

STRAIGHTWAY

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

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The Papacy of Rome for the End Time

Dr. H. T. Spence

Our purpose in this *Straightway* issue is to take a candid look at three areas of End-time concern arising in the religious media. Whereas the first area relates to the papacy, the second area concerns the present description of Romanism as the “Mother Harlot.” The third area regards the controversial “red moons” or “blood moons” that have become of great concern both to the Jewish religious leaders of our present day as well as Neo-Evangelical and Charismatic pastors.

As these concerns weave themselves into our society, troubled Christians must come

to a rest of heart that God is in control and that His plan will be resolved to the glory and honor of His Son. Like the sobering events of John 13 that end with Christ’s prophecy of Peter’s denial of the Lord, similar denials will become more unmistakable as we near the secret coming of Christ. Nevertheless, John 14 begins with the words, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” We must never let the powers and pressures of the world diminish a strong and steadfast belief in both God and His Son. The End Time will be filled with many strange and fearful things taking

This edition includes two more articles

The Mother Harlot of Rome and Her Secrets of History
The Red Moons of Our Times

place within the political world, the religious world, and the natural world. We must ready our hearts and minds for the days ahead.

Roman Catholicism and Its Papacy

The present manipulative powers of the papal system are radically changing Roman Catholicism—the oldest apostasy in Christianity. Statistically, Romanism boasts a membership of over one billion people; it has steadily grown, especially since Vatican II met in the early 1960s. This “Mother of Harlots” has surprisingly brought a number of public changes, while many other changes have been made behind the scenes and away from public scrutiny. Roman Catholicism is mysteriously rising with subtle influence, beyond the media’s imagery of it, as it plies through the waters of human history to bring about a final

world religion. Its powerful influence in the contemporary ecumenical movement (since the mid-1960s) has catapulted this apostate religion into the leadership of the Interfaith movement which is fast producing changes in the global religious environment and in their own religious presuppositions.

My father, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence, warned back in the early 1990s that Rome would make a number of changes to gain its religious goal of global conquest. Since my father’s death in July of 2000, we have witnessed three popes who have brought about a subtle agenda of which only Vatican insiders are aware. The hierarchy of Rome has never been transparent with the world and especially with its own people.

To understand what is really taking place in Romanism today we must take a historical journey behind the public face of Roman Catholicism. There has been a long procession of manipulations and transitions to bring about Satan’s End-time hope of conquering the world of mankind to his glory.

The Present Pope

There have been many enigmas surrounding Pope Francis, both before he became pope and certainly since he was appointed to the papacy. Surprisingly, he is the first Jesuit pope. Already his decisions, his manner of living, and his shocking

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public comments have drawn both commendation and criticism. He has candidly expressed a different perspective of the papacy than that of his predecessors, for he has not been the pope of luxury and pomp.

On the evening of March 13, 2013, a short time after the College of Cardinals elected him the 265th successor to Peter and leader of Roman Catholics, Jorge Mario Bergoglio (his real name) surprised Church leaders and the media by rejecting the papal limousine provided for his use; instead he rode back to his hotel by bus. It seems that since then he has permanently parked the armored Mercedes SUV (the normal mode of transportation of his predecessors) and has chosen to ride in a Ford Focus instead. Such gestures have continued since he took his papal name from “Saint Francis of Assisi,” one of the churchmen in history identified with the downtrodden. He urged his admirers from his native Argentina to donate money to the poor instead of spending it on a trip to pay their tributes in Rome. He chose to reside in the Vatican’s modest guesthouse rather than the comparatively lavish Apostolic Palace. He has even been observed carrying his own bags. In more recent months, another gesture to raise the eyebrows of the traditionalists of Rome was his act of washing the feet of two women in juvenile detention, one of whom was a Muslim. This action contradicted

the tradition that restricts the ritual to men, and mostly to priests in the Vatican entourage. Such expressions of outward “modesty” and “humility” are obvious contrasts from those of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, who became accustomed to a very different style of Vatican leadership.

The so-called Progressive Catholics have responded enthusiastically to the changes in Francis’ leadership. In recent months his opinionated remarks have entered the realm of “gay priests.” His less condemnatory statement, “Who am I to judge?” has been much less offensive than that of John Paul and Benedict. Though his words are more candid and less condemnatory, we are told that a new pope has comparatively little freedom to remake the ideological system of the Roman Curia. Since the cardinals and archbishops who head the various congregations, tribunals, councils, commissions, academies (that make up the Curia) typically resign upon the death of a pontiff, a new pope can choose the replacements of such men only from the list of cardinals and archbishops. It must be remembered that these men were appointed to the ranks of cardinals and archbishops by the pope’s predecessors. This has been true with Francis’ coming into the papacy following John Paul II’s and Benedict XVI’s solid 34-year run of forceful theological and doctrinal conservatism. Pope Francis has

inherited a church staffed at the highest levels with men who would oppose any dramatic change in course. Nevertheless, the world waits to see what this new pope will do with his privileged papal powers.

Just as we have a president in the United States who has aggressively set himself to bring about a new America by destroying the old, so Romanism may now have a pope who will radically alter the public face of the Romanist course of its past. In Washington, D.C., we have seen the pompous power of executive orders and privileges overriding laws in order to aggressively dismantle America (as we once knew it) with the goal of bringing our country into conformity to a greater purpose—transcending nationalism and coming into a New World Order. Likewise, Pope Francis may be the key man in a satanic plan to do the same in the realm of his religion for what he believes to be the greater purpose. Perhaps the question is how he will do this?

Change Under Pope Francis

Many practical perspectives have already changed at the Vatican since this new pope has arrived. In more recent months religious gossip within the Vatican hierarchy suggests that the ban on married priests may eventually be abolished; it is technically viewed as a matter of discipline rather than of “faith.” Francis does not view this or many other aspects of present Romanism as dogma or “a doctrine

of the Church.” It is evident when one carefully analyzes the words of this pope that he speaks more than any other pope in a subtle language of universal reform for the Church. With his unique manner, he may dismantle the present concept of Romanism in order to bring about a greater universal purpose for the Church’s existence. Before his reign is over, we may witness a first step toward abolishing required celibacy of priests. This may commence by his setting up a pontifical commission to study the celibacy rule, its impact on the lives and work of the clergy, and above all, its role in the alarming decline in priestly ordinations throughout the Western world.

In the United States alone, the population of priests has decreased from 59,000 in 1975 to around 39,000 as of 2014, with many of that number nearing or past retirement age. Possibly such a commission would also attempt to build on the fact that the Church permits married Anglican clergy to become priests when they convert to Catholicism, a practice that has already produced many married priests in countries around the world. Most importantly, it could identify historical grounds for reform.

Though we have heard so much in our lifetime concerning the clerical celibacy of Roman Catholic priests, we must remember that it was not uniformly enforced in the Western Church until more than a thousand

years after Christ's coming. And even then, celibacy never took root in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Also, what neither the pope nor the commission would say in public is that permitting priests to marry would make the priesthood a less attractive hiding place for sexually-perversed men who often end up molesting children.

Though a good number of priests and parishioners hope for such changes, one of the legacies of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s is a widespread consensus in Church hierarchy that a proposed break with tradition cannot even be entertained unless it can be framed to support a deeper continuity of the Church itself. This idea was first laid out by John Henry Newman in 1845; the concept is known as "development of doctrine," and it holds that any shift must reaffirm the underlying changelessness of the Church. Appropriated by conservatives within the Church amid the upheavals of the late 1960s and early 1970s, it has served as an effective restraint against innovation and reform. The Vatican sees, as we are even observing in Fundamentalism, that justifiable reforms and changes merely inspire even bolder ones to arise. I believe that history will bear this to be true in any religion.

On the horizon may be other reforms such as eliminating the ban on the use of artificial birth control, which basically the Western-

world Roman Catholics refuse to accept. There may be changes to the Church's teaching about homosexual acts, which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notoriously defines as "intrinsically disordered" and "contrary to natural law." Other changes may include welcoming women into the priesthood.

With all of these potential changes on the horizon, Francis often feeds the fire of these controversies with his public words to the media. But even so, there is a lot of secret baggage accompanying Pope Francis. For example, when he was chosen as pope, critics attacked him on his alleged accommodation of the military junta that ran Argentina during the "Dirty War" that stretched from 1976 to 1983. But his most serious that he turned over two priests to Navy torturers has never been substantiated.

What is clear is that he refused to speak out publicly against the Argentinean regime, even as he reportedly worked behind the scenes to help people flee the dictatorship. Thus, the portrait that emerges of this pope is that of a man whose mix of virtues and vices somewhat resembles Pope Pius XII, who discreetly saved thousands of Jews during World War II but officially declared the Vatican neutral in the battle against the evils of the Nazis. Unlike his predecessors, Francis holds an apparently sincere belief in dialogue, bridge-building,

conciliation, and the acceptance of differences. It seems important to him to appear happy and delightful, tolerant, and more of a man for the world. He has made unusually respectful, open-minded statements about the members and beliefs of other “Christian” churches, as well as about Jews, Muslims, and even atheists.

More and more, we are going to be hearing papal rhetoric from this pope. He truly is a politician, and politicians are given to idealistic language when speaking to the people and to the media (conversely, sowing disillusionment to everyone). Amidst such disillusionment, there will be charges of hypocrisy, dishonesty, and cynicism erupting when the politicians’ exalted words (governmental or religious) fail to match the deeds which they have spoken about. This has been so almost daily concerning the present administration in Washington.

We must realize that the Roman Church has a rhetorical reality all its own where subtle changes are more and more being allowed. Over many decades Romanism has had an overwhelming obsession with sodomy, an obsession that has become an integral part of the infrastructure of the Vatican. Even strong suspicions have fallen upon Pope Benedict XVI in his hurried resignation. Pope Francis’ words and open hands on the subject of homosexuality have diverted the attention of the papacy away from

sexual decadence to the plight of the poor. This positive spin has caused a number of disillusioned people to return to the Roman Catholic Church.

Pope Francis is also concerned for the many Romanists who are of the anti-Democratic party in American politics. But we must remember that a new pope appoints the bishops, archbishops, and cardinals who will govern the Church of the future in America and in turn will elect the next pope. In many ways we may see the wheels of powerful, future change set in motion by Pope Francis.

The Malachy Papers and Their Prophecies

This topic brings us to another dilemma that has risen in Romanism since the appointment of Pope Francis. Among the many prophetic writings within the secret archives of the Vatican, one particular work is simply designated as the Malachy Papers.

Perhaps a brief survey of these famous Malachy Papers would give some understanding of how changes have come in Roman Catholicism and where the Church is heading. These prophetic manuscripts were written by the Irish Archbishop of Armagh named Malachy (1094–1193). He was the first native-born Irish saint to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1190, he prophesied of his own death. In 1139, he was called by Pope Innocent II to Rome

where he supposedly received visions concerning the future popes of Rome (112 which followed); this list of popes concludes with the “Second Coming of Jesus Christ.” From this vision he wrote 112 short Latin phrases describing some aspect of the men who would arise as popes.

This manuscript was placed in the papal secret archives and not discovered until 1556 (or as late as 1590) by a Vatican librarian. It was published in 1595 by the Benedictine monk and historian Arnold de Wyon in his book called *The Tree of Life*. He was assisted by a prominent scholar of the times to make sure it was authentic. Though Malachy recorded a list of future popes (in coded form), it must be acknowledged he did not say whether these men were good or evil or whether they were true popes of the Romanist Church or “anti-popes” to Rome. Malachy’s writings identified each pope with one or more characteristics, such as his family coat of arms, his birthplace, or cities in which he would live during his life. He also prophesied of some of the events that would take place with a few of the claimants to the papacy.

No one truly knows if these writings exist as Malachy gave them, since they were done in 1139 and not discovered until 1556, and then published in 1595. The span of centuries between writing and discovery could have permitted editing by others.

(A simple postscript here concern-

ing redactors of ancient manuscripts: this also could be true with the famous Codex Vaticanus which is reputed to be one of the oldest manuscripts of a nearly completed Bible. It was supposedly produced in the late fourth century, but its whereabouts was uncertain for nearly a thousand years until it was identified in the Vatican Library in the fifteenth century. Ironically, there has been no question as to the authenticity of the Codex Vaticanus which later resurfaced by Tischendorf in the 1800s, and oh, the many modern Bible versions that have come from it.)

Several Popes Mentioned by Malachy

Whether the manuscript is the original or whether changes were made by some person or several, perhaps a few observations could be made concerning the manuscript’s predictions. It is not our purpose to deal with the entire list of 112 popes since the days of Malachy. However, perhaps to choose a few of them would give us some glimpse into Malachy’s predictive perspective. In more recent years as I have perused this list, it has become clearer that evidence of any fulfilled predictions is really based on the subjectivity of the reader. Although Malachy does not give the names of the popes, we will give their names so that the reader will know of whom we are writing. We will cover only a few for the reader to see the concept of Malachy’s writings.

Observations of a Few Popes on the Malachy List

For example, Malachy described Innocent X (1644–1655) as “Joyfulness of the Cross.” What did this phrase have to do with this pope? Well, it is interesting to note that Innocent X was finally elected on the Feast Day of the Exaltation of the Cross after a long and difficult Conclave.

Pope Pious VI (1775–1799) was designated by Malachy as “Apostolic Wanderer.” During his reign he traveled to Germany to confer with Emperor Joseph II. In the last two years of his reign, he was forced by revolutionaries to flee Rome. After a very difficult journey over the Alps, he died in France.

Another of the prophecies describes Pope Pious VII (1800–1823) as a “Greedy Eagle.” This pope’s reign was overshadowed by Napoleon, whose symbol was an eagle. Napoleon’s rule overshadowed Pope Pious VII’s reign. Napoleon and Pious VII were in continual conflict as Napoleon forced Pious VII to submit to his demands. But after Pious VII excommunicated Napoleon, the pope was kidnapped and imprisoned by Napoleon’s officers. Eventually Napoleon forced the pope into an alliance that leaned heavily in Napoleon’s favor.

Pious IX (1846–1878) was described by Malachy as a “Cross from the Cross.” Pious IX was the

last pope to govern the Papal States. He ended up imprisoned in the Vatican when the House of Savoy, whose coat of arms is a white cross, reunited Italy and removed Pious IX from the rule of the Papal States.

Malachy spoke of Leo XIII (1878–1903) as “Light in the Sky.” Leo’s coat of arms includes a picture of a comet in the sky. We must remember that bishops of the Roman Catholic Church create their coats of arms. Leo was made bishop on February 19, 1843. This means that he created his coat of arms thirty-five years before he became pope in 1878. He was identified with a light in the sky long before he became pope.

Malachy describes Pope Pious X (1903–1914) as “Fire Burning.” Pious X’s reign saw the Russian-Japanese War, the Mexican Revolution, and the first and second Balkan Wars. It was also at the end of his reign that World War I began and set Europe on “fire” as the war was seen to be.

Malachy describes Benedict XV (1914–1922) as “Religion Laid Waste.” Benedict reigned during World War I and the Revolution in Russia; these events led to millions of Roman Catholics being put to death. Mikhail Gorbachev in his 1996 *Memoirs* said that the Soviet Communist State laid waste a religion by “a wholesale war on religion” (p. 328).

Pope John XXIII (1958–1963) was described by Malachy as “Pastor and Sailor.” During his reign he

regularly wore clothing featuring a large sailboat.

Pope Paul VI (1963–1978) is described by Malachy as “Flower of Flowers.” It is interesting to note that Paul VI had three lilies on his coat of arms.

Pope John Paul I (1978–1978) was described as “From the Half Moon.” John Paul I began his reign on August 26, 1978, when the moon appeared exactly half full. So he began his reign from the half moon. John Paul I also came from the diocese of Belluno, meaning “beautiful moon.” This papacy abruptly ended with his death less than forty days after becoming pope.

Pope John Paul II (1978–2005) is described as “Of the Solar Eclipse.” He was born on May 18, 1920, the day of a solar eclipse. On the day of his funeral, April 8, 2005, there was another solar eclipse. Interestingly, on September 19, 1846, two little children declared that the Virgin Mary appeared to them in LaSalette, France, and told them, “Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist. The Church will be in eclipse.” The prediction went on to say that outside of a small remnant, the Church of Roman Catholicism will change from its former days. Something will eclipse the Church and its tradition. There are a number of Roman Catholic theologians of the Tridentine formula who believe that John Paul II was the man that

commenced the eclipse of the Roman Church.

Pope Benedict XVI (2005–2013) was predicted as “the Glory of the Olive.” He took on the name of Benedict, which is the Benedictine name for olive branch or tree. Before the Conclave appointed him as pope, we wrote of the possibility of his coming from the Benedictine order *or* taking on the papal name Pope Benedict.

The final name on the list of Malachy, after the “Glory of the Olive,” is “Petrus Romanus,” or “Peter the Roman.” This was to be the next pope, and from Malachy’s listing this would be Pope Francis I. In Malachy’s prophecy for this last pope, additional words are given:

In the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church, there will sit Peter the Roman, who will feed the sheep in many tribulations: and when these things are finished, the city of the seven hills [Rome] will be destroyed, and the dreadful Judge will judge His people. The End.

Thus, according to Malachy’s words, this current pope, Francis I, will be the last pope in history to claim the title the bishop of Rome. When one views this prophecy, perhaps it is not, as so many have said, that the last pope will be called “Peter,” but rather the last Peter (pope) will be viewed as “Peter (or Pope) the Roman.” It is interesting to note that Pope Francis I has pressed

for himself the title “Bishop of Rome” rather than the title “Pope.” He has disassociated himself with all the titles associated with the title of “Pope” and all other claimant titles—he constantly declares himself to be “the Bishop of Rome.” It is almost as if his authority, from his perspective, is limited only to Rome. When appearing on the balcony after the Conclave, his first words were that the purpose of the Conclave was “to give a bishop to Rome.” He has pressed such a title since then in his reign and identified himself as a “Roman.” He is also the first of the popes to sign his name in the official Vatican Directory in Italian rather than Latin (the official language of the Church). Italian is the language of modern Romans, a language which Francis speaks fluently. This is another gesture to place emphasis upon his role as “bishop” rather than a universal leader. It is also interesting to note, as mentioned previously, that he chose his papal name from the most well-known saint of Italy, Saint Francis of Assisi; the city of Assisi is only two hours from Rome. The middle name of both St. Francis of Assisi and his father happened to be “Peter.”

The prophecy is that Peter the Roman will feed many people during many tribulations. This pope really does not care if people believe in Jesus Christ or in the Roman Catholic Church. But his greater emphasis has been upon feeding the poor

throughout the world. On page 129 of his book *Pope Francis: Conversations with Jorge Bergoglio: His Life in His Own Words*, he stated, “It is a problem with sin. For four years Argentina has been living a sinful existence because it has not taken responsibility for those who have no food or work.” He is strongly promoting that the Church become poor in order to address the increased poverty in the world. Again, the prophecy declares that Rome will come to its end at the end of the last pope’s reign.

There are those within the Roman Catholic Church that believe the end of the world is soon. They believe that Pope Francis is “from the end of the world,” since he comes geographically from the end of the world “down” in South America, Argentina. Francis stated in his first address on the balcony, right after his appointment as pope, that the cardinals went all the way “to the end of the world to gain the Bishop of Rome.” He then stated, “Here we are.”

Conclusion

Roman Catholicism will definitely have a major part to play in the drama of the End Time of the last days. But to what extent will this be? Pope Francis I has come into both the political and religious world unassuming and without the flair and dogmatism of the last two popes. We cannot undermine his ability to radically change the largest segment of public Christianity in order to

loosely bind it with other world religions and thus create a one-world religion. Romanism is not content to be the leader of Christianity; it desires to become the leader of all religions of the world. In order to rule all religions, it, too, must submit to changes that will make it more compatible to the rest of the religions while maintaining its “keys of authority.” Postmodernism, the global philosophy of our times, has

boldly declared that all religions must do away with their absoluteness of distinctions and come to the universal purpose of religion—to serve the socialistic needs of mankind (that of a social gospel), while secular government rules the conscience and existence of man. The present pope is pressing more and more for the collective social needs of man rather than the individual convictions of man. ❏

The Mother Harlot of Rome and Her Secrets of History

Dr. H. T. Spence

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Rev. 17:1–5).

Roman Catholicism, the oldest continuing apostasy of Christianity, has been a historical enigma for centuries. A “mystery of iniquity” has been the rotting heart underneath her public veneer of a self-proclaimed “representation of Christ on earth.” Even from pre-Reformation times, the Roman Catholic Church has been viewed as the Mother Harlot of Revelation 17. Its extravagant wealth, pomp and circumstance have been part of an elaborate cover-up of this Kingdom of the Tares; it has been a church that has entered the gates of hell (Hades) where it resides in death. Its history from the early Crusades and subsequent reign of terror of the Papal Inquisitions has left the Vatican with more innocent blood on its hands than all the twentieth-century dictators, such as Stalin, Mussolini,

Hitler, and Saddam Hussein, put together. Although End-time political governments certainly have had their cover-ups of deception and oppression, Romanism has risen to be the greatest of all deceptions. Proclaiming to be under the cloak of Christ, she presents herself as the bride of Christ, the papacy as Christ's Vicar, and the Roman Church as the only church accepted by God.

The Architectural Wonder of the Mother Harlot

The word *Vatican* comes from the Latin *Vaticanus*, the name of one of the hills in ancient Rome upon which the palace of the pope was later built. St. Peter's Basilica, located at the Vatican, is the largest church in the world. It occupies the site of Constantine's original basilica, commissioned in A.D. 326 to mark the place of Peter's martyrdom; his basilica was completed thirty years later. By the fifteenth century this first basilica, unstable and with entire walls on the verge of collapse, was in great need of repair. Work did not properly begin until the reign of Julius II (1503–1513), who tore down almost the entire building under the care of Donato Bramante, his master architect, and then laid the foundation stone for the new church. Bramante died in 1514, after which numerous architects and artists were called in to scrutinize and rework the plans, including Raphael, Peruzzi, Michelangelo (who was personally responsible for designing

the mighty dome, the largest rotunda in the world; St. Paul's in London is the second). Carlo Maderno finally completed its very impressive façade.

On November 18, 1626, more than a century after work began, Urban VIII consecrated the new St. Peter's, and Romanists from all over the world came to marvel at its beauty. As one approaches the basilica, the certain details of the towering façade are not obvious from a distance: the central balcony, for example, from which new popes are presented to the people and give their inaugural blessings; or the thirteen statues including Jesus, John the Baptist, and eleven of the Apostles that line the balustrade (St. Peter's statue is inside). The entrance to the basilica itself is through one of five enormous doors in the atrium (the central, ornate door dates back to 1445). On the floor, a few feet inside the entrance, is a circle of dark red stone. Of the six such stones that decorated the floor of Constantine's original basilica, this is the only one that remains. It was on this very slab that kings and emperors knelt to receive their coronations from the pope himself, including Charlemagne, crowned the first Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day, A.D. 800.

Upon entering the basilica, on display in the Chapel of St. Peter, to the right of the entrance, is Michelangelo's marble statue of Jesus in the arms of Mary (the *Pieta*);

interestingly, the head of Mary is disproportionately larger than Jesus'. Michelangelo was only 23-years old when he did this piece, eventually signing his name along the sash of Mary's mantle (mantilla) to silence doubters who thought he was too young to have come up with a work of such perceptive depth. Pope Paul III commissioned the elder Michelangelo (in his 70s) to work on the basilica itself. In 1972 a madman attacked the sculpture severing Mary's arm, shattering her nose, and chipping off one eyelid before guards could stop him. Six months later the restorers discovered a previously unknown monogram sculpted from the skin lines on the palm of the Madonna's left hand—an "M" for Michelangelo.

Down the main hall from this Chapel are two monuments. The first of these is the tomb of Pope John XXIII, who when he died in 1963 had become the most beloved pontiff in modern history. The second is the statue of a seated St. Peter; this statue was rescued from the original basilica and is believed to have been sculpted in the workshop of Arnolfo di Cambio. Peter's left hand clasps the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, while his right is raised in a papal blessing. It is his feet, however, that get the most attention, the right one having been subjected to the kisses of so many pilgrims over the ages that it has been visibly worn down.

The Vatican over the centuries has boasted of sacred relics which have included the head and a little finger of St. Andrew; fragments of the true Cross brought back from Jerusalem by Constantine's mother Helena; the veil used by Veronica to wipe sweat from Jesus' forehead as He carried that same cross to Calvary (that cross was later believed to have displayed miraculous powers, from curing blindness to resurrecting the dead); and the lance of the Roman soldier Longinus, used to pierce the side of the crucified Christ. It is interesting to note that the ancient Italian Abbey of Monoppello, high in the Apennine Mountains, was in 1999 declared to have been in possession of the "real" Veronica's Veil all along, despite the fact that the Vatican still brings out its own version once a year for Easter ceremonies. Such relics, endless in number, are found in many halls and rooms as well as in the many buildings and annex rooms that make up this massive edifice called the Vatican. There are also the many priceless paintings that adorn the complexity of this home of the Harlot.

The Vatican boasts of being the site of Peter's martyrdom. In 1950, Pope Pius XII announced that the apostle's tomb had been discovered beneath the high altar of the basilica. This was the result of more than a decade of intense archaeological excavations. The crypt beneath

— *Article Continues after Insert*

Forty-first Annual Bible Conference

Foundations Bible College & Theological Seminary

“Christ’s Final Hours According to John”

Palm Sunday: March 29th

- 9:30 AM – Film
- 10:30 AM – Message: “Christ’s Final Hours According to John”
– Dr. H. T. Spence
- 6:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: Washing the Disciples’ Feet”
(John 13:1–20) – Dr. H. T. Spence

Monday: March 30th

- 8:30 AM – Film
- 10:00 AM – Message: “The Christ: The Prophecy of Betrayal & Denial”
(John 13:20–38) – Dr. Dennis Lowry
- 7:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled”
(John 14:1–6) – Dr. Douglas Wilson

Tuesday: March 31st

- 8:30 AM – Film
- 10:00 AM – Message: “The Christ: And the Father”
(John 14:7–15) – Dr. Douglas Wilson
- 7:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: And the Promise of the Spirit”
(John 14:16–26) – Dr. Dennis Lowry

Wednesday: April 1st

- 8:30 AM – Message: “The Christ: And His Peace”
(John 14:27–31) – Dr. Larry Saunders
- 10:00 AM – Message: “The Christ: And Abiding in Him”
(John 15:1–10) – Pastor Oscar Coggin
- 7:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: His Joy and Loving Him”
(John 15:11–17) – Dr. Larry Saunders

Thursday: April 2nd

- 8:30 AM – Message: “The Christ: Hated by the World”
(John 15:18–27) – Pastor Oscar Coggin
- 10:00 AM – Message: “The Christ: Sending Another Comforter”
(John 16:1–15) – Dr. Larry Saunders
- 3:00 PM – Meeting of the Board of Trustees
- 7:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: The Name Before the Father”
(John 16:16–33) – Pastor Oscar Coggin

Friday: April 3rd

- 8:30 AM – Message: “The Christ: The Prayer for His Own”
(John 17) – Dr. H. T. Spence
- 10:00 AM – Reflections Upon the Goodness of God
- 12:00 PM – Lunch for All Our Congregation and Guests
- 7:00 PM – Musical Drama: *The King of Glory*

Resurrection Sunday: April 5th

- 6:30 AM – Sunrise Service: “The Christ: His Entombment and Resurrection” (John 19:38–42; Matthew 28:1–8)
- 9:15 AM – Film
- 10:30 AM – Message: “The Christ: Meeting Him at the Tomb”
(John 20:1–18) – Dr. H. T. Spence
- 6:00 PM – Message: “The Christ: The Final Scene”
(John 21) – Dr. H. T. Spence
- **Closing: Communion Around the Altar**

*The bookstore, located in the French Divinity Hall of Anvil House,
will be open daily, Monday through Friday,
after the 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, & 7:00 PM services.
The Student Center will be open between services.*

Peter's had long been the final resting place of popes, emperors, and early Christian leaders, but it was always suspected that under them lay even more ancient graves. These graves are what were discovered between 1939 and 1949 under the direction of Ludwig Kaas, a high-ranking Vatican priest. During this time an entire network of second- and third-century mausoleums was uncovered, some Christian, some Roman.

The most significant discovery was a small monument dating from as early as A.D. 160 and seeming to mark the tomb of Peter. The team, led by Kaas, dug deeper, coming across a range of bones that were immediately sent to Dr. Riccardo Galeazzi-Lisi, the personal physician to the pope himself (soon after revealed as a "bogus" doctor), who asserted with inaccuracy that they belonged to a powerfully-built man who had died in his late 60s, a claim that led directly to Pius XII's declaration. When the bones were sent to secular specialists for a second opinion, however, the results were far from what the Church had been hoping for. The "apostolic remains" were in fact bones belonging not to one man, but to two separate men (one young and one much older), as well as those of a woman, a pig, a chicken, and a horse. This news was kept from the public until Kaas died, less than two years later. It was then that other writings by Kaas were found and revealed that he had

located another collection of bones in a second tomb. He had worked during a number of nights alone and kept his findings secret from the others of the archaeological team. When these bones were tested and confirmed to have belonged to a man in his 60s, the new Pope Paul VI made his own announcement, this time asserting that there could be no doubt that these were the true relics of Peter found beneath the high altar of the basilica (because of this the previous bones were discarded).

The Dark Secrets of the Mother Harlot

The history of Rome encompasses many dark secrets of deep immorality and perversions of great magnitude. It includes a woman as a pope (Joan in A.D. 855), the many illegitimate children of its papacy, assassinations of its leaders, and the many shady financial dealings of the Vatican bank. Truly, Rome has been the cover-up of evil throughout its history. Romanism is replete with history of debauchery and its control by the "prince of this world."

Tokens of its perdition may be seen in such examples as Alexander VI (1492–1503), who ruled with such decadence that to this day the very mention of his name causes many within Rome to shake their heads in shame. He reputedly committed his first murder at the age of twelve, went on to become pope by sending four mules loaded with silver to his

closest competitor, Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, to help swing the vote in his favor. Alexander became father to no less than ten illegitimate children with various mistresses, and as pope he engaged in a campaign of ruthless nepotism, elevating many to positions of power (his son Cesare was made Archbishop of Valencia while still a student of seventeen), and setting up his mistresses in palatial homes across Rome. One, Giulia Farnese, was even used as a model for the Virgin Mary as has been proven in a recently discovered fresco for the papal apartments. Wealthy cardinals were imprisoned and executed on trumped-up charges, simply so Alexander could get his hands on their property. Rome was plunged into a period of unprecedented darkness, its streets filled with prostitutes and murderers going unpunished, while the pope occupied himself with drunken banquets of great immorality. Rome has never recovered from this debauchery.

Another token of perdition is seen within her corruption of wealth (estimated at three trillion dollars), which came to the forefront in the tragic 1982 murder of the Italian banker Roberto Calvi, whose shady financial dealings with the Vatican bank brought him to his undignified end, swinging on a rope beneath London's Blackfriars Bridge. He was the chairman of the Italian Banco Ambrosiano which collapsed with debts of up to 1.5 billion

dollars. Calvi's death seemed to have been suicide, and the case was quickly closed by the Vatican, the independent state within the city of Rome. Yet the verdict of suicide was not accepted by the family, and the exhumation of his body in 1998 found compelling evidence that he was murdered; this evidence had been intentionally overlooked the first time. The injuries to Calvi's neck, for example, were inconsistent with hanging; and there were many aspects that indicated he was murdered. Various underworld figures were indicted for the murder by the police of the city of Rome. Even today great mysteries continue to surround his death.

The collapse of the Vatican's bank (Banco Ambrosiano) revealed an enormous network of illegitimate investments traceable to the Vatican Institute for Religious Works (IOR). A number of people who were involved were paid off to keep quiet. Calvi's secretary (left a note revealing all that was done) jumped from a fifth-floor window of the Banco Ambrosiano building taking her own life. Calvi shaved his moustache, purchased a fake passport, and fled to Venice, where he then hired a plane to London. The next morning, Calvi's body was discovered. Several other individuals of the bank also mysteriously died.

Another example of Romanism's deep-rooted corruption within the hierarchy is found in the mystery

of what happened to the speech denouncing fascism that Pope Pius XI was due to give just hours before his death in 1939, and what was the true role of his successor, Pius XII, in the rise of Nazi Germany? One of his first acts in replacing Pius XI was to meet with German authorities and reaffirm his support for the Nazi Party. The following month the papal ambassador to Berlin hosted a gala reception to mark Hitler's fiftieth birthday. War was just weeks away. When Hitler invaded Poland in 1939, Pope Pius XII said nothing. He refused to condemn the Nazis even as war escalated and casualties mounted on both sides. Even later, when President Roosevelt sent his personal representative to the Vatican in the hope of forcing a reaction, the pope remained cold and silent. Rome's view of Hitler and his leadership seemed not to have changed even years later when Pope Benedict XVI made his controversial trip to Auschwitz; he would not condemn Hitler and the Germans for what they did to the Jews. (We must remember that this pope was a member of the Hitler Youth, though he states he was forced into it at 14.)

There still is a great mystery surrounding the untimely demise of Pope John Paul I, who was found dead in 1978 after only thirty-three days in office. Much speculation has been given to his death, believing he was poisoned due to his strong anti-communist beliefs and his immediate

desire to curtail Marxist's studies in the seminaries of the Roman Catholic Church across the world. None of his desires to stay the growing plague of Christian Marxism within Romanism would be seen in the next pope, John Paul II.

Then in 1998, a member of the Swiss Guard brutally killed John Paul II's superior officer and wife in a great rage, or, at least, that was the Vatican's official version of events. Information about these deaths was quickly quelled by the Vatican. The autopsies were carried out behind closed doors by Vatican doctors who were sworn to secrecy and kept no written records of their findings. The families involved hired their own independent detectives who uncovered much information, but nothing was able to be done with the Vatican because of their "closed doors" policy.

As for the assassinations perpetrated by Rome, the list is endless; so are its secret manipulations of the media. One of the reasons the tens of thousands of priests caught as pedophiles are able to by-pass the law of the countries of the world is that as representatives of the independent state of the Vatican they have political amnesty. Yes, the Vatican is truly one of the crucial seats of Satan on the planet today, the Harlot who has drunk much blood of the saints and lived in the dark powers of evil.

The Secrets of the Mother Harlot

Perhaps a word concerning the papal secret archives would be worthy to note. This notoriously inaccessible repository for all manner of records, the so-called “Archivio Segreto Vaticano,” contains much of its dark, insightful history of collaboration with the powers of evil. Off limits to all but the most persistent of scholars (and even then, the materials are very limited), access to it is granted only by a lengthy application procedure. Some of the manuscripts found here may date back to the Caesars of Rome. The writings number into the tens of thousands. The following is just a small sample of the documents contained within the archives:

- (1) The letter from the Mongolian ruler Great Khan Guyuk to Pope Innocent IV, rejecting the pope’s claim that the Great Khan needs to be baptized, and his refusal to enter into peaceful relations with the Church until the pope himself goes to pay homage at the Mongolian Court.
- (2) A document announcing the foundation of the University of Cambridge by Pope John XXII in 1318.
- (3) A petition on behalf of the English King Henry VIII seeking papal annulment of his twenty-four-year marriage to Catherine of Aragon so that he might marry Anne Boleyn (1534). It is interesting to note that the many red ribbons attached to the

bottom of the petition (the seals of eighty-five English noblemen attempting to convince the pope of the legitimacy of Henry’s case) are said to be the origin of the term “red tape.”

- (4) A letter from Pope Paul III to the artist Michelangelo asking the artist to continue his work on the Sistine Chapel ceiling, originally commissioned by Paul’s predecessor, Clement VII—1535.
- (5) One of the last remaining letters by Michelangelo himself, pleading the case of the guards of St. Peter’s Basilica, whom he says “have not been paid in three months and will desert their posts unless remuneration is forthcoming”—1550.
- (6) Handwritten records of the Inquisition’s trial of Galileo for his so-called heretical claims that the earth revolved around the sun—1633.
- (7) Award of the Papal Equestrian Order of the Golden Spur granted to Mozart for his musical achievements—1770.
- (8) Peace treaty between the Pope and Napoleon’s French Republic, signed by Napoleon himself—1797.

Along with more manuscripts from the Inquisition, other items in these collections include the legendary lost second book of Aristotle’s *Poetics*; countless apocryphal Christian writings, many of them gospels penned by contemporaries of the

apostolic apostles and a century later; the libraries of the heretical Frankish Cathars which speak of the alleged marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene; evidences pertaining to the many torture methods (and drawings) used by the Papal and Spanish Inquisitions; Gnostic writings, including texts by groups such as the Orphites who worshipped Lucifer as the "Light Bringer"; the dark dealings by Vatican authorities over many centuries; evidences and details of sacrificial murders and devil worship to the more recent controversy surrounding pedophile priests, and the tens of thousands of babies born to priests because of their immorality; detailed reports of various Vatican exorcisms through the many centuries of the Vatican; and the list goes on and on.

The popes over the centuries have kept nearly every scrap of paper, from personal letters to formal papal documents, since the beginning of the Roman Church. The vast bulk of this material was passed on from pope to pope until A.D. 649 when the collection found its first home in the vaults of the Lateran Palace of Rome. In the eleventh century, the archives were moved to a holding place on the slopes of Palatine Hill, by which point a number of the oldest papyri were already disintegrating. During the Middle Ages, the archives were significantly defected by being moved around a great deal. In 1245 they were taken

by boat to a monastery in Cluny, and then to Perugia, Assisi, and finally Avignon, where they remained for more than a century. It was not until the rule of Pope Martin V (1427–1431) that the monumental process of moving the archives back to Rome began, by boat and wagon. A great number of official documents were lost or ruined at this time.

The first attempt at cataloguing the collection came during the reign of Pope Innocent II (1198–1216); but it was Nicholas V (1447–1455) who officially founded the Vatican Library and Sixtus V (1585–1590) who organized the secret archives into eighty separate cabinets or *amaria* which are still in existence today. There was one final journey of this collection, when at the turn of the nineteenth century Rome was invaded by Napoleon. He decided to transport the entire Vatican Library to France. The shipment was estimated at 3,239 separate chests; it took three years to make the move. But following his defeat in 1814, the archives began their slow return back to the Vatican. Many carts plunged into rivers and fell over cliffs; only 2,200 of the chests made it back to Rome.

Nevertheless, its archives are now safely in the vaults of the Vatican. According to some reports the secret archives are estimated as containing fifty-two miles of shelving, with some thirty-five thousand volumes catalogued and many works still waiting to be catalogued. The

oldest surviving document (at least catalogued) is declared to have been written in the eighth century. But again, this is the formal statement of the Vatican. The secrets within the Vatican seem to go back much further.

What details of assassinations, plots to overthrow governments, and the writings of crimes against nature and humanity are to be found in the vaults of this Harlot's record of iniquity! The historical record of her wickedness seems to be part of the thrill and delight of her many deeds of fornication with the world.

Conclusion

In our next issue of *Straightway*, we desire to unfold the changes that are coming to Romanism and the present influences that are rising within its

labyrinth of networking powers. Also we must observe the "speculations" that recent literary works have identified with Romanism and its cover-ups of history. Whatever the Mother Harlot has been in the past, she has not come to what she will be in order to ride the back of the Beast, the Antichrist. Though the final product of her sin has not yet appeared, she will be the leader of the "Inter-faiths" of religion that will rise in the next few years. The time is ripe for the changes; the end of one Rome will be known, and the beginning of another will rise from her filthy garments and fornication.

May God grant us the sight to see God's Word through these dark and difficult days of political and religious deceptions.



The Red Moons of Our Times

Dr. H. T. Spence

The contemporary voices and self-proclaimed interpreters of Jewish prophecy (such as John Hagee) have created great concern in the Neo-Evangelical and Charismatic churches over the re-appearances of "red" or (as they have identified them) "blood" moons. Because these men believe such moons are part of the End-time fulfillment of biblical prophecy, they are warning the Evangelical world of some

inevitable judgment or earthshaking event which will occur soon.

The Red Moon Defined

A "red moon" is a naturally occurring phenomenon that is often witnessed with a lunar eclipse. Note the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) definition of a lunar eclipse:

An eclipse of the Moon (lunar eclipse) can *only* occur at Full

Moon, and only if the Moon passes through some portion of Earth's shadow. That shadow is actually composed of two cone-shaped components, one nested inside the other. The outer or penumbral shadow is a zone where the Earth blocks part but not all of the Sun's rays from reaching the Moon. In contrast, the inner or umbral shadow is a region where the Earth blocks *all* direct sunlight from reaching the Moon.

More simply, a lunar eclipse takes place when the earth passes between the sun and the moon, and thus the earth blocks the sun's rays from reflecting off the moon. If our moon orbits our earth every 29.5 days and lunar eclipses only occur at full moon, does this mean that we have a lunar eclipse once a month? Note NASA's answer:

The moon's orbit around Earth is actually tipped about 5 degrees to Earth's orbit around the Sun. This means that the Moon spends most of the time either above or below the plane of Earth's orbit. And the plane of Earth's orbit around the Sun is important because Earth's shadows lie exactly in the same plane. During full Moon, our natural satellite usually passes above or below Earth's shadows and misses them entirely. No eclipse takes place. But two to four times each year, the Moon passes through some portion of the Earth's penumbral or umbral shadows and one of three types of eclipses occurs.

These three types of lunar eclipses are *penumbral lunar eclipse*, which is very difficult to observe; *partial lunar eclipse*, where only a portion of the moon passes through earth's umbral shadow; and *total lunar eclipse*, where the entire moon passes through earth's umbral shadow.

It is during this third type of eclipse that the moon (during the total phase) reflects back to earth a very bright red color, or blood-like color. Once again, note NASA's explanation:

During a total lunar eclipse, the Earth blocks the Sun's light from reaching the Moon. Astronauts on the Moon would then see the Earth completely eclipse the Sun. (They would see a bright red ring around the earth as they watched all the sunrises and sunsets happening simultaneously around the world!) While the Moon remains completely within Earth's umbral shadow, indirect sunlight still manages to reach and illuminate it. However, this sunlight must first pass deep through the Earth's atmosphere which filters out most of the blue colored light. The remaining light is a deep red or orange in color and is much dimmer than pure white sunlight. Earth's atmosphere also bends or refracts some of this light so that a small fraction of it can reach and illuminate the Moon....

The total phase of a lunar eclipse is so interesting and beautiful precisely because of the filtering and refracting effect of Earth's

atmosphere. If the Earth had no atmosphere, then the Moon would be completely black during a total eclipse. Instead, the Moon can take on a range of colors from dark brown and red to bright orange and yellow. The exact appearance depends on how much dust and clouds are present in Earth's atmosphere.

The Red Moons of History

So far in our observation a red moon is a natural occurrence and prompts no concern of Bible prophecy. However, concern can arise when we observe the “timing” of these full-moon eclipses reflecting a reddish color. When four of these red moons are seen in close succession of time (within two years), astronomy calls this occurrence a *tetrad*. In the past two thousand years, according to NASA's calculations, such *tetrads* have occurred fifty-five times.

Again, how does this fall into the plan of prophecy? What is presently drawing curiosity are the ten tetrads that have occurred during Jewish feast days. Jewish scholars since the destruction of Jerusalem have noted interesting parallels between unique events before and during feast days and the ten seasons of blood moons. (We must keep in mind that the concept of the Jewish calendar is different than that the modern Julian calendar.) These scholars have carefully noted that life-changing events for the Jewish people have transpired in the wake of what they

believe to be these heavenly omens.

One example concerns the tetrad (four lunar eclipses in close succession) of red moons that happened in 1493–1494 (all four surrounding Jewish feast days). Looking back, it has been viewed as an omen announcing the discovery of the new world and the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition against the Jewish world. This was a dark hour for the Jews of Spain; an estimated 400,000 Jews were forced to leave that country. However, any Jew who professed to be converted to Romanism (in order to stay in Spain) was then brought to the newly formed Inquisitional trials where under extreme torture they were tested to see if their conversion was genuine. Tens of thousands were put to death by that Inquisition.

We were taught in elementary school that Christopher Columbus discovered America, and that his financial backing was from the Spanish King and Queen Ferdinand and Isabella. However, there is the growing belief among Jews that Columbus was really a Jew seeking a new world for his people to flee from the Spanish Inquisition that took place in 1493 against the Jewish race in Spain. Simon Wiesenthal (1908–2005), an Austrian writer, a Jewish Austrian holocaust survivor (and a Nazi hunter after WW II), wrote the book *Sails of Hope: The Secret Mission of Christopher Columbus* (New York: Macmillan, 1973). In this book he

proposes the theory that Columbus was not only a Jew but also seeking a refuge for his people from the Inquisition. Amidst this growing theory, there is also the belief that Columbus was not financed by the King and Queen but by two Jewish men who had the hope that he would find such a place of sanctuary for the Spanish Jews. Therefore many have come to believe that this red-moon tetrad was an omen concerning the great oppression of Jews during the Spanish Inquisition.

Another tetrad occurred in 1949 and 1950. Some see this tetrad as an obvious omen in the light of the birth of Israel as a nation in 1948. The conflagration of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 scattered the Jews to the ends of the earth, where they were assimilated into the geographies of many nations. Amazingly, the Jews maintained their identity of race and lifestyle. God later moved in a most peculiar and glorious way to bring them back into their own land. Though the Jews were victims of Hitler's holocaust (comprising six of its thirteen million victims), the Lord's good providence appointed the birth of their nation right after that brutal slaughter. The date May 14, 1948 will forever be etched in the minds of the Jewish world as they became a nation among the nations. And initially through the Balfour Declaration the geography of Canaan was given to them. The Jewish leaders today believe this

tetrad of red moons of 1949–1950 became an omen for the birth of their nation.

Yet another tetrad took place in 1967 and 1968. The Jews note during this time the great Six-day War that started on June 7, 1967. This was another wonder of God's providence for the Jewish world. From the time of Israel's becoming a nation, their United Nations' appointed capital was on the coast of Canaan at Tel Aviv. But the Six-Day War allowed Israel to possess its religious capital of Jerusalem. This was an overwhelming miracle by providence that stunned the world. Were the Jewish Feasts and tetrad of red moons an omen of this? Many Jewish scholars looking back believe this to be so.

The Present Omen

The present excitement in a number of prophetic newsletters and sermons of prophecy is the ominous, present tetrad of red moons, two of which have occurred on April 15, 2014 and October 8, 2014. The third red moon will occur on April 4, 2015; the final lunar eclipse is to take place on September 28, 2015. As mixed feelings have arisen among the Jewish scholars and Evangelical pastors, there is concern of what this tetrad will reveal to the Jewish nation. We have witnessed in the month of March 2015, the reelection of Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The nation of Israel

has a president, but his powers are basically ceremonial; it is the prime minister (as in so many other nations) who has the political power. Mr. Netanyahu is considered the more conservative man who ran in this recent election. He is the one in this same month who, contrary to the desires of our president, spoke to our Congress in Washington. This prime minister now controls the majority of the seats in the government. The final days leading up to his election were filled with his speeches declaring his conservative plans for Israel. He also was in political struggle over the Iranian crisis and the Palestinian situation as well as with our own president's dislike for him. At the time of the writing of this article, it is yet to be seen what he will do in the aftermath of his reelection. Though his political coalition is more conservative, this most recent election will grant him greater freedom from restraints that were upon him in his last term of office. How will the Jewish rabbis view Mr. Netanyahu's recent reelection and its outcome in the light of this tetrad of the red moons?

There is also the concern for the pressure of our country's State Department upon Netanyahu for the nation of Israel to sign the peace accord that will establish a Palestinian state. Many Neo-Evangelicals believe that if this peace accord is signed, it will commence Daniel's Last Week (prophetically rendered in Daniel

9:27). If this accord is signed, according to its ramifications, there is the belief that the present-day Temple Mount, where the Dome of the Rock is located, will bring about a mutual distribution of the geography of Mount Moriah between the Muslims and Jews, with the hope of a Temple being built by the Jews on the Mount. Those who take this position are individuals who believe we are already in the Great Tribulation Period and that this will be the very accord between Antichrist and the Jews. One of their concerns is that if this is true, it will lead not only to the Battle of Armageddon but also to the return of Christ (Revelation 19).

Is this present tetrad of red moons to be a prophecy of this potential peace accord, or is it the omen of some other catastrophic event that will take place? For what are we realistically looking? Is it an omen of a political change to take place, or will it be a naturally-occurring devastating event to take place? Still others have speculated that the red moons are indicative of a devastating event to take place here in the United States, for this country has the highest Jewish population of any in the world (6.6 million), higher than even the Jewish population in Canaan (6.1 million).

Conclusion

But once again the question needs to be asked, what do these red moons

have to do with biblical prophecy? There are those who have drawn from Joel 2:30, 31 as perhaps the fulfillment of these red moons:

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.

Another popular passage is Revelation 6:12:

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.

It is believed that the “red” color of the tetrads occurring during the Jewish feasts is the fulfillment of the biblical phrases “the moon into blood” and “the moon became as blood.” Such prophetic sign observers believe that the moon will not turn to actual blood, but some phenomenon will bring about a blood-like color. Thus, to many, the red moons on or surrounding the Jewish feasts days have become omens of these prophecies.

Genesis 1:14 reveals that the appointed lights (sun, moon, and stars) are in the firmament for signs and for seasons. They certainly were witnessed in Joshua 10:11 of the famous Joshua’s Long Day and in Judges 5:20 in the days of Deborah and Barak. Christ gave the prophecy of Matthew 24:29 of the heavens

contributing to the judgments during the Tribulation Period (Revelation 6–19). There was also the star used by God to guide the Wise Men to the Christ Child and the sun’s becoming dark at the time of Christ’s crucifixion.

We do not undermine the usage of the heavenly bodies in God’s witness to the earth. We read of these at certain seasons of biblical history. Christ gave prophecy in Matthew 24 and 25 of the signs in nature concerning the End Time. The escalating frequency of violent storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other devastating events in nature certainly is part of the witness and signs of our times.

However, to identify the “red moons” with prophecies designated for the Tribulation Period is taking Scripture out of context. This would mean that any time these tetrads took place on Jewish feast days in the past two millennia of history, there would have been an equal prerogative of scholars to interpret them the same way, and for interpretative Scripture ahead of its time. The phenomena of the “red moons” should not be declared as the “blood moons” of Joel 2 and Revelation 6. For God may testify of His prophetic moons more supernaturally than what nature has done for thousands of years.

It is interesting to note that the so-called prophetic signs declared in the past by contemporary preachers

as being the fulfillment of Scripture have slipped quietly into the dim memory for most people. Although Harold Camping and Jack Van Impe gave us their elaborately-detailed predictions of the Second Coming of the Lord to the date or the year, their prophesied days came and went. The contemporary prophets now tell us that if the peace accord is signed by the end of this month, “this” will be the beginning of Daniel’s Last Week (seven years) before the Battle of Armageddon. It reminds us of the many books written and sermons preached during the peace agreements between Israel and Egypt during the days of Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. Those peace agreements were also to be the beginning of that Last Week; the belief now is that this peace accord will be the one. Similarly, many “Christian” publications declared that the Delta Storm invasion of Iraq in 1991 was to be the Battle of Armageddon, anticipating bloodshed up to the bridles of horses. Yet that war was over with very few lives of Americans and their allies taken in death.

We are often reminded of the words of John Lennon of the Beatles in the late 1960s. He was amazed that the Americans had become so obsessed with finding esoteric meanings in his songs. He wondered if he wrote a song about a fly landing on the windshield of his limousine how the Americans would interpret it. It seems that it has become that way

with many prophetic preachers with every moment of present history; certain prophetic interpreters seem to have found a Scripture declaring its fulfillment.

Although many prophetic passages of the Bible have clear interpretations, other passages are intentionally limited until an appointed time in history, in order to veil from the Devil God’s unfolding plan and purpose. In the actual moment when these prophecies will be fulfilled, God may surprise us with the reality that “the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come” (Joel 2:30, 31), and the “sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood” (Rev. 6:12). We have yet to see what this means.

We must always remember, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). While the world looks for the Battle of Armageddon soon, we know there must be the bringing to an end of the Church Age, a secret rapture, and then the sequential unfolding of Revelation 6 through 19. The prelude of those days will witness foretastes of many things that are the “actual” reality yet to come “in” their context. It is not to the moons we look, but we wait for the Son from heaven to come and take His waiting people home.

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