by the Church; the former in the hands of the **priest**; the latter by the hands of **kings and soldiers**, but **at the will and sufferance of the priest**.”

Cardinal **Edward Henry Manning** described **the manner** in which the Roman Pontiff originally rose to civil power in the Roman Empire. Manning explained what occurred when the Roman Empire was invaded and torn apart by the barbarian invasions:

“Now the **abandonment of Rome** was the **liberation** of the pontiffs. Whatsoever claims to obedience the emperors may have made, and whatsoever compliance the Pontiff may have yielded, the whole previous relation, anomalous, and annulled again and again by the vices and outrages of the emperors, was finally dissolved by a **higher power**. The providence of God permitted a succession of **irruptions**, Gothic, Lombard, and Hungarian, to desolate Italy, and to **efface from it every remnant of the empire**. The pontiffs found themselves **alone**, the **sole fountains of order, peace, law, and safety**. And from the hour of this providential **liberation**, when, by a divine intervention, the **chains fell off** from the hands of the successor of St. Peter, as once before from his own, no sovereign has ever reigned in Rome except the Vicar of Jesus Christ.” Henry Edward Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ*, Preface, pp. xxviii, xxix. London: Burns and Lambert, 1862

Manning further explains:

“It [the papacy] waited until such a time as God should break its **bonds** asunder, and **should liberate it from subjection to civil powers**, and **enthroned it** in the possession of a **temporal**

sovereignty of its own.” Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ (London: Burns & Lambert, second edition, 1862), pp. 11-13

Manning is saying that when the emperor Constantine moved the see of the Empire to Constantinople and the barbarians carved up the empire, the **bishop of Rome filled the vacuum** and became the arbiter in **civil affairs** as well as in **religious**. Remarkably, Manning refers to this taking over of civil power by the bishop of Rome with expressions such as “**breaking bonds asunder**”, and “**chains falling off**”, terminology that is reminiscent of 2 Thessalonians 2. The dragon had given the beast ‘*his power, his throne and great authority*’ (Revelation 13:2)

The noted Bible commentator, **Albert Barnes**, understood the meaning of 2 Thessalonians 2:7:

*“The supposition which will best suit this language is, that there was then some **civil restraint** preventing the development of existing corruptions, but that there would be a **removal, or withdrawing of that restraint**; and that then the tendency of the existing corruptions would be seen. It is evident, as Oldshausen remarks, that this resisting or restraining power must be **something out of the church**, and distinguished from the anti-Christian tendency itself. . . . It is necessary, therefore, to understand this of the **restraints of civil power**. Was there, then, any fact in history which will accord with this interpretation? The belief among the primitive Christians was, that what hindered the rise of the man of sin was the **Roman Empire**, and therefore “they prayed for its peace and welfare, as knowing that when the **Roman Empire should be dissolved and broken in pieces**, the empire of the man of sin would be raised on its ruins” From Barnes’ Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved*

Ellen G. White has some interesting statements regarding how the **secular power was removed** and the papacy was able to ascend to power:

*“The spirit of compromise and conformity [**of the early Christian church**] was **restrained** for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under **paganism [the Roman Empire]**. But as **persecution ceased**, and Christianity **entered the courts and palaces of kings**, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions.” GC, p. 49.*

*“The vast empire of Rome **crumbled to pieces**, and **from its ruins** rose that mighty power, the Roman Catholic Church. This church boasts of her infallibility and her hereditary religion” (Ellen G. White, Manuscript Releases, volume 1, p. 50)*

As we have seen, in cryptic language, the **apostle Paul** had already referred this moment when the civil power of the Roman Empire would be given over to papal Rome. In 2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7 the apostle referred to the removal of the mysterious **restrainer**:

*“And now you know **what** is restraining [**the civil power of the Roman Empire**], that **he** may be revealed in his own time [**once the restrainer was taken out of the way**]. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only **he** [**the emperor**] who **now restrains** will do so until **he** is **taken out of the way**.”*

Paul’s Cryptic Language

The **early church Fathers** were practically **unanimous** in the opinion that the ‘restrainer’ was a reference to the Roman **Empire** in general and to the **emperors** in particular. In 2 Thessalonians 2:6 the apostle refers to **what** was restraining (using the neuter article **to katechon**) but in verse 7 he refers to **who** was restraining (using the masculine article **ho katechon**). By his use of language, Paul indicates that the Church at **Thessalonica knew who/what** was restraining. And yet Paul wrote in veiled, cryptic language. Why didn’t Paul just come out and write openly that the Roman Empire was the restrainer that would be taken out of the way in order to give way to the papacy?

The answer is not hard to find. If Paul had said openly that the Roman Empire would be taken out of the way, the Roman government would have had grounds to accuse Paul of **sedition**. So Paul had to be **cautious** in the language that he used.

Dispensationalists (Evangelicals who believe in the Rapture of the church before the tribulation) and even the **Andrews University Study Bible** erroneously teach that the restrainer is the **Holy Spirit** who will be removed before the tribulation. But if this were true, then why would there be any need for Paul **to be so cautious**? It is clear that Paul could not define the ‘restrainer’ openly and he did not need to because the Thessalonians knew who he was writing about.

It will be noticed that Cardinal Manning wrote that the fall of the Roman Empire led to the ‘**liberation**’ of the Roman Pontiff. If the Roman Pontiff was liberated by the fall of the Empire, then he must have been **restrained** or in **captivity** before. Likewise, if the **chains fell off** the successor of Peter then the chains must have been in place before the Empire fell. The inevitable conclusion from Manning’s words is that the fall of the empire removed or **took away** the restraint from the Bishop of Rome.

The Ante-Nicene Fathers

Now let us turn to the writings of the early church Fathers to see how they understood the ‘restrainer’. It must be noted that many of these church fathers were **living in the very time frame** of Rome’s demise and fall.

Let us begin with **Tertullian** (160-240 AD):

*“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who **now hinders** must hinder, until he be taken out of the way.’ What **obstacle** is there but the **Roman state**, the falling away of*

which, by being scattered into **ten kingdoms**, shall introduce **Antichrist** upon (its own ruins)? 'And then shall be revealed the wicked one.'" 'On the Resurrection of the Flesh,' chapter 24; Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. III, p. 563 [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908]

Tertullian (160-240 AD) also wrote:

"The very end of all things threatening dreadful woes is only **retarded** by the continued existence of the Roman Empire." ('Apology,' chapter 32; Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III, p. 43)

Lactantius, who lived in the early **Fourth Century**, wrote:

"The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place; except that **while the city of Rome remains**, it appears that nothing of this kind is to be feared. But when that capital of the world **shall have fallen**, and shall have begun to be a street, which the Sibyls say shall come to pass, who can doubt that the end has now arrived to the affairs of men and the whole world? It is that city, that only, which **still sustains all things**." ('The Divine Institutes,' book 7, chapter 25; Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII, p. 220)

Next we present the testimony of **Ambrose** (died in 398 AD):

"**After the falling or decay** of the Roman Empire, Antichrist shall appear." (Quoted in, Bishop Thomas Newton, Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 463 [London: B. Blake, 1840])

Next in line is **Chrysostom** (died in 407 AD):

"When the **Roman Empire is taken out of the way**, then he [**the Antichrist**] shall come. And naturally. For as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly exalt himself, but **when that is dissolved**, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government **both** of man and of God." 'Homily IV on 2 Thessalonians 2:6-9,' Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. XIII, p. 389 [New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1905]

Finally, we will quote from **Jerome** (died in 420 AD):

"He that **letteth [restrains]** is taken **out of the way**, and yet we do not realize that Antichrist is near." (Letter to Ageruchia, written about 409 A. D. Letter 123, section 16; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. VI, p. 236 [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912]).

'In His Time'

2 Thessalonians 2:6:

"And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed **in his own time**."

What is the meaning of the expression 'in his time'? The **reflexive pronoun** ('his own') indicates that the man of sin would arise at a **specific time**. The little horn prophecy in Daniel 7:25 indicates that there was **a set time** for the little horn to rise to power: 'time, times and

the dividing of time.' Revelation 13:5 refers to this period as 42 months and Revelation 12:14 as 1260 days.

The Mystery of Iniquity

2 Thessalonians 2:7:

*"For the mystery of lawlessness is **already** at work; only **He [the emperor]** who now restrains will do so until **he [the emperor]** taken out of the way **[by the barbarian invasions]**."*

The mystery of iniquity was **already at work** in the days of Paul. The word 'iniquity' is the identical word that is translated 'transgression of the law' in 1 John 3:4 where we are told that sin is the transgression of the law.

1798 not the End of the Story

Thus far we have seen that the papacy **was restrained** or in captivity as long as the **Roman Empire stood**. When the Western Empire fell, the papacy was able to capture the throne which it did not relinquish for 1260 years.

But this is not the end of the story. Prophecy predicts that the 'man of sin' would have two periods of dominion—one in the past and one in the future. The papacy would be freed from captivity to the civil power in **538 AD** but would be thrown back into captivity by the same power in **1798 AD**. But the prophecy of Revelation 13:9, 10, 3 indicates that the papacy will **once again be freed** from its captivity and recover the power of the sword when the civil powers of the world allow themselves to be used for the **papacy's purposes**. The apostle Paul does not specify the two stages of the papacy described but rather describes the entire history of the 'man of sin' in broad strokes from his day until the second coming. That is to say, Paul did not explain that the 'man of sin' would be **bound** (before 538 AD) and then **released** (in 538 AD) and then **bound again** (in 1798 AD) only to be **released once more** (by the beast from the earth in the near future).

Two Stages of the Man of Sin

Not only does the book of **Revelation** describe a second stage of the papacy. Ellen White does as well:

*"The influence of Rome in the **countries that once acknowledged her dominion** is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a **restoration of her power**. "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." Verse 3. GC, p. 579*

*"When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act join hands with popery; it will be nothing else that **giving life [which means that it must have been dead]** to the tyranny which has long been eagerly*

watching its opportunity to **spring again** [which means that the active despotism must have existed before] into active despotism." *ST*, p. 712

"When the land which the Lord provided as an asylum for his people, that they might worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land over which for long years the shield of Omnipotence has been spread, the land which God has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ,--when that land shall, through its legislators, abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to Romish apostasy in tampering with God's law,--it is then that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a national act enforcing the false Sabbath, they will **give life** and **vigor** [which means that the corrupt faith of Rome must have been dead for a period] to the corrupt faith of Rome, **reviving** [which means that her tyranny and oppression of conscience were dead for a while] her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of his truth." *ST* June 12, 1893

Released Once Again

Why hasn't the deadly wound **healed yet**? What is keeping the papacy in **captivity**? **Malachi Martin**, Jesuit scholar and personal friend of **pope John Paul II** who wrote the best-selling book, **The Keys of this Blood** explained the reason in 1986:

"[For] **fifteen hundred years** and more, [papal] Rome had kept as **strong a hand** as possible in each local community around the wide world. By and large, and admitting some exceptions, that had been the **Roman view** [Ellen White calls it the 'Roman element' GC 581] until **two hundred years of inactivity** had been **imposed** upon the papacy by the **major secular powers** of the world." Quoted in *Christianity Today* (November 21, 1986), p. 26.

There are **three main points** in this statement by Martin:

- The papacy kept a **strong hand** in each local community around the wide world for **fifteen hundred years**.
- During the last **200 years** the papacy has **not been able** to exert this power because **inactivity** has **been imposed** upon her contrary to her will.
- The two hundred years of inactivity have been imposed upon the papacy by the **great secular powers** of the world.

No doubt Martin **does not realize** that he is describing the deadly wound and the **captivity** of the papacy that is described in **Revelation 13:10**. **What happened** two hundred years before Martin wrote this statement? The answer is unmistakable: The **French Revolution (1789-1797)** when the French government took away the power of the sword, took the pope captive and **emancipated itself** from papal power establishing **a republic**. As a result, one nation after another in the **western hemisphere** formed democratic governments that have **not allowed the papacy** to use them to accomplish her own ends.

But the French Revolution did much **more than just deliver France** from the iron fist of the papacy. It actually led **all the major powers of Europe** within a brief period of time to proclaim their emancipation from papal dominance. As a result, **nation after nation** in Europe formed democratic governments that guaranteed civil and religious liberty. For this reason, Henry Edward **Cardinal Manning** in **1862** (even before the Papal States were confiscated by Victor Emmanuel II in 1870) lamented that the nations of Europe had forsaken the papacy:

*“See this Catholic Church, this Church of God, feeble and weak, rejected even by the **very nations called Catholic**. There is Catholic **France**, and Catholic **Germany**, and Catholic **Italy** **giving up** this exploded figment of the **temporal power** of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.’ And so, because the Church **seems weak**, and the Vicar of the Son of God is renewing the Passion of his Master upon earth, therefore we are scandalized, therefore we **turn our faces from him**.” (*The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ*, pp. 140, 141, emphasis mine)*

Ellen White and the Healing of the Wound

So, prophecy tells us that the **history of the papacy** is **not yet complete**. The **civil rulers** of the world will **once again** allow the papacy to attach herself to them to determine and dictate her agenda. The striking prophecy of **Revelation 13:3, 11-18** tells us that the papacy will be **released from captivity** and will **recover the sword** of civil power and then she will behave as she did in her **heyday**. Then the prophecy of **2 Thessalonians 2** will reach its **complete fulfillment**.

Revelation 17 presents a vivid portrayal of the time when the prophecy of Revelation 13:3, 11-18 will be fulfilled. In this passage we see a **[1] harlot woman** whose name is **[2] Babylon** (17:5) who sits on **[3] many waters**, that is, upon nations, multitudes, tongues and people (17:1, 15). She sustains an **[4] adulterous spiritual relationship** with the **civil rulers** of the earth (17:2). She is garbed in **[5] purple and scarlet, gold and precious stones** (17:4). The kings of the world gladly drink her **[6] fermented wine** of false doctrine (17:2) and give decrees against those who refuse to drink with them. She has **[7] daughters** that were born from her at some point because she is called the ‘mother of harlots’ (17:5). And most significantly, she **[8] sheds the blood** of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus (17:6).

Ellen G. White, wrote **one hundred years before** Martin and used virtually **identical terminology**. She predicted that the restraints now imposed upon the papacy by the secular governments of the world will be **removed** and the papacy will recover the civil sword:

*“Let the **restraints** now **imposed** by **secular governments** be **removed** and Rome be **reinstated** in her former power, and there would speedily be a **revival** of her tyranny and persecution.” *GC*, p. 564*

Two things must be said about Ellen White’s statement:

- Ellen White wrote that the papacy was **wounded and in captivity** because the civil powers **no longer supported her**. In the case of the United States, the restraint was provided by the **First Amendment** to the Constitution which forbids congress from making laws that **establish** or forbid the **free exercise** of religion. As long as the United States **respects** its Constitution there can be no Sunday law instigated by the papacy.
- When the civil governments **remove the restraints**, the papacy will resurrect from its deadly wound and will once more be free from captivity to act as it did in the past.

The Parallel of Revelation 20

The **best parallel** to understand the binding and unbinding of the papacy is found in the book of **Revelation** itself. The prophecies tell us that in the **final days** of earth's history Satan will be alive and free because he is able to influence the **civil powers** of the world to do his bidding. Satan has always accomplished his purposes by **using the rulers** of the world. We can see this repeatedly in the Bible. Satan used Pharaoh, the great dragon (Ezekiel 29:3), to try and destroy Moses. In **Revelation 12** we find the dragon standing before the woman to devour the child as soon as he was born. Satan was behind the plot but the visible instrument that Satan used in his attempt was **Herod**, a civil ruler of the Roman Empire. So, Satan is **well and free** now and wreaking havoc because the kings of the earth are at his disposal to carry out his agenda.

But when Jesus comes, all the **kings of the earth** that supported Satan's agenda will die (Revelation 19:21). Without his support base Satan will have a **deadly wound** and will be chained in a prison of **inactivity** (Revelation 20:1-3). But after the thousand years the wicked kings will resurrect and they will **once again** lend Satan their support (Revelation 20:5). In this way Satan's wound will be **healed** and he will be **released** from his prison (Revelation 20:1-3, 7-9). In short, when Satan loses the support of the kings of the earth at the second coming he is **wounded and in captivity** but when he regains their support after the millennium he is **healed and free** of captivity. In a similar manner, when the papacy is able to use the civil powers to accomplish its will, she is healed and free but when the kings withdraw their support she is wounded and in captivity.

The Law: The Great Issue in the End Time Conflict

We have noticed that the 'man of sin' will be characterized by a stealth attack on God's law:

- The little horn thought that it could change **God's law**.
- The antichrist is called the **man of sin** and sin is the transgression of the law.
- The man of sin is called the mystery of **lawlessness**.
- The final warfare against God's people involves the **commandments of God**:

Revelation 12:17:

*“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.”*

A Powerful Miracle Worker

2 Thessalonians 2:8: Jesus will destroy the man of lawlessness at the **second coming**:

*“And then the **lawless one [the transgressor of the law]** will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His **coming [parousia]**.”*

2 Thessalonians 2:9: But **before** the man of lawlessness is destroyed, he will counterfeit the second coming of Jesus:

*“The coming **[parousia]** of the lawless one is according to the **working** of Satan, with all **power, signs, and lying wonders** . . .”*

Acts 2:22: The combination of the three Greek words, ‘power, signs and wonders’ is used in only **one other verse** in the New Testament, Acts 2:22. There we are told that Jesus performed these marvelous works. This means that the antichrist will counterfeit the miracles that Jesus performed while He was on earth.

*“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by **miracles, wonders, and signs** which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know...”*

Ellen White described what the counterfeit second coming will be like:

*“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will **personate Christ**. The church has long professed to look to the Savior's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will **make it appear** that Christ has come. In **different parts** of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of **dazzling brightness**, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation (Revelation 1:13-15). **The glory** that surrounds him is **unsurpassed** by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: “Christ has come! Christ has come!” The people **prostrate themselves in adoration** before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is **soft and subdued**, yet full of **melody**. In **gentle, compassionate tones** he presents **some** of the same gracious, heavenly **truths** that the Savior uttered; **he heals the diseases** of the people, and then, in his **assumed character** of Christ, he claims to have **changed the Sabbath** to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to **listen to his angels** sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost **overmastering delusion [an allusion to II Thessalonians 2]**.” *GC*, p. 624*

Our only protection at that time will be to know **how** Jesus will come and **what His word teaches** concerning the Sabbath/Sunday issue:

*“But the people of God will not be misled. **The teachings** of this false christ are not **in accordance with the Scriptures**. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image, the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out. And, furthermore, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit **the manner** of Christ's advent. The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold **the manner** of His second coming. “There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect . . . 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 24:24-27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is **no possibility of counterfeiting**. It will be **universally known**—witnessed by the whole world.*

*Only those who have been **diligent students** of the Scriptures and who have received the **love of the truth** will be shielded from the **powerful delusion** that takes the world captive. **By the Bible** testimony these **will detect** the deceiver in his **disguise**.” GC, p. 625*

Why People will accept the Counterfeit

2 Thessalonians 2:10: People will be lost because they **refused** to receive the **love of the truth**:

*“The coming [parousia] 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.”*

John 17:17: God's **word is truth**

*“Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth**.”*

Psalms 119:142: The **law of God** is the truth

*“Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your **law is truth**.”*

2 Thessalonians 2:11-13: Counterfeit Christians will **refuse to believe the truth**:

*“And for this reason God will send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe **the lie [the counterfeit second coming]**,¹² that they all may be condemned who **did not believe the truth** but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*



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