

STRAIGHTWAY

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].

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The Development of the Antichrist

Dr. H. T. Spence

As we see the days fast bringing changes of apocalyptic proportion to the world, the child of God must be prepared for the coming of both Christ and the developing powers of Antichrist. There is also the growing development of the “woman” who will ride the back of this beast called Antichrist. In this issue we want to deal with these subjects as well as the Blessed Hope we have in Christ.

The Term Antichrist

The term *antichrist* is a title that will increase in prominence the nearer we get to the coming of Christ and the Tribulation Period.

Although the title occurs only in the apostle John’s writings in 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; and 2 John 7, the idea which the word conveys is found frequently in Scripture. It has the understanding both of “taking the place” of Christ *and* of being “against” Christ.

The Development of Antichrist

Just as the doctrine of Christ is only suggested in the Old Testament and not fully developed, so it is with the teachings about Antichrist. Just as Messiah, the divine Logos of God and the only true expression of God, is only hinted at in the Old Testament, so Antichrist is presented primarily

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as an opponent of God rather than an opponent of God's Anointed One. Similarly, this could be seen in the historical books of the Old Testament in the figure Belial as a personal opponent of God; thus the very wicked were called "sons of Belial" or "a daughter of Belial."

Daniel 7:7 describes a great heathen empire coming in the future which is prophetically represented by a beast with ten horns. The Book of Daniel deals with empires and kingdoms of the Gentile powers. Daniel 2 presents these powers in the form of a man; Daniel 7 presents them in the form of beasts. But we read of a little horn that arises full of antagonism to God; he becomes the eleventh horn. He is described as having a mouth speaking great things and making war with the saints worldwide. In Daniel 7:7-11, we are told that the Ancient of Days will destroy him, and his kingdom will be given to the Son of Man.

In contrast, the activity of the Devil in the New Testament is specifically directed "against" Jesus Christ. Both Matthew 4 and Luke 4 present a personal temptation like none other by the Devil to Christ:

And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine (Luke 4:5-7).

In this passage the Devil claims to hold all the kingdoms of this world, the *oikoumene*, the inhabited earth. It is evident that men throughout the ages have willingly given their authorities over to the Devil in exchange for powers from Him. This particular temptation was a struggle in spirit against Christ and Antichrist. Jesus tells us in John 14:30, "for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." In the Parable of the Wheat and Tares of Matthew 13, the Son of Man sows the good seed, the children of the kingdom (designated as wheat), while the Devil comes behind Him sowing tares on top and all around the wheat. The Devil became "Antichrist" in spirit against the Christ.

In the Pauline Epistles this antagonism is presented in the spiritual sphere. Second Corinthians 6:15 asks, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul indicates that this mystery

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of iniquity already has been both a spirit and doctrine in development: “The mystery of iniquity doth already work”; it will culminate in the Man of Sin. Twelve years prior to this epistle, Caligula, the mad emperor, had a temple erected to himself in Rome demanding that his own statue be set up in Jerusalem and worshipped. According to the Johannine writings, such a man designated as Antichrist is coming. But John’s greater concern is anti-Christian forces and doctrines coming up among the churches in the denial of the coming of Christ. By the time of the Book of Revelation, this individual is finally presented: this beast out of the sea will step forward forcing his image upon the world, as well as his number, his mark, or his name.

The writings of John place antichrist in a development stage, a growing spirit, mood, and working which will finally be embodied in a person. He will be the tangible product of a developed spirit in history. We read in the culminating spirit of Psalm 2 that this antichrist is the development of the nations of history against God; this is why he is linked with the “seven heads” of the empires. Yet the Psalm concludes with the command, “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”

The Antichrist is also the development of Satan’s effort to get a man under his absolute control; he is one

who will have the ability to bring the human and demonic worlds together. When both the governmental powers of history and the Devil collaborate, they will do so in this personification of sin. This is why his name is linked with sin, for he is likewise the development of sin: he is of that Wicked One, the Lawless One (against the law of God), the Son of Perdition (which is a title only used of Judas and Antichrist). Christ is the Son of God; Antichrist is the Son of Perdition. As Jesus Christ is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16), so the Antichrist is the resolve of the Mystery of Iniquity (2 Thess. 2:7). He will be of the Seed of the Serpent.

The Antichrist will be a composite man: one who embraces abilities and powers of the previous empires. He will have the marvelous power of attracting unregenerate men; they will be irresistibly fascinated by his personality. He will be a flatterer, a brilliant diplomat, and a great administrator.

A Person or a System

Certainly there have been “many antichrists” that have emerged throughout history as persons or systems. Nevertheless, we believe the Bible is clear that the Antichrist will be a person. From the beginning, the Apostolic Church of the first century believed that Antichrist was to be a person, the embodiment of human blasphemy and wickedness. Toward the close of the twelfth century, many

began to look upon the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church as Antichrist. This view has been largely advocated by Protestant commentators. Many equate the papal system with the Antichrist system. Although the arguments in favor of this view are plausible, they are difficult to reconcile with the Word of God. Of course, we would not deny that the Roman Catholic Church postures itself as God's representative voice on earth; for, the Pope himself claims to be the "Vicar" or "substitute" of Christ for the Church. This also would include the Mass/Eucharist taking the place of Christ in the parishioner.

However, let us carefully note John's description of the Antichrist. In 1 John 2:22 we read, "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." First John 4:3 states, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist." It would be true to declare that Judaism has denied that "Jesus is the Christ"; it would be true that Unitarianism has denied that Christ has "come in the flesh." But the papacy has never denied these statements. The Church of Rome has always confessed the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed, declaring, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord." They have not denied that Jesus is the Christ. They have not denied that He came in

the flesh some two thousand years ago. It is what Romanism has built around this acknowledgment that is its heretical problem.

All the Protestant commentators insist that the Roman Catholic Church system is described in Revelation 17:4, 5 under the figure of a "woman," a harlot arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. This seems to be true, but this woman, the Mother of Harlots, is presented as riding upon the back of the beast, universally admitted to be Antichrist. If the beast is the Antichrist, the woman cannot be the Antichrist. It is clear in Revelation 17 that these are two different entities and do not signify the same thing. In fact, in Revelation 17:16, the beast and the ten horns will "hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." They will turn on that woman and destroy her. Again, Antichrist, as the "man of sin," is to "exalt himself and magnify himself above every god" (Dan. 11:36, 37). It is also stated of him "that he as God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4). However false and impious the claims of the papacy, it has always recognized "in words" subordination to God, and the Pope's highest claim is that he is the "vicar of Christ." He doesn't deny Christ but places himself as His proxy on earth. The papal system worships the Virgin and the saints, but it is not true that it worships the Devil openly.

Note Revelation 13:3, 4:

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

Though there are many things in the history of the Roman Catholic Church that foreshadow the Antichrist, yet it is clear that the beast out of the sea and the woman harlot are two different and distinct entities.

Days Leading Up to the Flood

The development of Antichrist is a mood, a spirit, an attitude, and a collective thought. It grows in a generation, is inherited by each following generation, and continues throughout the unfolding generations. After so many centuries the mood, spirit, thought, and attitude will bring forth a person who is the embodiment of it all. When this spiritual development of the centuries and the physical reality of a certain generation come together, the Antichrist will appear. He will be the product of the world against God, and especially against Jesus Christ.

Genesis 6 tells of the joining of the godly with the ungodly “seeds.” This union has had untold repercussions on the planet. The product of their thought life (v. 5), the product of their violence, the product of their hatred against the Son of God will all come together to produce the Antichrist

and his generation. Yes, it is the culmination of six thousand years of hatred and reaction to God. It will unconsciously and uncontrollably deepen.

Note Genesis 6:12, 13:

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

We also read that the days will come as in the days of Lot, days of what Jude 7 calls “strange flesh.” Daniel 11:37 seems to imply that Antichrist will be a sodomite: “Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.”

First John 2:18, 19 gives the understanding that Antichrist will be at one time or another closely associated with God’s people. Will his rhetoric be Christian? Will his rhetoric be Jewish? Will his “birth certificate” say one thing, and will he be someone else? Will the documents be altered to suit the need of deception? Are we truly witnessing such things in world leadership today? The true Antichrist will be political, yet he will present himself as the saviour of the world. But, “even now are there many antichrists.” The prelude to Antichrist will be antichrists. We also must remember that he will be in opposition to Jesus Christ, not just

presenting himself as a substitute. The spirit of Antichrist is already in the world; we are in his prelude generation.

Types of Antichrist in Scripture

The types and shadows of Antichrist are found throughout the Old Testament with each one expressing an aspect of the “man of sin.” The Scriptures declare that Cain “was of that wicked one, and slew his brother” (1 John 3:12). He portrays the Antichrist by his murder of the chosen seed, Abel (Rev. 13:6, 7). Nimrod in Genesis 11 rebels against the Noahic family and becomes a type of Antichrist by his creation of Babel and its tower (Gen. 11, Rev. 13 & 18). Pharaoh in the Book of Exodus oppresses God’s people. Korah rises in his gainsaying and rebellion. The prophet Balaam is seen as a type in his attempt to curse Israel. King Saul in 1 Samuel 13 is seen in type by both his intrusion into the priesthood and his angry hunting for David. Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 portrays this son of perdition by his proud boasting. Absalom rises among the shadows and types in his attempt to steal the throne of David. Two generations later, Jeroboam steps forward with his substitution of a false religion of antiquity. Sennacherib is a type because of his efforts to destroy Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar becomes a classic type by his golden image in Daniel 3. Haman in the Book of Esther is seen as one in his plot to exterminate the Jews. In the

prophecies of Daniel there was the “little horn” of Antiochus Epiphanes who defiled the temple.

The “Anti-” Heart and Will

The Scriptures make very clear that Christ and Antichrist are the thesis and the antithesis. Whereas in Luke 1:35 Christ is called the “Son of God,” in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 Antichrist is called “the son of perdition.” In 1 Timothy 3:16 Christ is “the mystery of godliness”; Antichrist will be the “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thess. 2:7). In Mark 1:24 Christ is declared “Holy”; in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 the Antichrist is called “Wicked” (or “lawless” in the Greek). In John 14:6 Christ declared Himself to be “the truth”; in 2 Thessalonians 2:11, the Antichrist will be the personification in the flesh of “a [the] lie” (the Greek uses the definite article). In John 15:1 Christ called Himself “the true vine”; the Antichrist will be the “vine of the earth” (Rev. 14:18). In John 10:4–15 Christ presents Himself as “the Good Shepherd”; in Zechariah 11:15, 17, the Antichrist will be viewed as “a foolish shepherd” and “the idol shepherd.” Christ is “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14); Antichrist will be full of “all deceivableness of unrighteousness” (2 Thess. 2:10). In Luke 19:10, Christ came “to save”; in Daniel 8:24, the Antichrist will come to “destroy.” In Isaiah 53:3 Christ is prophesied as “despised,” while Antichrist will be admired (Rev. 13:3, 4). Christ came in the Father’s Name (John 5:43), but Antichrist

will come in his own name (John 5:43). In Isaiah 53:3, Christ will be a “man of sorrows,” but Antichrist will be the “man of sin” (2 Thess. 2:3). Christ made Himself of no reputation (Phil. 2:7); Antichrist will exalt himself, “shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4). Christ came to do the Father’s will (John 6:38), but Antichrist will come to do his own will (Dan. 11:36).

The Body of Christ versus the Body of Antichrist

According to 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, the Body of Christ has been growing throughout history. This body is viewed as a whole, and yet it is made up of parts or members. The apostle Paul named this Body in 1 Corinthians 12:12 with the definite article in the Greek “the Christ.” It is evident that this body is presented as a man, and Christ Himself is the head of this body.

Daniel 2 also presents another body growing throughout history: the body of a man with its parts or members. The “times of the Gentiles” is presented in this chapter as the “day of man,” beginning with Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (the head) and culminating with the feet and toes (that of the Antichrist kingdom). The parts of this body are the empires that would rise in the earth leading to the coming of the final one, the Antichrist and his kingdom. This body too has a head, Babylon, and according to Genesis 10 all of the empires have arisen from

this head in history (Gen. 11). The Antichrist will be the composite of the previous heads and thus the beast with seven heads (Rev. 13:1).

The Satanic Trinity

According to Isaiah 14 the Devil has longed to be “like God.” He declared in Isaiah 14:13, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.” This shows his desire to be like the Father. Then we read, “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.” These are the prophetic hopes of Psalm 48:2 and Isaiah 2:2; both are references to the Son. We also read, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,” which is in reference to the Holy Spirit. He concludes his willful desire: “I will be like the most High.”

The Devil saw the Trinity in heaven before his fall and longed to be the same in his power and authority. His imitative hope will be realized in the Tribulation Period where the Dragon (Rev. 12 and 13) imitating the Father will give power and authority to the Antichrist (or beast out of the sea, his representative son). The third in the satanic trinity will be the False Prophet (or beast out of the earth, in imitation of the Holy Spirit). As the Father in heaven gave all power to His Son, so the Devil will give power or authority over the earth to his son, the Antichrist. This satanic trinity will rule the earth the last 3½ years of the Tribulation Period.

Conclusion

Satan has a special desire to control the earth and has concentrated his powers and deceptions here to gain it for himself. Luke 4:6 quotes Satan speaking to Jesus saying, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." It may be that the earth was Lucifer's God-appointed principality and throne after his creation. Both Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 indicate that Lucifer had a throne before his fall. It is evident, however, that he was not content to have a throne delegated by the Creator; he wanted the highest of the thrones, God's Throne. This may be the reason he has been trying to take this planet, or regain it. The planet Earth also seems to be God's darling planet or His elect planet of the universe. Whatever is dear to God, Satan wants. It became the singular place in the universe where God sent His Son to live and die, and to rise again and ascend back to heaven. This is the planet where salvation was wrought for mankind, and it will be the place, according to prophecy, where Christ will set up His kingdom. It will also be the place in the new earth that God will move His Throne for the rest of eternity. The Devil knows that the earth is a special place in the universe to God.

There are three angels mentioned in Scripture whose names are revealed: Gabriel, Lucifer, and Michael. Gabriel seems to be representative of the Father; Michael seems to be

representative of the Holy Spirit; and Lucifer, the anointed cherub which covered the throne, was close to the Son. Of the three angels, Lucifer was the one who fell, the one appointed to the Son. Perhaps this fact is the reason that the Son came to earth to purchase salvation for this earth and to ultimately fully restore it. So many characteristics mentioned in Ezekiel 28:12–19 about Lucifer (the power behind the king of Tyre) resemble the Son of God and may explain Satan's intense anger and hatred focused against the second member of the Trinity. We must remember that God did not create Satan; God created Lucifer. Satan was self-born within Lucifer, the illustrious one.

We know that the Antichrist as a person is yet to come, but even now are there many antichrists. They have come in the preliminary personalities of rulers such as Marx, Engels, Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, and even those of more contemporary times. The apostle John revealed that these antichrists will be found in and among God's people. We are told by Christ in Matthew 24:15 and by the apostle Paul (2 Thess. 2:4) that Antichrist will appear in the Holiest of Holies of the Jewish Temple in the Tribulation Period. But his spirit (many antichrists) is even found in the holy place of the institutional Church today.

If Antichrist will be the embodiment of the "lie," of which Satan is the father (John 8:44), how will he come into the world? Will Satan

devise a scheme and plan (as the Father designed a plan for His Son to come)? Will Antichrist be presented to have had a “super” to the natural birth? Will his birth certificate be carefully forged to accommodate him to the world? Will the global people actually know from whence he came? To deceive the Jewish nation into accepting him, he will have to present himself as Jewish; but how will this be deceptively rendered? Will the truth be known about his real father and mother? Will he come on the national scene with a wife and children and yet not really be married? Will he be a sodomite, yet present himself with a “politically” appointed wife and children to maintain the deception? Will the preparation of his early years be hidden from the world and molded by an elite group of men? Will these men finally present him to the

world with all the deceptive, forged documents that will be the most ideal in order for humanity to accept him? Will his entire life be a lie formed and fashioned for global acceptance? There certainly will be many mysteries and hidden peculiarities.

According to Daniel 7:25, when Antichrist comes he will try to “wear out the saints.” The antichrists of our time are endeavoring to do the same. The tactic today may not be to kill God’s people but to wear them down through laws, regulations, and mandates forced upon the Christians against God, His Son, and the Bible until they finally give in to the changes demanded of them. May God help us, even now, in these days of the prelude to the coming of “the” man of sin.



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The Three Global End-time Forces United Nations, Ecumenicity, and Interfaithism

Dr. H. T. Spence

The generations that prelude the coming of Antichrist must politically and religiously prepare the world for his coming. How will such a wonder of logistics take place? This article presents man's hope through a trilogy of forces becoming prominent in the End Time of these last days.

Man's Desire to Create His Own Kingdom

The cross of Calvary reveals insights into man's hatred against God and His appointed Son-Heir. Although man thought he had rid himself of God and the Heir of the universal vineyard (Matt. 21:33–41) when he crucified Christ on the cross, the resurrection of Christ and His ascension to the right hand of the Father ensured a continued battle against man's hope of a utopia without God. Over the centuries man has dreamed and schemed of a final day when all of humanity will unite to declare their possession of this planet for themselves without the presence of God and His appointed Son as King. Man has entered into a covenant with the Devil to bring this about, and one day Satan will give power to a man whom he will make the capstone of this global kingdom (Luke 4:6; Rev. 13). Throughout history, governments of this world have been viewed as city-states, as kingdoms, and as empires. But the

longing has increased in the past 150 years for the entire world to become a united empire against the Creator, the God of Heaven and Earth.

The hope to eradicate God began back in Genesis 11 at the city of Babel and its tower. It was then that the Devil led Cush and his son Nimrod to build a city and a tower. The city and the tower have become symbols throughout history of political and religious control of the world's population. But God came down then and confounded the language of man. Genesis 11:6 states, "And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." Genesis 6:5 reveals "that every imagination of the thoughts of his [man's] heart was only evil continually." Although this imagination was of deep, immoral sin, the thought imagined in Genesis 11 is the high-handed sin of taking the place as God. This imagination is a far deeper sin than that of Genesis 6. The motive of chapter 11 was "Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (11:4). They wanted their "name" to take the place of "the Name" (Hebrew, *Ha Shem*) of Jehovah. But the Lord, confounding

the language, “scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city” (11:8).

Since that time the Devil has been inspiring men throughout the centuries to return to Babel in hope of finishing what was “left off”: to build that city and that tower to reach to heaven. This will demand political (the city) and religious (the tower) unity. How could man accomplish this goal with earth’s population now reaching seven billion people strung among a multitude of governments and religions? The Devil has been establishing his blueprint for centuries to bring about this final confrontation with God through a trilogy of forces that began in the twentieth century and has escalated into the twenty-first century. Though the seed of this trilogy has grown in the workings of man’s imagination for centuries, only in the past 120 years have global situations engendered the hope of its reality.

The United Nations

The first of these forces has been the political rise of the United Nations. This international organization had its origin during World War II. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt first suggested using the name “United Nations” to refer to the allies of World War II. Roosevelt suggested the term to Winston Churchill, who cited Lord Byron’s use of the phrase “united nations” in his writing *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* as a reference to

the allies at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Roosevelt was referring to the alliance of the nations’ fighting against Germany and Japan. The idea for the future United Nations as an international organization emerged in documents signed at the allied conferences in Moscow and in Tehran in 1943. On June 26, 1945, fifty nations signed the Charter of the United Nations. The League of Nations, a term used prior to this, dissolved itself in April of 1946, transferring its mission to the United Nations. Its headquarters eventually moved to American soil within New York City on a piece of land secured through a donation by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

The United Nations introduced itself as a security force for the world with the hope of preventing global conflicts between nations and even eliminating future wars on the earth. The next decades of its existence, however, proved the difficulty of such a reality. Preventing conflicts was especially difficult from 1947 to 1993. Following the end of the Cold War, there were renewed calls for the United Nations to become the organization for achieving world peace. Nevertheless, the dissolution of the Soviet Union left the United States in a prominent position of global dominance that brought a variety of new problems for the United Nations. Most of the money and provisions for the United Nations’ existence came from the United States.

Though at the beginning the UN seemed to be limited in its influence, there were warnings that it would ultimately rise to pervade all the countries of the world in absolute control. Today, the blue helmets worn by the UN army have become prominent in many countries throughout the world. Designated as a peace-keeping force, the army is composed of military personnel from the 110 countries. George Orwell in his novel *1984* issued such a warning against the potential danger of this organization. Time has proved that the UN is definitely forwarding a growing philosophy, aimed ultimately at bringing all nations into a unified government that would control everything: laws of humanity, world courts, world economy, world farming, cultures, education, medicine, and the military. UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization) has found its way into every country in the world.

The great statue found across from the UN complex depicts a man beating a sword into a plowshare with the caption, "We shall beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks." This is taken from Isaiah 2:4. The verse goes on to say, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This verse is in the context of Christ's kingdom to be set up in the future, with the Prince of Peace ruling and reigning; however, mankind believes he can bring about his own utopia of universal peace without the

presence of God and His Son. But man is born in sin, and he will never be able to produce such a hope. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:20, 21).

Our present Washington administration believes that the United States must become an example to the rest of the nations by yielding our country in absolute submission to the United Nations in every aspect of life: in control of our population, laws, courts, economy, banking system, farming, food supply, medicine, etc. Such an organization as the UN must take control over every aspect of life within a nation; if all the nations would submit to such a hope, the leaders believe universal peace would result.

To accomplish this peace, three major rights must be given up in every nation: (1) There must be the confiscation of any weapons that could be used by the people to protect themselves from the encroachment of oppressive global laws. (2) There must be absolute control of all education by the government. Closing down all private education, including home schools and various private school concepts, would make the State the sole educator of our children. Whoever controls the schools rules the world. (3) There must also be the confiscation of land from private ownership. They claim that private

ownership of any real estate, including nations being independent owners of land, simply produces motivation for war in order to gain control over more land. The "new world order" must absolve all real estate ownership, including national ownership. All of mankind must become the work force for the global government without independence of living. In this desire, the United States of America seems to be setting the example as a national template by submitting itself to the new world order. In doing so, we will become the example of a great nation brought to its knees.

The hope of such a new world order is held not only by national governments but also by religious leaders. The papal system for centuries has believed in this and for decades has been a strong supporter of the new world order. The Popes since the days of World War II have pressed world leaders for a new world order, governed by socialism and communism. Rome wants such a universal government but wants the Church to help with such a plan. (Truly Rome will be identified with the Mother Harlot to ride the back of the Beast, the Antichrist, as prophesied in Revelation 17. We will present this in the next article.)

Conflicts among nations continue to ignite dangerous wars on our earth. But global planners have concluded that war will never be eliminated unless world government replaces the era of the nation-state.

The Ecumenical Movement

A second force that has become imperative for this new world order is the Ecumenical movement. Especially in the United States, ecumenism has hoped to destroy the barriers within Protestant Christianity that could deter reunification with Rome to forward the pursuit of a global religion.

Rising in the mid-1800s, Liberalism and Modernism invaded the major denominations of Protestantism. In addition, Neo-Orthodoxy at the turn of the 20th century invaded the Protestant churches. This helped bring about a dismantling of the integrity of the Bible upon which Protestantism was founded. The collapse of biblical absolutes led to broader fellowships especially among various denominational missionaries. As the denominations began to fall more and more away from the Bible, the walls of partition of doctrine began to erode.

By the 1940s the similarities between these distinctive denominations no longer seemed important. Various organizations arose to assist in bringing together the denominations, such as the National Association of Evangelicals, the World Pentecostal Fellowship, the United Methodists, and the various Presbyterian associations. There also was the birth of the Neo-Evangelical and Neo-Pentecostal movements in 1948, which eventually encompassed the entire conservative Evangelical world. Simultaneously,

in 1948 was the birth of the World Council of Churches, with the hope of bringing all of the Protestant churches together, an ecumenicity of the Protestant world, which very soon opened its door for all Christendom to enter. The powers of ecumenicity were strongly elevated when the Roman Catholic Church held in 1962–1965 the Second Council of the Vatican. Many approaches to worship and living so radically changed within Romanism that it opened the door for the rest of Christendom to joyfully accept fellowship with Rome and Rome with them.

Formally defined, *Ecumenism* is the movement within Christianity that aims at “the recovery in thought, in action, and in organization, of the true unity between the Church’s mission to the world (its apostolate) and the Church’s obligation to be one.” For Roman Catholics ecumenicity has as its goal to reconcile all who profess Christian Faith by bringing them into a single, visible organization, i.e., through union with the Roman Catholic Church. The work of ecumenicity is basically on its way to fulfilling the task of bringing all of Christendom together, and we will see the pressures upon all the denominations within the next few years to resolve their differences with Rome.

Since the inception of the Historic Fundamentalist movement, it has been this remnant within global Christianity that has taken a stand against the ecumenical movement.

The historic Fundamentalists believe that the Christian Faith is exclusively based upon the inerrancy of Scripture and its absolutes, and that it alone produces the true Church. It also has consistently believed that Liberalism, Modernism, and all of the contemporary views of Christianity are apostate. Now, however, those identified as Fundamentalists are fast leaving this fortress by capitulating to the Neo-Evangelicals who are ecumenists at heart. Although Christian ecumenism can be described in terms of the three largest divisions of Christianity (Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestantism), the Independents are fast becoming part of the spirit and hope of ecumenicity.

We are now witnessing Rome opening its doors for the wayward ones to return to the Mother. Doctrine is vastly declining in the Christian world. More and more the simple belief in Jesus Christ (whether deity or elevated humanity), as well as the Lord’s Supper (the Eucharist/Mass), is becoming the common ground of fellowship. Truly the ecumenical movement has been a success, and it is evident that churches are now yielding to Rome more and more. Billy Graham opened wide the door for the Evangelicals to safely enter into the fold of close fellowship with the Mother Harlot. The Charismatic movement fed the fires of warmth and acceptability of Rome, especially with the alliance of Cardinal Suenens in the 1970s. The ecumenical

movement has been so successful that it is simply a matter of the paperwork between the denominations before we see the prodigals returning home to the professing mother of Christianity.

The Interfaith Movement

There is another movement, however, that goes beyond the ecumenicity within Christianity or global Christendom. It is called *Interfaithism*. It has now become obvious that the desired world political unity will never be achieved without bringing an end to religious conflict. This is why New Age global planners have quietly given birth to the “United Religions Organization.” They believe that the future of our world depends on all becoming tolerant and respectful of each other’s religious beliefs. The new world religion (now being born) will not be Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Wicca, or Islam; it will be “interfaithism,” the belief that all religions, while different on the surface, are each valid pathways to God. Rome, as in the present ecumenical movement, is taking the leadership in the Interfaith movement. This explains why Pope John Paul II was willing to declare in 1994 that Muslims also have salvation, as was written in his *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. While this declaration is as untrue today as it was a few decades ago, the times are different now. Today, the declaration is applauded.

Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, a Protestant turned Roman Catholic, has also been a

leader in Interfaithism through his “Tony Blair Faith Foundation.” He writes the following:

These are times of tumultuous change. The twentieth century order is history; and the forces of globalization are pushing all of the economics of the world—and all of the citizens of the world, with their great diversity of religious faiths—more closely together. Global interdependence is a reality. And faith is inextricably linked to that interdependence. As we have seen, faith can be a source of division and destruction. But faith can also be a source of reconciliation, not conflict.

Today, the Interfaith movement is shaping a global spirituality. Since the 1950s, the United Nations, led by its visionary prophet, Robert Muller, has been on a specific and premeditated course to unite the world’s religions. In his book *New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality*, Muller does not hide the agenda. He explains how his Catholic upbringing led him to ultimately embrace Buddhism, the religion of then UN Secretary General U Thant. Muller calls for a UN-led global government and global religion as mankind’s only hope.

Another man who had extreme influence upon such a belief was Hindu guru Sri Chinmoy, who died in 2007. He noted the following:

No human force will ever be able to destroy the United Nations as the vision-light of the Absolute Supreme, which is slowly, steadily, and unerringly illuminating the

ignorance, the night of our human life. The divine success and supreme progress of the United Nations is bound to become a reality. At his choice hour, the Absolute Supreme will ring his own victory bell here on earth through the loving and serving heart of the United Nations.

The Interfaith movement can find its roots back in the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, which dates back to 1893. One century later, in 1993, the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions met; it included Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Voodooists, Druid priests, witches, snake charmers, Zoroastrian sun worshippers, and representatives of the Lucis Trust (an organization whose original name was Lucifer Publishing Company). In December of 2007, the Chicago-based Parliament of the World's Religions, led by New Age leader Jim Kenney, met. It continues today in collaboration with the UN to bring about the one world faith for all people.

Another interfaith and multi-faith interactivity is found in the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. Its founder Bahá'u'lláh enjoined his followers to "consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship." Bahá'í is often at the forefront of local interfaith activities and efforts. This "religion" strongly participates at a global level in inter-religious dialogue both through and outside of the UN processes. In 2002 the "Universal House of Justice,"

the global governing body of the Bahá'ís, issued a letter to the religious leadership of all faiths in which it identified religious prejudice as one of the last remaining "-isms" to be overcome, enjoining such leaders to unite in an effort to root out extreme and divisive religious intolerance.

Another religion that is rising in influence in the Interfaith movement is Buddhism. It has historically been open to other religions. Along with Hinduism, this religion is fast becoming acceptable in Western civilization. It teaches people to "live and let live." There seems to be no evidence to show that Buddhists, unlike Hinduists or Muslims, have interfered or done any damage to any other religion in any part of the world for the purpose of introducing their religion. Buddhists do not regard the existence of other religions as a hindrance to worldly progress and peace. The 14th Dalai Lama has done a great deal of interfaith work throughout his life. He believes that the "common aim of all religions, an aim that everyone must try to find, is to foster tolerance, altruism and love." He met with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican in 1973, with Pope John Paul II in 1980, 1982, 1986, 1990, and 2003. During 1990 he met with a delegation of Jewish teachers for an extensive interfaith dialogue. He has since visited Israel three times and met during 2006 with the Chief Rabbi of Israel. He has also met with the late Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Robert Runcie and other leaders

of the Anglican Church in London; Gordon B. Hinckley, late president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons); leaders of the Eastern Orthodox Church; Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, and Sikh officials; and the list continues.

As for Orthodox Judaism, it forbids interfaith dialogue, believing the intent is to convert Jews. Yet Reform Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism, and Conservative Judaism encourage interfaith dialogue.

Islam has long encouraged dialogue to reach truth. But this is different from interfaith dialogue which seeks to find common ground between the religions and leave differences aside. Islam also stresses that the supreme law of the land should be Islam, and it must regulate all life's affairs and would exclude all other religions. In more recent times Muslim theologians have advocated interfaith dialogue on a large scale, which is new to them. But relations between Muslims and Jews remain strongly difficult, especially because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts.

Conclusion


No religion exists without "faith," and faith is based upon what that religion believes to be a sacred text, the embodiment of their faith. The Eastern religions are aggressively rising in Western civilization. Confucianism is included among them. Its teachings are thought to have been recorded by Confucius' students

in *The Analects*, plus an additional five works attributed to Confucius dating back to the third century B.C. Hinduism has made its way into America with its faith based upon the *Bhagavad-Gita*, a Sanskrit poem believed to be a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna dating back to 200 B.C. Islam's faith is based upon the Koran, believed to be the verbatim word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. The Old Testament becomes the "Faith" of the Jews along with the Talmud. *Tao Te Ching* (*The Way and Its Power*) becomes the text of the Chinese philosophy and religion known as Taoism. The *Upanishads* (dating back to 900 B.C.) and the *Vedas* become the sacred writings of the Hindu religion. The Old and New Testaments become the sacred book of the Christians.

If "the Faith" writings of a religion are to be sacred, and one's faith is based upon "the Faith" of its founder, it stands to reason one would never give up his faith in "the Faith" of his religion. We see this radically true with the Muslims, even to the point they would put to death anyone who would dishonor the Koran. But Christianity, which is leading in the movements of ecumenicity and Interfaithism, has publicly denounced its faith in "the Faith," to the point of believing it is no longer relative to modern Christianity. Therefore it has the least to lose in its pursuit of Interfaithism.

Nevertheless, to true Christians, the

Christian remnant in the earth at this time, their entire life is based upon that precious Book, the Bible, and to reject it or compromise its message would destroy their existence. Thus, they must be willing to stand firmly upon it no matter the cost. There can be no ecumenicity for the Christian with the world, with religions, and even within Christianity with the apostates. Second Corinthians 6:14–16 is still true for God’s people, as well as the call, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean

thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (vv. 17, 18). “The Faith” has not changed, and our “faith” in it must never change; to the contrary, we must “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3, 4). 

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The Woman Who Rides the Back of the Beast

Dr. H. T. Spence

Prophecy in Scripture speaks of people, places, and events sometimes hundreds or even thousands of years before their fulfillments. Within Bible prophecy there is a time period designated as the End Time when Satan will attempt to culminate his plan against God. Equally, Bible prophecy reveals that God will definitely culminate His sovereign plan concerning human history and the Devil.

One prophetic aspect dealt with by both God and Satan concerns the two women mentioned in Revelation 12 and 17. From the days of the early Church, the woman mentioned in Revelation 12 was always viewed as the Church. Over the centuries, especially since Dispensationalism arrived in the 1800s, the shift of interpretation of the woman has been drawn to the nation of Israel; however, Israel is not mentioned in chapter 12, and the woman is presented with the sun, moon, and stars. Israel is an earthly nation elected by Jehovah, whereas the Church is the “heavenly” view of the woman.

This woman is presented from four perspectives: three in chapter 12 and one in chapter 17. First, she is viewed as the woman clothed in her beauty; again, we believe this to be the Church throughout history; Satan has ever been poised over the woman.

Second, there is a man child

“within” her, a part of her and yet distinct from her; he is to “rule all nations with a rod of iron.” Dispensationalism uses Revelation 19:15b to interpret this man child as Christ. However, it should be equally acknowledged that Revelation 2:26, 27 declares that overcoming saints will also rule “with a rod of iron.” We believe the man child of Revelation 12 to be the saints taken out of the institutional Church at the Rapture; this man child is caught up quickly. In this context the Dragon was out to devour only the man child, not the woman. Following the rapture of the man child, the woman flees to the wilderness (12:6).

Third, in Revelation 12:17 we also read of a “remnant” of this woman, with whom the dragon “was wroth” and “went to make war.” It is said of this remnant that they “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” We believe this remnant (12:17) to be those saved during the Tribulation Period (6:9–11; 7:9), who seem to be Gentiles that in the aftermath of the Rapture come to accept Jesus Christ.

Fourth, we later read in Revelation 17 (after the man child is taken and the remnant of the woman’s seed is separated from her) of a woman coming out of the wilderness. This woman is called “Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.” Who

is this finally seen coming out of the wilderness into which the woman of Revelation 12 ran? We believe this woman is the Roman Catholic Church in its final form leading globally all of the religions, with the concept of the Pope being the beast out of the earth. This woman will ride the back of the scarlet colored beast, the Antichrist.

To understand *this* woman of Revelation 17, we must go back in history and view events that have transpired to bring her to her present form. We first note Babylon, which had its beginning in Genesis 10 and 11, under the apostates Cush and Nimrod. These apostates reacted against God and truth leaving the other families of Noah to begin their own political and religious civilization. Babylon began as a city (political) with a tower (religious) to reach unto heaven. Though its inhabitants were scattered after the Lord confounded their language, the vision for this city powerfully returns during the days of Daniel under the “head of gold,” King Nebuchadnezzar. Although his great empire soon falls, the apostle John gives prophetic insight that Babylon will return. In Revelation 17 it returns as a mystery (religious); in chapter 18 it returns as a city (political). The prophecies reveal that one day Babylon will rise to be a most impressive city, a commercial city, a world capital city, dominated by a universal religion. Yes, Babylon is coming back.

The empire prophecies of Daniel 2

increase our understanding concerning a future kingdom (which at the time of Daniel was not known); this kingdom is represented as the iron legs of the man-image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Following this empire comes a final empire marked by both iron and clay in the feet and toes of this image. The two iron legs prophetically are the two divisions of the later Roman Empire. The final empire, though distinct from the legs, will have the iron of the legs mixed with clay. Babylon, the older head city-empire, and Rome, the younger city-empire, will return.

The Prophecies of Babylon and Rome

There has been much speculation as to the implications of these prophecies. Does it mean that the geography of Babylon will be led by the government of Rome in a united empire? Or is Babylon to signify the restoration of an *Old Testament idolatry* and Rome to become in some form a *New Testament idolatry*? There were two exoduses in the history of the Jew: one was from Egypt (representing sin and the world) and one from Babylon (representing religious apostasy). In these days of increasing apostasy, we should be careful to understand that Babylon and Rome are coming back into prominence with an apostate force that we will have to meet as genuine Christians. It may be that we have thought so much about the Jews and Palestine in prophecy that we have not thought enough about

Babylon and Rome. They both have their roots historically, philosophically, and archaeologically in Babel, Bel or Cush, and Nimrod. And they are coming back as Satan hopes to fulfill his own ancient conquest against God and His people.

Perhaps a word on the time period of the present world age would aid us in this prophecy. The apostle Paul indicates that the present age will meet a concluding transition at a certain generation “upon whom the ends of the world [Greek, “ages” in the plural] are come” (1 Cor. 10:11). The beginnings of the empires (Gen. 10) are to be found in Babylon and the scattering aftermath (Gen. 11:1–9); the “times of the Gentiles” began with Babylon (Dan. 2); and according to Revelation 18, those “times” will conclude with Babylon. Thus, all of the great empires of history have directly or indirectly come from Babylon. Its antiquity is greater than Rome, for it was the initial rising, tangible blasphemy both politically and religiously against Jehovah God. Yet, the Son of God came to earth during the height of the Roman Empire. Rome too had its birth in the “times of the Gentiles”; Babylon rejected the true God in creating its own religion against God (Gen. 11:1–4), and Rome, the Empire, rejected the Son of Man by crucifying Him. Just as Babylon is coming back, prophecy likewise declares that Rome is coming back in some form. Both Babylon and Rome will serve Satan again against God, His Son Jesus

Christ, and His people.

Related to these past forms of Babylon and Rome, a final form of these two cities is yet to arise in history. Although apostasy, the final frontier of sin, is the same in its characteristics of innate and malignant evil, it is ever mutating to come to its finality. In our day, Roman Catholicism is truly a combination religiously of old Babylon idolatry and Roman idolatry. This religious system and its political powers throughout history have constantly mutated; even true in our lifetime, it continues rapidly its mutation toward its final form, “Mystery Babylon,” the Mother Harlot (Rev. 17).

Though some will not agree with this full view of Revelation 17 and 18, we believe the city of Babylon in Revelation 18 will be the literal capital of the Antichrist Kingdom. Likewise, “Mystery Babylon” will somehow be identified with Roman Catholicism, though perhaps in a different form than its present presentation, in order to accommodate the assimilation of all the religions of the world to bring about a global, one world religion. Ecumenicity today is leading to Interfaithism, which ultimately will lead to the one world religion. We believe Roman Catholicism will be at the forefront of these developments. It seems that all of the religions of the earth will merge into Romanism by the middle part of the Tribulation Period. She, in her final form, will lead them; her titular head will be the beast out of the earth (Rev. 13:11–15).

Roman Catholicism: Its End-time Changes

Roman Catholicism, the oldest and largest Christian apostasy, has continued to mutate assimilating heresies from Judaism, Gnosticism, Greek philosophy, and sprinklings of Egyptian, Babylonian, and pagan Roman religions. Nonetheless, it came to a crucial change in its reaction to the Reformation in the 1500s. Prior to the Reformation there were several evangelical movements (with limited light) within the Roman Catholic Church. But the Council of Trent brought this Church into a new mutation of Romanism in its adamant stance against the Reformation and more specifically, the Bible and its Christ. Then in 1868 the convening of Vatican I deepened its dark, apostate heresy with the dogmatization of the infallibility of the Pope.

Further crucial mutations have occurred in Romanism in the twentieth century. The first was during the time of Pope John XXIII when he spoke of the Protestants as simply “separated brethren” and Christian “sisters” of Rome, though not “daughters.” This was the first time since the Reformation that such a gesture had been given by Rome to those outside of her Church; this acknowledgment indicated a change in the mood of Rome towards those who had brought about the Protestant Reformation.

The next crucial change within

Romanism came during the Second Vatican Council (held intermittently from the fall of 1962 through 1965). Romanism endeavored to finally enter “the twentieth century” by way of this Council amidst the increased decline in number of parishioners. Vatican II became Rome’s hope to confront the Church’s relations with the modern world and the Pope’s call for Church renewal. Two Popes presided over this momentous twenty-first ecumenical council: Pope John XXIII opened the council and after his death, Pope Paul VI concluded it. This council was prophetically viewed by many of the Church leaders as a means to bring in the “winds of Pentecost” and provide a fresh move from heaven throughout the Church.

It is interesting to note that four of the men who took part in the opening of this historic council eventually became a Pope: Cardinal Montini, who succeeded Pope John XXIII and became Pope Paul VI; Bishop Luciani, eventually became Pope John Paul I (whose death, according to insiders of the Vatican was an assassination); Bishop Wojtyla, who became Pope John Paul II; and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who attended as a theological advisor, and later became Pope Benedict XVI. Drastic changes in the global Church came from this Council; these changes included a vernacular Mass/Eucharist. All of these compromises were to carefully accommodate an easing of relationships between the Protestants and the Roman clergy.

A third crucial change came on October 4, 1965, when Pope Paul VI presented himself with a false humility and kindness before the United Nations. He bestowed upon the audience the thought that the United Nations had the power for peace and authority to change the world. It was also in his message to strongly promote the need of a universal community of interdependence among all the nations. It must be understood that the papacy has always been (and especially in the twentieth century) a strong supporter of socialism, communism, and the new world order. The Popes of the past and present centuries have also had a belief in the redistribution of all the wealth of the world; this is especially true with the ideologies of the recent Pope Francis I. The papacy believes that the government leaders, along with the help of the Roman Church, could bring about this new world order.

A fourth crucial change was the Charismatic movement which swept into the Roman Catholic Church between 1969 and 1972. It was sanctioned by Rome, having its own representative within the movement through Cardinal Leo Suenens. He was the crucial man within the Second Vatican Council whom Pope John called upon to be one of the moderators of the Council. When the first session of the Council fell into a deadlock, Suenens pulled it out of its chaos and set the agenda for the rest of the Council meetings. It

was after this Council that Suenens committed himself (drawing much controversy) to the deepening of dialogues with other Christian denominations and religions, as well as granting greater liberties to the laity (including women) within the Church. Amidst his diversity of manipulations within the Interfaithism movement, he was the prominent Romanist endorser of the so-called “Catholic Charismatic Renewal.” The Charismatic movement within the Romanist Church by 1972 spilled over into the Pentecostal denominations following their own heretical “neo” movement within so-called “Neo-Pentecostalism.” The Charismatic movement broke down many of the barriers between Romanism and Protestantism. Now this movement has become a “religious glue” to bring much of Christendom together.

Malachi Martin, a prolific writer within the Roman Catholic Church, wrote in his early book *The Final Conclave* of the staggering changes among cardinals, bishops, and priests. Though there was a movement among traditional Romanists to return to the Tridentine formulas (Council of Trent) of Romanism, the majority of the Church had now embraced the contemporary world; there would be no turning back.

A fifth crucial change came with the conclave election of Pope John Paul II in 1978, who reigned as pontiff until his death in 2005. A native of Poland, he was a key power behind the overthrow of the communist

party there through the Solidarity Movement. He also was one of three key men, along with Gorbachev and Reagan, who brought down the Berlin Wall. He was a strong socialist believer, although he acknowledged that the socialism of communism was not working; instead, he desired to bring about a socialism through the Roman Catholic Church. John Paul II was the man the Romanist Church needed for global “public relations” through his charismatic personality. He helped bring the Romanist Church to a greater acceptance throughout the world. He became the most beloved Pope of all times. Kings, queens, the Dalai Lama, Evangelicals such as Chuck Colson and James Dobson, evangelists (among them Billy Graham), laity, and many others were all brought under the powerful spell of this Pope. He helped greatly to assist in Rome’s enlarged acceptance within the religious and political worlds.

From one perspective Rome remains the same in root and spirit; it will never give up the keys of authority or give up its declaration of being the “true” Church. But the twentieth century proved that Romanism is willing to make many concessions and changes to bring all of Christendom under its authority, and even to become a strong leader in the Interfaith movement to produce the coming new world religion.

Most Recent Popes

After the death of John Paul II,

there was the election of Joseph Ratzinger, the strong theologian behind John Paul II. He was more of a private scholar of the Church without the charisma to lead the Church’s interactions with other religions and nations. Nevertheless, he was chosen to be the next Pope due to his closeness to John Paul II and his theological abilities. Ratzinger, taking on the name Pope Benedict XVI, came to the papal throne in 2005 and reigned until the early part of 2013. Though he has been strong in the “traditions” of Rome, he has been very weak in dealing with the sodomy issue among the clergy. There were rumors in and around the Vatican of pressures for him to resign. Just days before Pope Benedict became the first pontiff to resign in 600 years, his office was embroiled in further intrigue—this time involving the discovery of an alleged homosexual underworld within the Vatican. The morality of the Roman Catholic cardinals strongly came into question. At the beginning of this year of 2013, Cardinal Keith O’Brien, the highest-ranking Roman Catholic leader in Britain, resigned after allegations of inappropriate acts toward male priests surfaced against him in the *Observer* newspaper. Though the Roman Church is against marriage of the clergy, they believe this form of sin (sodomy) does not fall under celibacy. The immoral scandal of lies and manipulation surrounding sexual abuse is escalating within the Roman Catholic Church as this underground

behavior among priests, bishops, and cardinals is becoming more and more publically revealed. Cardinal O'Brien was slated to attend the most recent conclave to decide on the next Pope; however, amid the controversy he said he would not.

While the public understands that no one but the Pope has seen the 300-page dossier of this most recent scandal, it is evident that it contains the breadth of corruption within the Vatican. This internal investigation was prompted by the "Vatileaks" scandal last spring, and it discovered extensive corruption involving stealing and immorality among the priests and their staff at the Vatican. Concerns of financial mismanagement first surfaced through hundreds of controversial documents leaked into the Italian media last year. These documents revealed corruption within the highest echelons of the Catholic Church, including Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the 78-year-old secretary of state. The man cleaning up the Vatican's finances was Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who, according to the *New York Times*, made enemies within the powerful administrative body of the Roman Catholic Church (the Curia) for identifying the corruption. Against his wishes, he was removed from his post and sent to serve as an ambassador to the United States in Washington, D. C.

These are only the latest of many recent indications that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has become

increasingly isolated under Ratzinger's very strict cover-up rule.

Apart from the turmoil within the Roman Catholic Church, political governments trying to "modernize" their societies have defied Church teachings and influence. Let us note a few of the embarrassments to the Church:

(1) During the recent American presidential election, the Roman Church decided that it was totally opposed to President Obama's plan to introduce the Obamacare health insurance mandate. The reason? It would include funding for birth control. In an effort to placate the bishops, Obama has since offered two radical modifications that would relieve the Church of having to provide such things to its employees. There is a strong indication that this confrontation was manufactured as a means of defeating Obama at the election, but it failed. The Romanist parishioners voted against the Church and the bishops were unable to order them into voting the way the Church told them to. Instead of rushing to the polling booths to defeat Obama, its parishioners voted for him in record numbers.

(2) In Spain, once regarded as the most Roman Catholic country in the world, the previous secularist government legalized same-sex marriage. The Church set its face against such a reform and spoke vehemently against it. Nevertheless, the reform passed. The new government, which

is supposedly sympathetic to the Vatican, promised to repeal the law. It has failed to do so, thwarted by the constitutional court. Abortion reforms were enacted, Church privileges were reduced, and changes were made to the stranglehold the Church had on education.

(3) As for the country of Portugal, similarly, same-sex marriage is now legal. This happened despite the Roman Church's best efforts to defeat it.

(4) In the Philippines, the Church declared that a bill in parliament to make birth control products legal and freely available must not pass. Yet, it passed.

(5) In Ireland, once unquestioningly under the thumb of the Roman Church, the child abuse revelations have been so extreme as to cause the prime minister to denounce the Church in Parliament. He has since closed the Irish Embassy at the Vatican.

(6) In South American countries, which the Pope could once guarantee to rule with a rod of iron, there have been rebellions. In Brazil, same-sex marriage was approved (although the Church succeeded in defeating attempts to reform the harsh abortion laws).

(7) In Mexico City, same-sex unions are now legal. This political agitation and these attempts to interfere in democratic parliaments are increasingly resented. Poll after

poll shows that the Roman Catholic population neither agree with nor accept the Vatican's doctrines on abortion, birth control, homosexuality, or assisted suicide. This is reflected in the dwindling number of Roman Catholics now attending Mass or having anything else to do with the Church.

Although Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) has resigned, he still will be living in Vatican City at a monastery. Many will sigh with relief at his departure. He leaves behind a reactionary College of Cardinals he was instrumental in forming.

The new Pope Francis I, born in South America (though of Italian parents), is the first Jesuit to be elected Pope. The Jesuit movement came into existence by Ignatius of Loyola in 1534, when he and six other young men took on the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to become "God's soldiers" and eventually the watchdog for the Pope, offering absolute obedience to him. The Society of Jesus is consecrated under the patronage of Madonna Della Strada, a title of the Virgin Mary. The "Superior General" (by outsiders called "the Black Pope" due to the black robes the Jesuits wear) heads up the Jesuit men and powers around the world. He is chosen for life by the Jesuits themselves. Little is heard about this voting procedure, for the Jesuits often work incognito.

The new Pope is against the trappings of the historical papacy;

he is a socialist in heart and a strong believer of the redistribution of global wealth. Again, we must remember, a Jesuit has taken the vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. It is now becoming more and more obvious that he is his own man; his absoluteness of papal power may reveal many more changes coming to the Roman Catholic Church, if he lives long enough. The permissibility of the “discussion” of clergy marriages may be entertained through his papacy. More will be addressed concerning this current Pope in the next *Straightway* issue.

The Coming New Religion

We must realize that the coming new world religion is yet to be finalized in history. Such a new religion will be composed of the contributions of change from within Romanism, apostate Protestantism, Judaism, Mid-east religions, and the ancient religions from the Far East. All these changes will blend together to make the final new religion. We should not conclude that the past or present Romanism is that final form. Nor should we conclude that the final form is without a dynamic and large contribution from the past and present form of Romanism. Like a mother and her paramours with illegitimate children, there is a new religion that will be born in the coming days through the coming together of all of the neo-movements.

We believe Romanism *in a new form* will head up the one world religion of

the new world order. She will not be the Antichrist; nonetheless, she will ride the back of an Antichrist new world order. God’s providence is bringing us politically into a generation both in America and around the world where a climate is being readied for the coming of Antichrist. We also are witnessing the pressure religiously for the coming of the Mother of Harlots led by a False Prophet.

In our next issue we want to explore the possible facets that seem to be coming. God’s people must be ready to face them yet with the Blessed Hope of the maranatha spirit. [S]

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