

# EndTime Issues...

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THE  
LAST  
POPE  
?

POPE BENEDICT XVI



# Contents

EDITORIAL: MORAL SLIDE OF PROTESTANTISM	3
CURRENT ISSUES: THE FINAL YEARS OF THE PAPACY – REVELATION 17:1-11	5
PROPHECY UNFOLDS: THE “VILE PERSON” RISES AGAIN – DANIEL 11:28-35	19
WHY JESUS IS COMING SOON: THE GREAT WEEK OF TIME – PART 9	26
LIBERTY IN THE BALANCE	34
THE GARDEN PATCH: PEST CONTROL – OVERVIEW	37
FOCUS ON THE SABBATH: POPE BENEDICT XVI’S EMPHASIS ON SUNDAY	40

## EndTime Issues... Magazine

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**Manuscripts** are welcomed for consideration. They should relate to something that has recently been happening, to a clearer understanding of prophecy or have a deep spiritual end-time concern, be simply written and well documented with a focused interest to Christians. Length should be limited to 10 double-spaced pages. The ongoing appeal: “Issues of concern to the final generation.”

**Letters** to the editor: We welcome your letters of encouragement, deepening insight on relevant topics and plain feedback relative to *EndTime Issues...* Please keep your communiques brief. Your letters will be the property of Christian Heritage Foundation. Personal answers normally cannot be made. Selected letters may be published in subsequent issues of *EndTime Issues...*

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## Moral Slide of Protestantism

They used to be America's fortresses for good. From their inception, they were a counterforce to fight moral corruption. The American Protestant churches promoted values that gave its citizenry models for integrity within and without government. Faith was a driving force in people's lives.

Then in the 1960's change infiltrated the thinking of both Catholic and Protestant churches – the former by executive design, the latter because of weakening commitment to Christ. Powerful thinkers such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Johannes Baptist Metz and Jurgen Moltmann promoted *liberation theology*. They impacted the mission of Christian churches worldwide. The *charge* was redefined within greater societal and secular terms. American Protestant churches were apostatizing.

The once conservative National Council of Churches abandoned its spiritual ecumenical base and began to view its greater role in socio-political terms. Mainline churches that sat at the NCC's administrative table moved away from its Christian mission toward the "religious left."

This change in Protestant thinking led many mainline churches to ignore the cries of religious and political conservatives who stood for truth and moral reform. During the Cold War benign neglect of the persecuted belied a growing calloused heart of Christian leaders. American Protestantism, with little Catholic resistance, began a trend that would minimize truth and promote *sentimentalism* and *secularism*.

To talk of sin from the pulpit became evil in itself. Christianity became shallow. Self-denial, courage and patience were no longer required. Tolerance became the antidote for guilt. Obedience to God's laws, repentance for rebellion and the possibility that God could eternally reject the sinner were buried under a morass of religious fantasy.

Around this time new translations of the Bible emerged. In 1951 the Revised Standard Version debuted. Its translators were liberal thinkers, such as Millar Murrows, who said, "We cannot take the Bible as a whole and in every part as stating with divine authority what we must believe and do" (Millar Murrows, *Outline of Biblical Theology*), and Russell Bowie, who felt that the Old Testament was filled with "enthusiastic traditions" and "folklore" (Walter Russell Bowie, *Great Men of the Bible*, N.Y. Harper and Brothers, 1937, p. 1).

A backlash against this trend developed from a growing number of leaders calling themselves "fundamentalist." They sought to reinforce old Biblical standards. Other men like Billy Graham; Bob Jones, Sr.; John R. Rice, Charles Woodbridge, Harry Ironside and David O. Fuller, and later, in the early 1980's, Jerry Fallwell and Jack Van Impe began what would become another backlash, the "evangelical movement."

Though claiming allegiance to the sacred Scriptures like the fundamentalists, the evangelicals have become what William Ashbrook called the "new neutralism." It has evolved into a massive movement of compromise between Catholics and Protestants with unity over community purpose and minimizing doctrinal differences. They have become "diplomats" for Christ – not separatists – but appeasers.

Early Protestantism was anti-Rome. The Catholic Church was Babylon and represented the antichrist. The new evangelical movement has set this aside. Leaders of the past who "contended for the faith" have been replaced by this growing faction, ordering unity at all cost.

A newer form of "evangelicalism" has been popularized by Charles Swindoll, Max Lucado, Charles Colson and James Dobson. Christian leaders – like the late Bill Bright, Harold Lindsell, Tony Campolo, D. James

Kennedy, David Hocking, Bill Hybel, Charles Stanley, Luis Palau – have proselytized its shrinking tenets.

Evangelicals have become an interchurch movement with many para church organizations, such as the National Religious Broadcasters Association, Back to the Bible and the National Sunday School Association, supporting it. Publishing houses, colleges and universities as well as international conferences have defined what Ernest Pickering called – by his book title – “The Tragedy of Compromise.”

This evangelical movement is characterized by:

1. Repudiation of denominational differences
2. Separation being replaced by tolerant dialogue
3. Dislike for doctrinal controversy
4. Repudiation of anything Biblically negative – with a “judge not” philosophy
5. Love and unity above doctrine
6. Promotion of the appearance of intellectualism and scholarship imagery
7. Dividing truth into important and not important
8. Exalting socio-political activity to the same level as the great commission
9. Neutrality towards spiritual warfare
10. Softness towards “strict Christianity”  
–[www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org)

This alternate thinking regarding Christianity led to the inevitable ecumenical document called *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* in March of 1994. With the bonding and unity themes driving modern Christian leadership, secular ideologies have been adopted. Worldly marketing techniques have become popular. Music that sounds no different from that of the dance hall, metal

concerts or the bar room is part of the “worship” experience. Commitment to Jesus and all that He stands for has been replaced by social concern, with the idolizing of peace and love. Liberation theology has arrived.

Out of this, many have come to covet the “excitement” of “church.” The “happiness” of this new freedom of expression is magnetic to the masses. Secular-driven ideologies of the Bill Hybel/Rick Warren cast have become the design of many church leaders and even denominations. AND – the work of the Holy Spirit has become a foreign tool to change hearts..

What man can do is replacing what God will do within the committed individual. Rising concern and interest in membership numbers, church growth and “bigness” is driving away the final excuse to be called a committed Christian.

Man’s greatest need in experiencing the perfecting righteousness of Jesus needs rediscovering. It is a commitment to a life that meticulously follows God’s directives. We cannot be saved without recognizing *what* we must be rescued from. Then, the beauty of Jesus and His saving power becomes magnetic. Then we commit to Him and Him alone and not to a movement that rises no higher than the leadership of man. Grace transforms – to those who let Him enter the heart. It requires a commitment that is eternal and resistance against sin that will not end until Jesus returns.

Any church or leader who promotes church over commitment or grace over obedience has joined the secularist evangelical movement that is sweeping the world. Though it is anti-separationist, it is the ultimate separation – from God.



## THE FINAL YEARS OF THE PAPACY

REVELATION 17:1-11

We are told that "Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 547-548. But God told Daniel that "the wise [will] understand." 12:10. John was told, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein:" Revelation 1:3. This is clear evidence that the prophetic truths will be fully comprehended at the end: "The time for the unfolding of special truth in relation to the closing scenes of this earth's history is during the last generations that shall live upon the earth." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 692. "The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood." E. G. White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 949.

It is with these invitational promises that we prayerfully move forward to a deeper and better understanding of last day events. It is not the kind of study where one can ever declare he possesses the full truth. Nor should one ever claim a position of singular authority over any topic. Interpretation comes by God Himself working on the heart, helping to build on past understanding of Bible translations and religious writers. New light is a complement to all inspiration over the ages.

Revelation 17 is in that category. Its past interpretations have been varied. Often it has been put into a post end-of-probation time setting, yet interpreted historically, running over a time period of centuries. Since its sequence follows the outline

of the seven last plagues, some insist that the introductory vial angel, coming out of chapters 15 and 16, implies that the information about to be imparted to John in Revelation 17 is related to those seven last plagues.

Does that mean that all the events occur *at the time* of the plagues? Or is the angel presenting the *final history* of the whore that will lead to destruction associated with the plagues? The angel, talking to John in Revelation 17, does not identify himself as to which plague his vial held. That appears not to be important. If the angel is still holding a vial, it likely has not been poured out yet.

A fresh look at this chapter tells an amazing end-time story, with a sequence of events that meshes closely with Revelation 13. Focusing there on what it says of the beast, "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast," a provocative picture arises of a beast *after* its wounded head was healed. Those scenes move progressively toward the end of time. New imagery is presented in Revelation 17, showing that the beast is associated with a *woman*. By looking at evolving changes in the beast's experience plus that harlot, we can see fascinating sequential phases of end-time prophecy.

**Phase One:** The deadly wounding (a point in time) of *one* head of the beast

**Phase Two:** A dormant beast

**Phase Three:** The wound healed – the world wonders after the beast associated with a woman – final events to its doom



ST. PETER'S SQUARE

In Revelation 13 we see the nature of the sea-beast detailed (verses 1-10) – then the nature of the earth-beast with two horns as it supports that first beast (verses 11-17). Finally, it states that it would be wise to discover who the seven-headed sea-beast really is (verse 18).

In chapter 17 we come *back* to the beast. This time an angel of destruction says to John, Come and let me show you details about that beast and its *final* history of doom. We know the world is wondering after the beast. When it is time, the kings of the earth will have committed fornication with the beast. The inhabitants of the earth will have become drunk with her wine – the bonding drink of her deception. *The world unites over something deceptive that she has.* This imagery, these messages, go back and forth with ever more intensity and clarity all the way through chapter 18. It is a message of the *final battle* on earth between good and evil, the *final standoff* between God and Satan, a graphic picture of the earthly forces in *final conflict* right up to its end in the seventh plague (when Jesus returns). Chapters 13–19 provide the clearest picture of earth's final events, which have begun. *But more, they confirm why the time we are now in is end-time!*

"John in the Revelation writes of the *unity* of those living on the earth to make void the law of God [Rev. 17:13, 14; 16:13 quoted]." E. G. White, *Manuscript Release #14*, p. 90 (emphasis added).

This chapter is a prophecy of when all the earth's powers unite against God and His people just before its fall. Let's begin our discovery.

**Verse 1: "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:"**

A fascinating statement is made on Revelation 17 in the book *Revelation, Four Views – A Parallel Commentary* (Gregg editors, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997):

"Though the fall of Babylon has been announced in 14:8 and described in 16:19, another whole section (of Revelation) is required to tell the story more thoroughly. Chapters 17–19 reveal ... Babylon[’s fall] in greater detail."

These appear as a series of events that climax the history of the apostasy on this earth, coming right up to the marriage of the Lamb. When the angel said, "I will show unto thee the *judgment* of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters," it suggests the story of her doom, the sequence of events that will happen to the apostate church to bring its final end.

In Revelation 14:8 we find the horrible apostasy of Babylon and its influence on the world. In Revelation 16:19 we see God's final retribution on Babylon because of *that apostasy*. Revelation 17:1 brings another interesting picture into view. The angel is now going to show ("I will show you") what occurs at the end *that leads to* this final destructive act of God. *In this context*, it makes the end-time meaning of each verse in the whole chapter more clear.

**Harlot:** A woman represents a church – thus a harlot or prostitute, a false church. This harlot symbolizes a religious system of enormous falsehood. In the first verse, the word "great" is used in many translations to describe this harlot. She represents a great and well-known system of falsehood. In the Christian world, what system of deception stands above all others? It can be none other than the Roman Catholic Church. Why? A harlot means a false "Christian" church. A church that is known for its *notoriety* and *greatness* – a church that prides itself on assuming the authority of Jesus often in its magnificent display of grandeur.

Finally, in verse 1, there is another clue as to this harlot's power and role. Though riding on the beast, the woman is sitting also on "many waters." Most translations use this expression. This suggests that this system of religion strongly controls or is over many groups of people or nations. *Another way to address this is that this church has power over the world in its twilight hours.* (Verse 15 describes the waters.)

**Verse 2: "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."**

This next verse continues to describe this woman. But now a *functional* view of her position

emerges. This rebellious system of religion has had illicit relationships with the leaders of the world. Some way, this religious power has a charisma that attracts the leaders of the world. The world is so enamored by the papacy and specifically the pope, it continually wonders after its power of leadership (Revelation 13:3). This end-time picture comes after the wound is healed. This is the story of the final acts of the papacy to its judgment or end.

When did the wound become fully healed? It was in 1929 that Mussolini's prime minister and the pope's Cardinal Gasparri consummated the Lateran Treaty. This treaty began a true religio-political state for the papacy with the pope as its head. Thus, the historical framework for Revelation 17 and parts of 13 appears to be 1929 on. This will be reinforced as our discussion progresses.

It is interesting that this verse presents global imagery of its influence as an ecclesiastical power. Not only have the leaders or political powers had a close association, an intimate relationship, with the papacy, but the people of the world are also deceived. They are stupefied by her messages and her miracle-working power (Revelation 13:13-14).

By the end of the second verse, the angel has choreographed a scene that sets the stage for phase two of this angel's message. An angel tied in with the final earthly judgments comes to describe to John the final acts of the great, false system of Catholicism. In this drama there is something about what it does or says that so enamors the leaders of the world and its inhabitants that they are mesmerized by the papacy. This is so great, the whole world submits to the Vatican leadership. In this relationship the leaders of the world will all do something illegitimate together – "commit fornication." The *wine* means it will be *something specific* they will share together. The rest of the world will be intoxicated or *totally* enamored by what is going on.

It is now that the angel takes John into the wilderness in spirit. This is a *new phase* in this prophetic message. An important issue is now becoming clear. The messages of Revelation 13 have been reinforced. Now the final history of this illegitimate power is unfolded.

**Verse 3: "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."**

This break in the events is significant. The angel moves from a preamble of a bad woman – to a woman *riding a seven-headed beast* out in the wilderness.

The angel transfers John – he is carried in spirit to a wilderness. John's attention is drawn to this scene as now the main object of the angel's message. The wilderness symbolizes a desolate, barren place. To the pure woman in chapter 12, it was a hiding place. For the harlot and the papacy it symbolizes the barrenness that surrounds this whole system of power and worship. The papacy is surrounded by nothing that is deeply spiritual or abiding. It is desolate, devoid of spiritual significance.

This is the first time John *sees* the woman. He describes her in the next verse. But *his first reaction* relates to what the false system of worship (the Catholic Church) is sitting on. This chapter describes three things the woman sits on or has control over – waters (verse 1), seven mountains (verse 9) and here in verse 3, the beast. As we previously discussed, the waters represent *groups* of peoples (verse 15). The papacy at some prophetic point in time is over all the people of the world. The seven hills represent Rome, which we will discuss below. Can we refine our understanding of the beast?

Here is where we have myriads of challenges from different expositors. Most agree that a beast symbolizes a ruling political power. A head symbolizes a leader (someone over that government or power). We have several prophetic beasts with seven heads. There are several ways to interpret the beasts. One is to view the beast of Revelation 17 as the same beast of Revelation 13 and perhaps related to the seven-headed dragon beast of Revelation 12. Another is to consider them as representing totally different powers. A final way is to view them as representing the same power but in different time periods. There has been strong posturing to adopt a historical interpretation of this beast. As we shall see, this locks out clear end-time prophetic messages.

We will discover as this chapter unfolds that it is best to view the seven-headed beast of

Revelation 13 and 17 as representing the same power – the papacy. But regarding time sequence, chapter 13 follows chapter 17.

Isaiah talks of our sins being as scarlet and that they can become as white as snow. This implies that our sins are cleansed – removed – they have disappeared. Red or crimson stands out. It is bold. Symbolically, it suggests something is tainted. The beast is tainted with sin. One could even say it represents sin. But why is this beast red and the one in Revelation 13 is not?

There is a second application to this color. J. Stuart Russell wrote: “The *scarlet* color ... may easily be recognized as the symbol of Imperial dignity.” *The Parousia: A Critical Inquiry into the New Testament Doctrine of our Lord’s Second Coming.* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1887, rpt 1983). The Vatican became an imperial state – a sovereign nation – for the first time in 1929. It is imperial, dignified in its own eyes and full of sin.

Something very important is found in this imagery. The woman and the beast are together but *separate entities. The political power, the beast, is distinct from the religious power, the woman.* In the setting of this chapter the angel now begins to unfold a time in papal history when the church and the state of the papacy are clearly two entities, yet are tied together. The question then comes: “Has there been a point in time where this separation became clearly defined? The answer again is “Yes.” It would have to be a *time* in history when the papacy functioned as a distinct political force and had a strong, well-defined religious body. Here it is again! That occurred in 1929. In that year Pope Pius XI (the first modernist pope) became king of the Holy See as an independent neutral *sovereign power.*

Vatican City became an independent state where the Holy See would reside and exercise its sovereignty. The agreement also guaranteed to keep open lines of communication between the Vatican and the rest of the world – telephone, postal and rail links. Italy was to build a rail station inside the Vatican. The Lateran Treaty was formally

signed on February 11, 1929. The Vatican thus, for the first time in history, became the smallest independent state in the world (109 acres). Paul Johnson, *The Papacy* (Barnes and Noble, Inc., Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997), p. 196.

Now a new era enters the papacy. Ambassadors were quickly appointed to various countries. Various countries reciprocated. The papacy had become a sovereign church state. *The angel’s description of the beast and the woman now takes on new significance.* History now presents this satanic power as having these two distinct entities. 1929 becomes a pivotal prophetic time in our understanding of Revelation 17. Thus, an analysis of the first three verses of chapter 17 means that the angel is opening up a prophetic view of the papacy from 1929 on.

The third verse also says that the beast had seven heads and ten horns. We will move into the meanings of both of these as the discussion matures. But it might be prudent to say in passing, “heads” means leaders or controlling individuals. There are seven *distinct* leaders of the papacy who

are represented. The horns represent political or ruling powers or leaders over specific entities. There are ten horns or ten unique powers bonded to the papacy in some way that act as a force to carry out its will.

Of great importance is what is written all over the crimson beast. Various translations suggest that the *blasphemies* against God are many. Numerous issuings of defiance against God are recorded *all over* the animal. The papacy is labeled repeatedly in all its parts with acts of defiance against God.

Taking this a step further, the papacy from 1929 on will be guilty of horrible dogmas, acts and words against God. This labeling helps us to understand that this beast is the same as the one in Revelation 13!

**Verse 4: “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden**



Pope Pius XI

**cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:"**

This verse refines our understanding of the woman. She is clad or arrayed in purple and scarlet. The imagery suggests a picture of royalty, pomp and arrogance. It is a striking contrast to the woman of Revelation 19:7-8 who will be the wife of the Lamb. That church is humbly and simply dressed in fine linen, clean and white. Intriguingly, the white linen represents the righteousness of the saints (verse 8). The scarlet of the harlot represents being clothed with sin; the purple, the claim to royalty and authority. "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, ... for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Revelation 18:7.

The adornment of gold, precious stones and pearls is to make her outwardly attractive. These parallel the seductive appearances of a prostitute. It also presents a deep imagery of the Catholic Church where the senses are stupified by glamour and the awesome appearance of opulence in its churches and religious rites.

"While Romanism is based upon deception, it is not a coarse and clumsy imposture. The religious service of the Roman Church is a most impressive ceremonial. Its gorgeous display and solemn rites fascinate the senses of the people and silence the voice of reason and of conscience. The eye is charmed. Magnificent churches, imposing processions, golden altars, jeweled shrines, choice paintings, and exquisite sculpture appeal to the love of beauty. The ear also is captivated. The music is unsurpassed. The rich notes of the deep-toned organ, blending with the melody of many voices as it swells through the lofty domes and pillared aisles of her grand cathedrals, cannot fail to impress the mind with awe and reverence." *The Great Controversy*, p. 566.

The golden cup in the woman's hand – the receptacle that is passed out to others – contains something she wants to use to influence or share with others. The Scripture says that the cup was full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. The woman – the papal system of worship (the Roman Catholic Church) – has prostituted, degraded, cheapened and adulterated the purity of truth and the gospel. Her cup is full of unclean and false doctrine. A cup *held up* is a form

of celebration. *The woman honors falsehood*. She flaunts her power to change laws. She becomes an abomination to God.

**Verse 5: "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."**

Each descriptive image becomes a metaphor for the next effigy. One builds upon another. The angel is reinforcing again and again the heinous anti-God picture of both beast and woman. But now, with focused interest, John's attention is drawn to the forehead of the woman. On the forehead – the center of thought and character of this apostate church – he sees a name or words that define its very nature: "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Let's look with care at the four parts of this inscription. The word "mystery" does not appear in all translations. In the RSV it is placed in this context: "On her forehead was written a name of mystery." In using this word, the implication is that of wonder or marvel – it does not suggest the name cannot be understood. Rather it appears as if to convey, "this is the wonder and marvel of this woman." It is less of a *name* (the word "name" is often absent in various translations) and more of a *caption* of what this woman represents. It is her functional title.

The woman is a *mother of harlots*. She has offspring. Something has come out of her. She has children that are like her. They are women – other churches. They are harlots – they also adulterate truth.

"Benedict 13th, in his proclamation of the Jubilee, A.D. 1725, explains this sufficiently. His words are, 'This catholic and apostolical Roman church is the head of the world, the *Mother* of all believers, the *Faithful Interpreter* of God, and *Mistress* of all churches.'" Gregg, Steve – editor, *Revelation, Four Views – A Parallel Commentary* (Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), p. 402 (emphasis added).

Most fascinating is this claim of the papacy that she is the "mother of all believers," the "mistress of all churches." The plea of the late Pope

John Paul II to the Protestant world was to “come back home.”

“The description of the woman as arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls is all too familiar to one acquainted with the trappings of ecclesiastical pomp today and especially of high officials in the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches.... It has been noted by many writers that the iniquitous and pagan rites of Babylon crept into the early church and were largely responsible for the corruptions incorporated in Roman Catholicism from which Protestantism separated itself in the Middle Ages.” Walvoord, John, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Chicago, IL: Moody, 1996.

This is not an isolated position in the Protestant world:

“It is hard to escape the conclusion that the Roman church is the harlot. But this is not the whole picture, for the apostate church is not merely the Roman church. It will include other groups in a family relationship with their mother.” Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Revelation*, Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1968.

This little phrase, “Mother of Harlots” gives to us a powerful clue *as to when the prophecy of Revelation 17 applies!* When the Protestant churches broke away from the papacy, they were *not harlots*. They were part of God’s people seeking to find direction and communion from God’s Word. The Catholic Church would not become the mother of apostate churches until the pure thrust of the Reformation became adulterated and tainted. Pope Pius XI came into power in 1922. He was a politician and a religious leader. Though he forbade Catholic participation in ecumenical initiatives, he fostered links with eastern-rite churches. However, there was a significant ecumenical conference in Stockholm in 1925 called the “Life and Work.” This began the momentum of all subsequent ecumenical work by which Protestants began to compromise their doctrinal heritage of the Reformation. Thus – the prophecy of Revelation 17 is an end-time prophecy that commences sometime after 1925 *when the children of the harlot also become harlots!*

The forehead title begins by saying “BABYLON THE GREAT.” Babylon derives its roots from *Babel*, as in the Tower of Babel. Originally, it meant “the gate of God.”

“Harlot Babylon considers herself a gate of God, *the gate of God*. *Extra ecclesiam non salus est* was for centuries her official Latin doctrine, ‘Outside the church [of Rome] there is no salvation.’ But evidently in God’s sight she was a place of confusion. Her teaching, a misleading mixture of truth and error, created a monumental muddle.” C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, vol. 2 (on Revelation), Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1985, p. 460.

“The message of Revelation 14, announcing the *fall of Babylon*, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. *Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days*; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God’s people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 383 (emphasis added).

When did the noble stand for God change to a stand against Him? The prophecy of Revelation 17 declares that the application is *at the time of the end*.

**Verse 6: “And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”**

It is a church that is responsible for the death of saints. So significant is this, the church is drunk or intoxicated by its power to kill those who witness for Jesus.

Dave Hunt in his provocative book, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, has these comments:

“The horrid conduct of this Holy Office [Inquisition] weakened the power and diminished the population of Spain ... by emulating on its flaming shambles more than three hundred thousand

victims.' Jean Antoin Llorente, Secretary to the Spanish Inquisition, 1790-92, p. 242.

"Failure to give whole hearted allegiance to the pope was considered treason against the state punishable by death. Here was the basis for slaughtering millions. (p. 243).

"Remember, it is not that the woman's hands that are red with blood but that she is drunk with the blood of martyrs. Her condition depicts a church that not only kills but tortures its pitiful victims for days and even weeks. (p. 249).

"The Catholic Inquisition in Holland ... burned tens of thousands at the stake for espousing the baptism of adults who had come to a personal faith in Christ." (p. 258). Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, (Harvest House Publishers; Eugene, OR; 1994).

Hunt is right. The blood of the millions slaughtered for Jesus made the Catholic Church drunk by its torture. Consider this:

"The Roman Catholic Church, uniting the forms of paganism and Christianity, and, like paganism, misrepresenting the character of God, has resorted to practices no less cruel and revolting. In the days of Rome's supremacy there were instruments of torture to compel assent to her doctrines. There was the stake for those who would not concede to her claims. There were massacres on a scale that will never be known until revealed in the judgment. Dignitaries of church studied, under Satan their master, to invent means to cause the greatest possible torture and not end the life of the victim. In many cases the infernal process was repeated to the utmost limit of human endurance, until nature gave up the struggle, and the sufferer hailed death as a sweet release." *The Great Controversy*, p. 569.

Those spectacles actually show the historical triumphs of the harlot's sin. But that was in the Dark Ages. This chapter is end-time. Those same persecutions will be revisited.

John had some sensitivity as to the hideous nature of this terrifying scene and what the harlot symbolized. The Living Bible has a unique and probably accurate sentiment of this apostle: "I stared at her in horror." He is mystified at the scene. This evokes a reaction from the angel.

Since the torture of saints is pre-end-time, it is an affirming statement as to who this woman is. It also reveals another issue. She is here drunk at the

time of the end. Her evil, murderous nature has not changed, and during the time of the end she will experience the same intoxication again, causing death (same as the fourth Seal of Revelation 6 and the martyred saints in the fifth Seal).

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of *Rome* really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures *in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated*. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. *Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution.*" *The Great Controversy*, p. 581 (emphasis added).

**Verse 7: "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns."**

The angel questions John: "Why are you so amazed? Is this arrogant behaviour so surprising when there is so much sin and blasphemy against God? Put things in perspective, John. Look, I'll explain to you what the woman and the beast represent and mean."

This now brings us to another *transition* in chapter 17 of John's experience with this angel. It is now time to explain what the significance of the Vatican nation and the Catholic Church is after 1929. This is what this apostate church and civil power will be like right at the end of time.

In this context, we can approach what now is to come with greater confidence. *The interpretation is contemporary*. Like Protestant pioneers discovered the contemporary understanding of Christ entering the Most Holy place in the sanctuary in heaven, we can understand through *concurrent revelation* what is evolving with the papacy now as it relates to the *end of time*.

**Verse 8:** "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

John's attention is now drawn away from the woman back to the beast. The angel said "it was" (existed in the past); "is not" (left the world scene); and clearly, it now "is" – "the beast that thou sawest." It is a beast that is present at the time designated for the prophecy to be fulfilled. As we discussed above, it could only be after 1929. John is drawn into the future with this vision. And in that context, the beast (the papacy) "is." But, there was a time it was not, and before that, when it existed. This reinforces our earlier position that the presentation of the beast represents the papacy in different prophetic time periods.

When did the beast exist in the past? We are told in Daniel 7:25 that the papacy would have power over a 1260-year period from 538 A.D. (when Justinian, a strong leader at Constantinople, awarded the pope to be head of the Christian churches) to 1798 (when the pope was taken prisoner – a crippling blow to the papacy). This was followed by land being taken from the Catholic Church (1870) and a time of complexity and impaired influence in the world at large. Though many landmark events occurred within the Catholic Church's hierarchy during this period (especially 1869-1929), its world influence was compromised. Then in 1929, with that Lateran Treaty, the beast came fully alive. It had ascended out of a bottomless pit. This was to be for only a short time because soon there would be a rapid transition to its doom. The next historical scene of this beast is its final doom – it goes into perdition, which was described in the previous chapter.

"The beast that thou sawest." That is, the beast of verse 3 (John was not shown the beast in either its "was" or its "is not" state but in its revived state, following the "is not" period. However, the angel briefly recounts the past career of this fearful creature by way of identifying the beast as John saw it).

"At the time John saw this beast in vision it had already 'ascended out of the bottomless pit.'" *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 853.

Reinforcing the historic event of 1929 is this statement:

"All the world wondered after the beast.... And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' If ch. 13 here refers to the same event as ch. 17:8, it follows that the statement 'his deadly wound was healed' (ch. 13:3) is equivalent to the expression 'shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.'" *Ibid*. This would mean that the beast that "yet is" is now alive.

Again, viewing the scene in a historical setting, tying in the rise and fall of kingdoms doesn't fit. The imagery and symbolism are *end-time*. The evidence puts us into the 1929 period on. The unconsecrated people who have not their names written in the Book of Life will be enamored by the papacy. It appears that the angel is saying that because of what has happened to the papacy, its modern day/end-time charismatic presence causes people to marvel over this power.

"All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life." Revelation 13:8. An outcome of this papal allegiance:

"Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose, Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy. Let the principle once be established in the United States that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured. *The Great Controversy*, p. 581.

Some contend that the beast is the devil. As we shall discover, the Bible gives the beast a dual identity. The primary imagery is of the papacy. In verse 11 the symbolism changes and a picture of Satan emerges as the conflict of the ages comes to a close – that is a later application.

**Verse 9: "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth."**

The wording of the first part of this verse is similar to that of the last verse of chapter 13. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding..." In 13:18 is a special check on one's interpretation – it is like the messenger is saying to all readers, "if you still have uncertainty as to who we are talking about (the beast), here is the number of his name." In 17:9 is another invitation – "think carefully, this is a verification as to who the beast power is."

The woman is sitting on seven mountains or hills (as some translations say). What apostate religious power is sitting on seven hills? Rome is often referred to as the City of Seven Hills by men such as Horace, Virgil, Martial and Cicero and Propertius as noted in the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 855. Modern writers of commentaries hold similar views, such as Adam Clark, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Holy Bible* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1967).

The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 854-855 reviews the many positions of various writers. There is a significant clue that tells us how to interpret the seven heads/hills in this verse. Besides the beast being from an end-time period, the woman is *associated* with the seven

heads. She is sitting on them – is an intricate part of them. If we apply historical powers, such as Assyria, Egypt, Persia, etc. to them, it brings uncertainty to the rest of the chapter. For the heads are associated with the woman or the Roman Catholic Church! Those ancient nations existed *before* the papacy ever came into being. So we must look for a more contemporary explanation. Since there has been ample evidence of this power from 1929 on, the view of Clark and others that this is the Catholic Church sitting in Rome is a clearer meaning of verse 9.

**Verse 10: "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."**

The angel just addressed the seven heads as being seven hills. Immediately, he gives another meaning to these heads. They are also "seven kings." A king is a ruler of a sovereign nation or empire. The heads are part of the beast or papacy. The time the papacy became a sovereign nation was in February, 1929. The "king of the papacy," the head of the Holy See (the Vatican) is the pope. If we try to assign countries or nations to the heads, we break apart the imagery of the beast. To do this interjects a disassociation between the broad messages the angel is giving. *Historically, we*

**"FIVE HAVE FALLEN"**

[AT THE TIME THIS PROPHECY WAS UNDERSTOOD – DURING THE POPE JOHN PAUL II ERA]

already segregated the Catholic Church from the Vatican state. The angel pleads, Have the mind of wisdom. Interpret the message in the simplest most reasonable way possible.

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament Scriptures is full of truth *that we need to understand*. Satan has blinded the minds of many so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared *what shall be in the last days*." *Maranatha*, page 30 (emphasis added).

As this chapter and specifically this verse is studied, a very logical and simple picture emerges. The woman (the Catholic Church), the beast (the papacy, the Holy See, the Vatican state) and the heads (the popes, leaders of the Holy See) are all next to each other. They are *associated together* in this particular time period. There can be no other conclusion that draws together the meaning of the Vatican leadership than to view the heads as seven sequential popes, beginning in 1929, when the church became a sovereign power. [Note: The *head* that was wounded in chapter 13's beast is seen as the pope that was taken prisoner – Pope Pius VI. Why can't the heads of Revelation 17 refer to popes also?]

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Before we move to elaborate on this further, it would aid our sensitivity to look at a principle outlined by the late Ellen G. White, an amazing Bible expositor. There have been myriads of interpretations levied on the book of Revelation. Chapter 17 is of no exception. Understanding and application are progressive. God designed the messages to bring special blessings at appropriate times. At any given time there is a level of God's *revealing* for that time.

"Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the Spirit did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them. The meaning was to be unfolded from age to age as the people of God should need the instruction therein contained." *The Great Controversy*, pp. 344-345.

They had the Bible, as we have; but the time for the unfolding of special truth in relation to the

closing scenes of this earth's history is during the last generations that shall live upon the earth (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 692-693).

We have chosen for discussion purposes to call this *concurrent revelation*. In His infinite wisdom, prophecy fills generational needs. Hope is affirmed in just the needed way to inspire God's people to press forward. Understanding where we are in the sequence of end-time events becomes a powerful incentive to prepare for heaven.

"The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which every one should understand. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. *By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves*." E. G. White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 949 (emphasis added).

Assurance after assurance has been given that at the end diligent study will be rewarded with understanding. This is wonderful. The prophetic secrets of God shared with His servants so long ago are for *us*. Like discovering a treasure, Daniel and John held the container full of treasure but were not permitted to open it up. Future generations would be given that privilege. They rested in being the mouthpieces for special messages from heaven.

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. 'The wise shall understand' (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God's people all through the centuries, the promise is, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.' Revelation 1:3." *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 547-548.

Again, the prophetic messages are to be understood at the end of time. What value is this?

Why have *prophecies*? Why have *passages* that require intense research to grasp? God is drawing our interest and attention to the scenes and events which immediately precede His return. As Satan will seek to affirm his lordship through spiritualism, God is affirmed through the fulfillment of end-time prophecy. Confidence is inspired in the sovereign Father as at no other time in history as we observe unfolding events foretold centuries ago. *His omniscience is verified as His foreknowledge becomes our experience.*

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Picking up where we left off, the angel says of these heads or leaders of the papacy: Five popes are fallen, one is, and the other is yet to come; and when that pope comes, he will lead only a short time.

In 1929 Pope Pius XI was in power. He was an aggressive pope with a world view and with a passion to control the United States with Catholic dogma. He had little interest in church and state separation. He was the first pope to aggressively take action to achieve these goals. He fostered the Catholic Action organization to stimulate help from the Catholic laity. It was during his "reign" that the Vatican truly became a sovereign state. He had diplomatic skills. He devised international rules to arbitrate disputes between countries and spoke out vigorously against fascism and communism. Clearly, he was the pope that helped heal the wound inflicted in 1798.

Pope Pius XII followed. He had been Pius XI's Secretary of State. His mission took him all over the world. His reign created controversy over the quiet, permissive spirit he seemed to have over Hitler's extermination camps. He was vocal in setting positions and recommendations for world leaders. He despised communism. He was also in competition with the ideology to control the world. Pius XII was more open than all his predecessors relative to ecumenical ties to other churches.

His successor, Pope John XXIII, is known for Vatican II. It was there that other churches were called to participate with ideas and recommendations. Vatican II molded the church to fit into a contemporary world – and created imagery acceptable to other denominations. No pontiff in modern times transformed the face of Catholicism

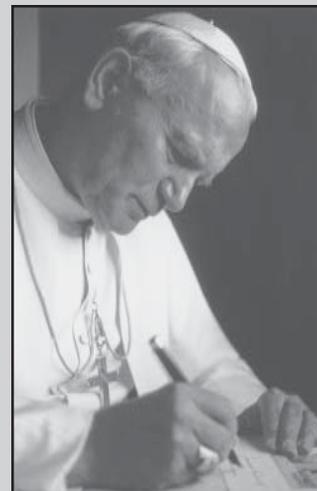
as this man. Ecumenism took huge strides forward. He laid the foundation for the world to see the Vatican as having a major role in peace, human rights, and social welfare reform. He courted Jews and Muslims, Buddhists and Christians. He died only four years into his power, leaving the finishing of Vatican II's work to his successor, Pope Paul VI.

Pope Paul VI was hesitant and unsure of himself. He became unpopular, even among Catholics, by his encyclical, *Humanae vitae*, against artificial contraception. The backlash was so deep that he never wrote another encyclical. During his reign the Vatican Bank became rife with scandal. He did, however, guide into completion Vatican II.

The next pope was Pope John Paul I. He was swiftly elected by the College of Cardinals on August 25, 1978. He had a background of being an academic scholar and a pastor. He was deeply interested in investigating the Vatican bank. He announced that he would reverse the teaching on birth control. On September 28, 1978, he was found dead on his bed. Rumors still abound that he was murdered. He also announced that he would reverse the teaching on birth control.

To this point we now have five popes – "five are fallen" (verse 10). "These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. *By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves.*" E. G. White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 949 (emphasis added).

Crucial Note: "Five have fallen" refers to the *time* when this prophecy would be understood. At this time, as we seek to understand the contemporary meaning of this, is it possible that we have *concurrent revelation* working?



POPE JOHN PAUL II

**"ONE IS"**

[WHEN THE PROPHECY  
WAS UNDERSTOOD]

The pope who took Pope John Paul I's place is Pope John Paul II. He died in 2005 and was the second longest reigning pope – “and one is” (verse 10). The weight of evidence suggests that this pope is the one “that is” – at the time of our understanding of verse 10.

Pope John Paul II did indeed emerge as the international pope. No other papal figure has drawn more favor from world political leaders than that man. He was the most traveled pope. He addressed crowds as large as one million. With President Ronald

Reagan, he was the most responsible for bringing down European communism. The world truly wondered after Pope John Paul II.

“... and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space”

(verse 10). As we put together the puzzle of Revelation 17, the evidence mounts that the present pope, Benedict XVI, is now the one who has come. That reign will be short. Paul Johnson, in his book *The Papacy* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997), p. 208, says, “Whatever may happen in the immediate future, the Roman Catholic Church is entering *the last years of a pontificate*. John Paul's successor in the world's most extraordinary job is almost certainly already among the college of cardinals [that was certainly true]. On the evidence of past successions, he will probably be quite unlike the man he will replace” (emphasis added).

This posturing is reinforced as we move on through the chapter. The heads seem to come to an end. These leaders, part of the papacy, appear to be the final popes. Something happens after the seventh. The 10th verse also clearly sets a sequence of the heads – a sequence of leaders of the beast or papacy. This implies that the heads of the dragon in Chapters 12 and 13 have also a sequence

to be understood. Then follows a fascinating power after the seventh.

**Verse 11: “And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.”**

The beast is once again addressed and described in such a way as to make clear that the angel is referring to the beast of verses 8 and 9 (implied also in verses 3 and 7). This beast, the

papacy, “is the eighth.” The Modern Language translation says it in what appears to be a clarifying way: “The beast that was and is not, is himself an eighth king; he springs from the seven and goes on to destruction.”

Two additional fascinating comments help to

**“THE  
OTHER IS  
NOT YET  
COME”  
AND  
THEN...**

[WHEN PROPHECY  
UNDERSTOOD]



POPE BENEDICT XVI

shed light on “the eighth.”

“The preposition ‘of’ is to be understood in its common acceptance in John's writings, as denoting origin, identity of nature: as Primasius puts it, ‘the beast is the essence, the concentrated expression of the seven, the embodiment of their spirit.’” Milligan, William, *The Book of Revelation* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1889) [quoted in *Revelation, Four Views – A Parallel Commentary*, p. 411].

The beast is an expression of the seven or perhaps better, the seven is an expression of the beast. The papacy embodies their spirit. This is carried a step further by Arnoc Gaebelein in *The Revelation: An Analysis and Exposition of the Last Book of the Bible* (Neptune, N.J., Loizeaux Brothers, 1915, as quoted in *Revelation, Four Views – A Parallel Commentary*, p. 411):

“The unexpected reference to the eighth (v. 11) apparently refers to the man himself, who is the leader of the seventh or final world empire.”

Who really is the leader of the seven popes? Who really is the power behind the beast? What

power could arise after the papal leadership and still be part of this vast system of falsehood? What power will go down into perdition?

Apparently the beast comes out of the “bottomless pit” (verse 8) and then goes into perdition (verse 8 and 11). There is an unspecified time between the emergence of the beast out of the “pit” and when it goes into perdition (utter destruction or annihilation). Just before perdition, there is an eighth power related to the last seven popes that emerges. What is the last deceptive power or leader to emerge before Jesus comes? A power that can be symbolized as a beast, that takes the place of the *heads* and is spoken of as the whole beast, yet numbered as the eighth. It has to be a powerful “individual.”

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” II Corinthians 11:13-15.

“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour’s advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation (Rev. 1:13-15). The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’

“The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 624.

Though we look at the world as being influenced by this final act of satanic power, “Satan sees that he is about to lose his case. He cannot sweep in the whole world. *He makes one last desperate effort to overcome the faithful* by deception. He does this in personating Christ.... The saints look

on with amazement. Will they also be deceived? Will they worship Satan? Angels of God are about them. A clear, firm, musical voice is heard, ‘Look up.’” *Last Day Events*, p. 164.

Lest we think it will be easy to overcome this “obvious” temptation, note that one of Satan’s final objects is God’s faithful, and: “*We shall be commanded to worship this being, whom the world will glorify as Christ. What shall we do?*” E. G. White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1106 (emphasis supplied).

What happens *after* Satan appears as an angel of light?

“But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But Omnipotence will interpose, and to the *apostate churches that unite in the exaltation of Satan*, the sentence will go forth, ‘Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.’” *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 62 (emphasis added).

The beast represents the papacy. It also represents, at the very end, Satan – the power behind the papacy. Other imagery used to denote Satan also is the dragon. To honor the papacy is to honor Satan.

“Satan is working to the utmost to make himself as God, and to destroy all who oppose his power. And to-day the world is bowing before him. His power is received as the power of God. It seems that the whole human creation has wondered after the beast. The kings and rulers of the earth, those who are called noblemen, think themselves altogether too great to submit to the yoke of Christ. But they are willing to bow at Satan’s bidding.” E. G. White, *An Appeal for Missions*, p. 12.

“I saw the rapidity with which this delusion [spiritualism] was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my yes upon the train. It seemed that the whole world was on board, that there could not be one left. Said the angel, ‘They are binding in bundles ready to burn.’ Then he showed me the conductor, who appeared like a stately, fair person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and

asked my attending angel who it was. He said, 'It is Satan. He is the conductor in the form of an angel of light. He has taken the world captive. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned. This agent, the next highest in order to him, is the engineer, and other of his agents are employed in different offices as

he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition." *Early Writings*, p. 88.

The weight of evidence suggests the eighth is Satan as he brings to the world his last act, his last push to be seen as "God." But then, destruction – the end.

Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.



# Prophecy Unfolds

## DANIEL CHAPTERS 8–12 – PART 11

BY FRANKLIN S. FOWLER JR., M.D.

### Chapter 31

#### THE “VILE PERSON” RISES AGAIN

*Daniel 11:28-35*

In the last chapter the *vile person* is destroyed by a country that had previously been its ally (vs 26) – France. This occurred when Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner by Napoleon’s General Berthier in 1798. Pius VI died shortly thereafter in France. The *secular rule* of the papacy began its downward plunge in that year and was complete by 1870. Its *ecclesiastical power* was clipped but not destroyed. Its “deadly wound” would later be healed (Revelation 13:3). This linguistic play simply reveals a *lethal* secular blow and *bruising* of its ecclesiastical authority.

*“Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart [shall be] against the holy covenant; and he shall do [exploits], and return to his own land. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.” Daniel 11:28-30.*

These verses use the word “return” five times (first noted by Wood<sup>1</sup>). That word is *shuwb* in Hebrew. In this context “he,” the “vile person,” returns from exile (cf. Ezekiel 2:1, Nehemiah 7:6, Isaiah 10:22, Jeremiah 22:10, 12:15). This means he is restored to what had been before.

He “returns” into “his land with great riches” (vs 28).

The self-imposed *imprisonment* by Pope Pius IX to the Vatican formally began in 1870 when it lost all of its *papal states*. The pope refused to recognize the existence of the Italian government. This picture was terminated during the time of Pope Pius XI by the Lateran Treaty on February 11, 1929, and confirmed by the Italian constitution in 1948.

The signatures on that first historic document were Cardinal Pietro Gasparri for the Holy See and Premier Benito Mussolini for the kingdom of Italy. With a stroke of two pens the Holy See was reestablished – and with great riches:

1. Church–State authority of the Holy See was recognized (they legally became a civil and ecclesiastical power).
2. The city of Rome was conveyed as the center of the Catholic world and a place of pilgrimage.
3. Italy recognized the validity of Catholic marriage and that all such issues were to be settled by Catholic Canon Law.
4. Catholic religious instruction would be permitted in public schools. Textbooks were to be approved by the Church.
5. Up until 1985 Roman Catholicism was to be the Italian State religion.

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<sup>1</sup>Wood, Robert, M.D.; *Daniel 11 – 2500 Years of Religious History*, p. 19.

6. There was Church sovereignty over the 109 acres of the Vatican (an internationally recognized *state*).
7. There were payments of cash and bonds to the church from Italy for the state land they lost.
8. Many free (forever) civil services were given – from railroad to postal.

The record says that his heart shall be *against the holy covenant* (vs 28). Psychoanalyst and Jesuit-trained E. Boyd Barrett wrote a book in 1935 that outlined the sinister plans of Pope Pius XI to become once again a world power! This book not only contained language to influence a major social agenda but permitted anything to further its power.<sup>2</sup> It is sinister and belies its claim to be a Christian church. The document ends with the words “Rome will stoop to conquer – even to sin.”

Thus its name, “Rome Stoops to Conquer.” This was the shot that went around the world, depicting this power as evil and willing to deceive – typifying the antichrist. This “prince” is portrayed as warring against the covenant. This parallels the *little horn* power in chapter 8 – “a king of fierce countenance” – one who was deceptive, “understanding dark sentences” (8:23), who would “cause craft to prosper” (8:23-25). Most remarkable – he is the one who stands up against Christ (“the Prince of princes”), seeking to undermine His work and people (8:24-25).

This is amazing because in 11:22 we learned that the *vile person* warred against the Messianic “Prince of the covenant” during the Dark Ages. Here he is doing exactly the same thing in a different era! The papacy hasn’t changed. Gabriel early on depicts this power as anti-God. It fights the redemptive plans that God has made with mankind. It defies the everlasting covenant.

“... and he shall do [exploits] and return to his own land.” Daniel 11:28.

The word “exploits” is not in the original. Scholars have felt it better expresses the meaning of having its own way or doing its own pleasure. Since it says “he” returns to his own land, it suggests the papacy was away and then returns to the Vatican – its own land *by now*. This matches

exactly what modern popes have done, making trips to foreign lands outside of Rome and Italy. Pope John Paul II was the most traveled papal head in history. He made over 100 foreign trips as a public image gesture to Catholic people. But through the sheer numbers that came out to see him, the whole world has “wondered.” Some gatherings reached over a million people in attendance.

Another form of “exploit” occurred. Since 1929 there has been increased meddling in world affairs. This began with Pope Pius XI, who made aggressive moves to infiltrate and control the political machinery in America. Pope Pius XII, his successor, was active in working with Hitler in treacherous plans against the Jews (something the Vatican is working hard to cover up). Pope John Paul II, in one of the greatest secret alliances of all time between himself and President Ronald Reagan (beginning on June 7, 1982), brought the Soviet bloc and its communistic regimes to an end.

“At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.” Daniel 11:29.

The “time appointed” or *mowed* was recently used for the time the papacy came to its Dark-Ages end (11:27). The *final end-time* meaning is noted here and in 8:19, 11:28-29, 11:35 and 12:7. These relate to the three and a half years when God’s people are persecuted, and ends with their deliverance (12:7, 1) just before Jesus comes.

Pope John Paul II had for years been courting a friendship with the Islamic world. Many of their leaders visited him in the Vatican and many attended a world peace conference in Assisi, Italy (January 24, 2001). In return, the pope visited the Syrian Omayyad mosque May 5, 2001 – the first papal head to do so.

The *vile person* is seen also as the *king of the north*. Though the papacy is its prophetic head, it represents – at the end – Babylon, and draws into its fold apostate Protestantism and spiritualism (as defined in Revelation, chapters 12–13 and 16–18). In 11:40 there is aggressive imagery of the *king of the south* “pushing” or warring against the *king of the north*. Here in verse 29 he is not aggressive. He comes towards the south in peaceful imagery.

<sup>2</sup>Barrett, E. Boyd, *Rome Stoops to Conquer*, p. 125 (Julian Messner, 1935).

It appears that the *vile person* comes into the Islamic world at the onset of this appointed time. What is happening?

For many years the papacy under Pope John Paul II had offered to be a neutral party or leader in Jerusalem and mediate the Jewish–Muslim–Christian conflict. The papacy succeeds in this verse to administer this wish. He comes “into the south” and acts as a buffer of peace. The foundational work towards this began in earnest with Pope John Paul II. This is one of several reasons that we know from Revelation 17:10 that the king “which is” refers to this specific pope. It draws on many prophecies. Now, the one that “is to come” has arrived.

Daniel notes that it won't be “as the former or as the latter” (vs 29). The former represents the Crusades. The latter is when open war is ongoing and the Muslim countries are defeated (vs 40).

“For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.” Daniel 11:30.

This verse has stimulated creative theories as to its meaning. Few expositors have tried to contextually analyze its thoughts *within* the sequence of ideas.

The previous verse reveals a “southward” influence by the *vile person*. The Islamic world, competing with the Vatican in power and global membership, is courted by the papacy in its ecumenical outreach. Whatever the “ships of Chittim” specifically do, it intimidates and directly threatens the *vile person* – “he shall be grieved.”

Ships (*tsiy*) simply refers to boats. Chittim (*kittiy*) is used in a variety of ways in the Scriptures. Balaam prophesied that ships would come from the *coast of Chittim*, afflicting Assur (Assyrians) and Eber (Hebrews) (Numbers 24:24). Isaiah refers to the “land of Chittim” (Isaiah 24:1, 12). Jeremiah noted the “isles of Chittim” (Jeremiah 2:10), referring to the coasts of Cyprus. Ezekiel refers to the “isles of Chittim” (Ezekiel 27:6), also alluding to Cyprus.

The two common things from these texts are the island of Cyprus and the *westward direction* from

Daniel and Palestine. “In Daniel's day the word referred ... to the lands and peoples of the west.”<sup>3</sup> That appears to be the key here.

There is a significant emphasis on directional symbols ever since the ram who was pushing “westward and northward and southward” in 8:4. What influence coming from the west would threaten the papacy, the *vile person* or the *king of the north*?

“Since *north* and *south* portray the forces hostile to God (see verse 27), it stands to reason that *east* and *west* illustrate those who meet with God's approval. There are a number of texts that also indicate the correctness of this concept: ‘Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the *east*, and gather thee from the *west*; I will say to the *north*, Give up; and to the *south*, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.’ (Isaiah 43:5, 6).

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the *east* country, and from the *west* country.’ Zechariah 8:7 (cf. Revelation 7:2; 16:12 where, although no mention of ‘west,’ ‘east’ bears favorable symbolic significance).”<sup>4</sup>

Symbolically, what would be west of Rome that would cause it to grieve at the end of time? Without equivocation, the *remnant*, as their forces begin to consolidate under the banner of the everlasting covenant. There is an anecdotal story about a Seventh-day Adventist lady who worked for Pope John Paul II. He purportedly told her that he wasn't concerned about the influence or power of the Adventist church (as reflected in Malachi Martin's book *Keys of this Blood*, p. 286). But he went on to express grave concern when he noted, “the 144,000 we don't yet know how to deal with.” We will shortly note that “people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits” (vs 32). They are symbolized by the *remnant* in prophecy – the white horse of the first seal, who goes out to conquer, to finish the work (Revelation 6:1-2).

As the end of time unfolds and the appointed time comes, first noted in 8:17 and 19, the spectacle of those committed to God will increasingly contrast with the ecumenical thrust of a papal coalition with apostate Protestantism. The pinnacle will be reached when moves *against* the

<sup>3</sup> *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 873.

<sup>4</sup> Wood, Robert, M.D.; *Daniel 11 – 2500 Years of Religious History*, pp. 20-21.

covenant agreement will become law. That will signal the last bastion of resistance to the geopolitical goals of the Vatican.

The ships of Chittim symbolize *the remnant people coming from the west*, specifically beginning in the United States, who oppose the *vile person*. E. G. White referred to this verse, then quoted verses 31-36 and concluded that these “scenes” will “take place” when Satan assumes “control of human minds who have not the fear of God before them. Let all read and understand the prophecies of this book.”<sup>5</sup> She saw these events as part of the end-of-time scene.

What is the papal power’s response to this? He exhibits open indignation against the holy covenant, which embodies God’s law and man’s allegiance to the great principles it conveys. “So shall he do” Gabriel says. Do what? Do something to repudiate its sacredness. That will be seen, as we’ve noted before, as the transgression or abomination that will bring it to its desolating end.

“... he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.” Daniel 11:30.

This fearfully portrays an element of ecumenism based on unity of common beliefs – here, distinctly against the holy covenant. This represents the bonding that is now going on between apostate Protestantism and Catholicism.

This started on January 25, 1959, when Pope John XXIII announced that the Second Vatican Council would take place. *Catholics and Protestants Together* was a golden thread that wove its way through its subsequent proceedings. Documents of unity between the two have since been signed. Dialogue continues as they hold hands together in an ever closer bond.

They have intelligence (*biyn*) with one another. They have understanding with each other over forsaking or setting aside the holy covenant or law. What area of the law once held in the Ark of the Covenant do Protestants and Catholics mutually reject? The fourth commandment, regarding the Sabbath. That is the issue that is now coming to the fore in this chapter! Recall that the “transgression” or *peshah* of 8:13 was against (1)

God’s authority, (2) His law and (3) His covenant. All these issues are embodied in the fourth commandment.

“And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily [sacrifice], and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.” Daniel 11:31.

The arms (*z@rowa*) that support what the *vile person* does symbolize military or political forces. This suggests that nations or governments will stand behind the papacy during this end-time rise to power. That is exactly what is portrayed in Revelation 17:12 where ten horns/kings are described, who share power with the beast (papacy–Babylon) for a short time. Also, this parallels Revelation 13:12 where the earth-beast (apostate Protestantism) causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast (sea-beast – papacy). The world’s civil infrastructure comes to the support of the Vatican right at the end.

Long after Gabriel’s message to Daniel, Jesus talked about the abomination that leads to desolation (Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14). In that dual prophecy Jesus related this decreed curse to the destruction of Jerusalem and the end-time desolation of the world.

“The Saviour’s prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God’s mercy and trampled upon His law.”<sup>6</sup>

“As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation [the United States] in the decree *enforcing the papal Sabbath* will be a warning to us.”<sup>7</sup>

“The first day of the week is to be exalted and presented to all for observance. Shall we be partakers of this *cup of abomination*? Shall we bow to the authorities of earth and despise God? The powers of darkness have been gathering their forces to bring this crisis about in the world, so that the man of sin may exalt himself above God.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Manuscript Releases, vol. 13, p. 394.

<sup>6</sup>White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup>White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 464.

<sup>8</sup>White, Ellen G.; *Review and Herald*, 04/15/1890. *Signs of the Times*, 03/03/1890.

An important note: Since Jesus ties the abomination of desolation to the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world, which meshes with Daniel 8–12, the popular interpretation of Antiochus Epiphanes (~ 165 B.C.) to the *little horn, vile person and king of the north* simply doesn't fit. It's a concept that is against Jesus' clear teaching.

*"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do [exploits]." Daniel 11:32.*

This verse is a dramatic statement by Gabriel. This ecumenical bond between Catholicism and Protestantism against God's holy law and covenant is driven by deception and seductive actions, conveying what they are not. This insight began in chapter 8 – a king "understanding dark sentences, shall stand up" (8:23) and "he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand" (8:25).

The last half of this verse is beautiful. In contrast to the corrupt covenant breakers are those who "know their God." They are strong (*chazaq*) and cleave to the holy principles of heaven. It then states that they do *exploits*. That word, again, is not in the original Hebrew text. But the implication that is made in this last thought means they follow through or act upon their conviction and loyalty to God. This draws upon a remarkable theme found in Revelation 6, where it depicts the unswerving dedication of the 144,000 in the white horse. At that time, when the history of the world is coming to a close, God's remnant will be active, going out to conquer and conquering.

*"And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, [many] days." Daniel 11:33.*

This verse and the last part of verse 32 should have been topically together. They that understand (*saka*) have an intelligent grasp of God and His truth based upon reason. His people (the remnant) shall instruct many. This last group of people will be teachers. This is when the spread of the gospel crescendoes around the world into the *Loud Cry*. It comes at the time of the oppressive abomination. As Satan corrupts the world, God's people will be "instructing many." This is, again, beautifully depicted in the first Seal (Revelation 6) when the

white horse (God's purified, holy people) goes out to conquer.

Another contrasting picture is here painted. Those loyal people will fall by the sword, and flame, be imprisoned and have their belongings taken away. This is persecution and parallels the second, fourth and fifth Seals (Revelation 6:3-4, 8-9) where a group of vengeful people (red horse) have power to harm and kill (pale horse) seen in the martyrs (those killed).

The King James Version of the Bible says "many days." In Hebrew it is simply days (*yowm*). A similar phrase was used in 8:26 that referred to an indefinite time in the future. Here it is used without the word "many." *Yowm* refers to literal days as used by Daniel. It suggests a short, indefinite time period. The next chapter will tell us exactly how long that will be – three and a half years – the time of trouble or tribulation.

*"Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries." Daniel 11:34.*

When God's people shall fall (*kawshal* – suggesting stumble or totter from weakness or weariness from the pursuit of persecution), they will be assisted with some help. God sustains His people. He never leaves or forsakes them.

"Those who are loyal to God's law will not always find the way smooth. God has not promised his people exemption from trials, but he has promised that which is far better. He has said: 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' 'My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' 'The God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation.' 'As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth.' All who love and fear God will suffer persecution. But Jesus will be near to sustain everyone who is afflicted for the truth's sake. When in the prison of Philippi, the scourged and heavily-manacled servants of Christ had such divine consolation that they sang praises to God, and the walls resounded with their triumph. To these faithful messengers, that cold dungeon, reeking with dampness, was made as the gate of heaven. The glory of the Sun of Righteousness beamed forth into that inner prison, making it radiant with a divine effulgence. Christ, the royal messenger, came to John when on his sea-bound isle, and gave

him the most wonderful revelations of himself, and of what was to take place in the world's history prior to his second appearing. Jesus revealed himself to Stephen while he was surrounded with pitiless foes. The martyr was given a view of the glory of God with Jesus standing at his right hand to give help to his suffering servant."<sup>9</sup>

"Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition."<sup>10</sup>

Sadly, many of those who claim loyalty to God, when under threats, will join with or cleave to those who have been deceived by "smooth" teaching. They are attracted to the flatteries of the wicked. This is a description of many who will leave or be shaken out of God's fold at the end of time.

"As the controversy extends into new fields and the minds of the people are called to God's downtrodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite. As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment keepers. They will be threatened with fines and imprisonment, and some will be offered positions of influence, and other rewards

and advantages, as inducements to renounce their faith."<sup>11</sup>

"I was pointed to the providence of God among His people and was shown that every trial made by the refining, purifying process upon professed Christians proves some to be dross. The fine gold does not always appear. In every religious crisis some fall under temptation. The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church. As a class, their spirits are not steadfast with God. They go out from us because they are not of us; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, many are offended."<sup>12</sup>

*"And [some] of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make [them] white, [even] to the time of the end: because [it is] yet for a time appointed."* Daniel 11:35.

The wording of this verse is confusing. It is a verse of hope, however, and has been included to show that at the very end many backsliders will return to the fold.

The clearest rendition of this text comes in a transliteration, *The Berkeley Version in Modern English*:

"On the part of some teachers their stumbling shall be for their refinement and purification to make them white, preparatory to the final period which is delayed until the appointed time.

"When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together, and present to the enemy a united front.... The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord.— Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 401 (1900)."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>White, Ellen G.; *The Signs of the Times*, 03/03/1890.

<sup>10</sup>White, Ellen G.; *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 607.

<sup>12</sup>White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 89.

<sup>13</sup>White, Ellen G.; *Evangelism*, p. 693.

This verse is filled with the most helpful information regarding the end of time. We've already seen in 8:19 that the end of time (*eth gets*) is at the appointed time (*mowed*). Daniel 12 has shown us that this is the *chazown* vision in the last three and a half years of time. That is when God's people are "trodden underfoot," "cast down" or persecuted.

The wording in the last half of this verse strongly suggests that when many backsliders return to the loyalty of the remnant noted in verse 34, the dross of this world is purged and they become white – just like the 144,000 noted in the white horse of Revelation 6:1-2. What a message! From the seeds of harm come a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ at the end.



# Why Jesus is Coming Soon

## The Great Week of Time

Part 9

### E. G. White and the “Delay” Issue

There are seemingly conflicting statements in the writings of E. G. White relative to the time of the end. As with Biblical study, the information presented must be viewed in context and purpose.

There are several issues that require concerted analysis to objectively use her material correctly:

1. The Advent pioneers originally had a view of prophecy that invited its *complete fulfillment* by October 22, 1844. On October 23, 1844, the intense Biblical research that had been done needed reassessment.
2. E. G. White was inspired that changes were needed. One example related to the 1843 chart used by our pioneers. It needed revision, which was done by 1850 when Daniel 12's 1335- and 1290-day prophecies were dropped. Notice how she related to that change:

“I saw that the figures of the chart were as God would have them, and that His hand was over and *hid a mistake in some of the figures*, so that none should see it till His hand was removed.”<sup>1</sup>

“I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and *hid a mistake in some of the figures*, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed.”<sup>2</sup>

“His hand covered a *mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods.*”<sup>3</sup>

3. Many of her writings were pastoral and sought urgently to point out errors and correct them through spiritual counsel. The *Testimonies* reflect this shepherding care she so eloquently gave.
4. Some of her messages added beauty to the stories and truths of the Bible in language that would appeal to all. The *Conflict of the Ages* series met that objective with clarity.
5. Special instruction relative to prophecy and the time of the end fills her writings. We have used that material in the many books this office has written over the past eight years to *affirm* conclusions made through Biblical research.

It has become apparent to us that clear and accurate understanding of prophecy began to unfold only slowly after 1844 to the church leaders. One can see in E. G. White's writings, first, a backward view; then a current view; then finally by approximately 1890 on, a forward understanding of most eschatological prophecy. A simple example of this is in the grasp of when Daniel would stand in his lot at the end of his days (Daniel 12:13). At first that was applied to 1798, then over various contemporary times and, finally, in 1907, to the future.

<sup>1</sup>*Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 1 (emphasis added).

<sup>2</sup>*Early Writings*, p. 74 (emphasis added).

<sup>3</sup>*The Great Controversy*, p. 373 (emphasis added).

6. Often her appeal of the imminent return of Jesus was in language that “we are on the border of the eternal world” to urge preparation *for* time is running out.
7. As this remarkable servant had the distinctness of truth unfolded to her, she too, as we would be, was influenced by events that surrounded her relative to the end of time.

### Current Events Influenced Her

The “abomination” that leads to “desolation” of Daniel 8–12 and Matthew 24 represents the enforcement of the Sunday laws. E. G. White saw that as an unfolding sign of the end in her day. This occurred in Australia (where she resided for several years) and in America, especially in the southern states.<sup>4</sup> She raised concerns relative to that issue, which was consistent with her perception of the end-time from “current events.”

Reviewing her comments on the timing of the coming of Jesus requires the same sensitivity as to the above issue.

God sees as man does not. E. G. White saw another vital principle at work in the play and interplay of the world’s events.

### She Always Sensed the Shortness of Time

E. G. White early on defined her statements in light of these principles:

“A statement published in 1851 in *Experience and Views*, and found on page 49 [page 58, present edition] of *Early Writings* is quoted as proving my testimonies false: ‘I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer.’

“As the subject was presented before me, the period of Christ’s ministration seemed almost accomplished. Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?

“Paul writes to the Corinthians:

“But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as

though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not’ (1 Cor. 7:29, 30).

“Again, in his epistle to the Romans, he says:

“‘The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light’ (Rom. 13:12).

“And from Patmos, Christ speaks to us by the beloved John:

“‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand’ (Rev. 1:3). ‘The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book’ (Rev. 22:6, 7).

“The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued *longer than we expected* in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear *as soon as we hoped*. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never!”<sup>5</sup> The delay was a human perception.

### Forward Movement of Prophecy

“Not by any temporary failure of Israel, however, was the plan of the ages for the redemption of mankind to be frustrated. Those to whom the prophet was speaking might not heed the message given, but the purposes of Jehovah were nevertheless to *move steadily forward* to their complete fulfillment.”<sup>6</sup>

“God’s purpose for Israel will meet with literal fulfillment. *That which God purposes, man is powerless to disannul*. Even amid the working of evil, *God’s purposes have been moving steadily forward to their accomplishment*. It was thus with the house of Israel ... it is thus with spiritual Israel today.”<sup>7</sup>

This underscores a broad concept regarding God’s timing. Whether it is a timing prophecy, a period, an appointed time, sequence of events or decree, they all come within the framework of a very distinct, forward-moving, Biblical pattern. As type has its antitype, in all eras of human history

<sup>4</sup> *Biography of Ellen G. White*, p. 252; *Selected Messages*, bk 3, pp. 381, 394; *Manuscript Releases*, No. 10, p. 275.

<sup>5</sup> *Selected Messages*, bk 1, p. 68 (emphasis added).

<sup>6</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 705-706 (emphasis added).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 720 (emphasis added).

God works within a specific framework of minor first fulfillment and then final fulfillment in all His prophetic revelations. This assures us of the divine precision of prophecy and aids in its interpretive understanding. In forward-moving themes minor prophetic fulfillment becomes a metaphor for a final application. Man's evil does not impede God's plans.

Now we look at the numerous eschatological statements of E. G. White. They are set in chronological order and reflect the above principles and her progressive understanding of the end. We ask that the student view each one in the context of her (EGW's) understanding, time, purpose of the thought and meaning to the remnant people.

### E. G. White – When Jesus Returns

**1844 – “delay” (written in 1882, regarding this time):** “Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and *Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.*”<sup>8</sup>

**1851 – “delay”:** “Now is the time to lay up treasure in heaven, and to set our hearts in order, ready for the time of trouble. Those only who have clean hands and a pure heart will stand that trying time. Now is the time for the law of God to be in our minds [foreheads], and written in our hearts. The Lord has shown me the danger of letting our minds be filled with worldly thoughts and cares. I saw that some minds were led away from present truth and a love of the holy Bible, by reading other exciting books; and others were filled with perplexity and care for what they shall eat, drink and wear. *I saw some, looking too far off for the coming of the Lord. Time has continued on a few years longer than they expected, therefore they think it may continue a few years more, and in this way their minds are being led from present truth, out after the world.*

In these things I saw great danger; for if the mind is filled with other things, present truth is shut out, and there is no place in our foreheads for the seal of the living God. This seal is the Sabbath. I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer; and what leisure time we have should be spent in searching the Bible, which is to judge us in the last day.”<sup>9</sup>

**1878 – expectancy:** “Ministers who would labor effectively for the salvation of souls must be both Bible students, and men of prayer. It is a sin for those who attempt to teach the word to others to be themselves neglectful of its study. All who feel the worth of souls will flee to the stronghold of truth, where they may be furnished with wisdom, knowledge, strength, and divine power to work the works of God. They should not rest without the holy unction from on high. Too much is at stake for them to dare to be careless in regard to their spiritual advancement. Ministers of Christ, your coldness, your lack of prayer, of fervor, and of heavenly wisdom may turn the balance with a soul, and send it to perdition. Ye messengers of the truth, ye cannot afford to be indifferent *in these last days! Our feet are on the borders of the eternal world*, and every probationary moment is more precious than gold.”<sup>10</sup>

**1879 – expectancy:** “All who are faithful workers for God will yield their spirit and all their powers a willing sacrifice to him. The Spirit of God operating upon their spirit calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in the answer to the divine touch. This is true sanctification, as revealed in the word of God. It is the work of a lifetime. And that which the Spirit of God has begun upon the earth for the perfection of man, glory shall crown in the mansions of God. Those who are indolent and self-caring know not true happiness and peace. They are losing, even in this life, and what glory they lose in the future, immortal life. I wish I could speak words to men and women which would nerve them to diligent action. The moments now granted us to work are few. *We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world.* We have no time to lose. Every moment is golden, and

<sup>8</sup>*Selected Messages*, bk 1, p. 68 (emphasis added).

<sup>9</sup>*Broadside2*, January 31, 1849 (emphasis added).

<sup>10</sup>*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 08/08/1878 (emphasis added).

altogether too precious to be devoted merely to self-serving. Who will seek God earnestly, and from him draw strength and grace to be his faithful workers in the missionary field? Individual effort is essential for the success of this work. The ease-loving and self-caring, the worldly, ambitious ones will be ashamed to engage perseveringly in the tract and missionary work. Some may take hold of it impulsively, but they will not be able to bear rebuffs, and sneers, and contempt. These soon become weary in well-doing, and fall back to their own position of living and caring for self. For such there will be no reward in Heaven, for Christ is to give to every one as his works shall be."<sup>11</sup>

**1881 – expectancy:** "I would, at this time, sound the note of warning to those who shall assemble at our camp meeting. *The end of all things is at hand.* My brethren, ministers and laymen, I have been shown you must work in a different manner from what you have been in the habit of working."<sup>12</sup>

**1881 – expectancy:** "Vigilance and fidelity have been required of Christ's followers in every age; but *now that we are standing upon the very verge of the eternal world,* holding the truths we do, having so great light, so important a work, we must double our diligence. Everyone is to do to the very utmost of his ability. My brother, you endanger your own salvation if you hold back now. God will call you to account if you fail in the work He has assigned you. Have you a knowledge of the truth? give it to others."<sup>13</sup>

**1886 – expectancy:** "I want to speak to the ears of our people in America in every church. Awake from the dead, and Christ will give you life. Souls are perishing for the light of truth as it is in Jesus. *We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world.* Fair-weather Christians will not be wanted for this work. The sentimental and tasteful religion is not needed for this time. There must be intensity brought into our faith and in the proclamation of truth. I tell you, a new life is proceeding from satanic agencies to work with a power we have not hitherto realized. And shall not a new

power from above take possession of God's people? The truth, sanctifying in its influence, must be urged upon the people. There must be earnest supplications offered to God, agonizing prayer to Him, that our hopes as a people may not be founded on suppositions, but on eternal realities. We must know for ourselves, by the evidence of God's Word, whether we are in the faith, going to heaven or not. The moral standard of character is God's law. Do we meet its requirements? Are the Lord's people bringing their property, their time, their talents, and all their influence into the work for this time? Let us arouse. 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God' (Col. 3:1).—Letter 55, 1886."<sup>14</sup>

**1888 – "delay":** "It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; he desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief.' [Heb. 3:19.] Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner, it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and his people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which he had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. *In mercy to the world, Jesus delays his coming,* that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning, and find in him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out."<sup>15</sup>

**1888 – impending:** "A great crisis awaits the people of God. A crisis awaits the world. The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. *Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are now taking place before our eyes.* Already the question of an amendment to the Constitution restricting liberty of conscience has been urged upon the legislators of the nation. The

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<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 01/02/1879 (emphasis added).

<sup>12</sup>*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 16-17 (emphasis added).

<sup>13</sup>*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 460 (emphasis added).

<sup>14</sup>*Selected Messages*, bk 2, pp. 382-383 (emphasis added).

<sup>15</sup>*The Great Controversy*, p. 458 (1888) (emphasis added).

question of enforcing Sunday observance has become one of national interest and importance. We well know what the result of this movement will be. But are we ready for the issue? Have we faithfully discharged the duty which God has committed to us of giving the people warning of the danger before them?"<sup>16</sup>

**1889 – expectancy:** "There are many who have not taxed their mental powers, and who have no experience in putting to the stretch their utmost ability to find out what is truth. It is not possible that the Holy Spirit shall fall upon you unless you feel your need, and are more desirous for its descent than you now are. *You should realize that you are living upon the very borders of the eternal world, that Christ is coming very soon, and that all heaven is interested in the work that is in progress in fitting up a people for his coming.* If ever there was a people that needed to heed the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodicean church to be zealous and to repent before God, it is the people who have had opened up before them the stupendous truths for this time, and who have not lived up to their high privileges and responsibilities. We have lost much in not living up to the light of the solemn truths which we profess to believe."<sup>17</sup>

**1890 – expectancy:** "My brethren, we are living in a most solemn period of this earth's history. There is never time to sin; it is always perilous to continue in transgression; but in a special sense is this true at the present time. *We are now upon the very borders of the eternal world and stand in a more solemn relation to time and to eternity than ever before.* Now let every person search his own heart, and plead for the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness to expel all spiritual darkness and cleanse from defilement. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Through faith, irrespective of feeling, Jesus, the Author of our salvation, the Finisher of our faith, will, by His precious grace, strengthen the moral powers, and the sinner may reckon himself 'to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.'

Simple faith, with the love of Christ in the soul, unites the believer to God. While toiling in battle as a faithful soldier of Christ, he has the sympathy of the whole loyal universe. The ministering angels are round about him to aid in the conflict, so that he may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper,' 'the Lord is my strength and my shield;' 'I shall not be overcome. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.'"<sup>18</sup>

**1891 – expectancy:** "Will you, my sister, always trust in Jesus, who is your righteousness? The love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost, which is graciously given unto you. You are one with Christ. He will give you grace to be patient, He will give you grace to be trustful, He will give you grace to overcome restlessness, He will warm your heart with His own sweet Spirit, He will revive your soul in its weakness. *Only a few days more to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world, seeking for a better country, even an heavenly.* Our home is in heaven. Then stay your soul in confidence upon God. Roll all your burdens upon Him."<sup>19</sup>

**1892 – expectancy:** "Let every one who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming, search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. Let every believer take up his Bible with earnest prayer, that he may be enlightened by the holy Spirit as to what is truth, that he may know more of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and disappoint the enemy. *The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer.* This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to his

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<sup>16</sup>*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 711 (1882–1889) (emphasis added).

<sup>17</sup>*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 06/04/1889 (emphasis added).

<sup>18</sup>*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 147-148 (emphasis added).

<sup>19</sup>*Selected Messages*, bk 2, pp. 231-232 (emphasis added).

disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of him."<sup>20</sup>

**1892:** "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>21</sup>

**1893:** "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>22</sup>

**1893 – "delay":** "The work of opponents to the truth has been steadily advancing while we have been compelled to devote our energies in a great degree to counteracting the work of the enemy through those who were in our ranks. The dullness of some and the opposition of others have confined our strength and means largely among those who know the truth, but do not practice its principles. *If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind.* What account will be rendered to God for thus retarding the work?"<sup>23</sup>

**1894:** "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>24</sup>

**1896 – prolonged, yet there is an appointed time:** "The Lord Has a Time Appointed. The natural heart is not to bring its own tainted, corrupting principles into the work of God. There must be no concealing of the principles of our faith. The third angel's message is to be sounded by God's people. It is to swell to the loud cry. The Lord has a time appointed when He will bind off the work; but when is that time? When the truth proclaimed for these last days shall go forth as a witness to all nations, then shall the end come. *If the power of Satan can come into the very temple of God and manipulate things as he pleases, the time of preparation will be prolonged.* – Lt 83, 1896."<sup>25</sup>

**1896:** "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>26</sup>

**1897 – "delay":** "[Num. 32:6-15, quoted.] The Lord God is a jealous God, yet He bears long with the sins and transgressions of His people in this generation. If the people of God had walked in His counsel, the work of God would have advanced, the messages of truth would have been borne to all people that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Had the people of God believed Him and been doers of His word, had they kept His commandments, the angel would not have come flying through heaven with the message to the four angels that were to let loose the winds that they should blow upon the earth crying, Hold, hold the four winds that they blow not upon the earth until I have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. But because the people are disobedient, unthankful, unholy, as were ancient Israel, *time is prolonged that all may hear the last message of mercy proclaimed with a loud voice.* The Lord's work has been hindered, the sealing time delayed. Many have not heard the truth. But the Lord will give them a chance to hear and be converted, and the great work of God will go forward.—Letter 106, 1897."<sup>27</sup>

**1901:** "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>28</sup>

**1901 – "delay":** "*We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years,* as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action. – Letter 184, 1901."<sup>29</sup>

**1903 – "delay":** "I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His Word, *they would today be in*

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<sup>20</sup>Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 11/22/1892 (emphasis added).

<sup>21</sup>Pamphlet PH002, p. 28.

<sup>22</sup>Review and Herald, 02/21/1883.

<sup>23</sup>General Conference Daily Bulletin, 02/28/93 (emphasis added).

<sup>24</sup>The Signs of the Times, 05/29/1884.

<sup>25</sup>The Publishing Ministry, pp. 389-390 (emphasis added).

<sup>26</sup>General Conference Bulletin, 10/01/1896.

<sup>27</sup>Manuscript Releases, vol. 15, pp. 292-293 (emphasis added).

<sup>28</sup>Review and Herald, 06/11/01.

<sup>29</sup>Evangelism, p. 696 (emphasis added).

*the heavenly Canaan.*" – General Conference Bulletin, March 30, 1903."<sup>30</sup>

1903: "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>31</sup>

1908: "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>32</sup>

1909 – "delay": "*If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning.* But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan has stolen a march upon us."<sup>33</sup>

1910: "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>34</sup>

1913 – **expectancy**: "All heaven is astir, engaged in preparing for the day of God's vengeance, the day of Zion's deliverance. *The time of tarrying is almost ended.* The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home. *I feel as if I must cry aloud, Homeward bound!* Rapidly we are nearing the time when Christ will come to gather His redeemed to Himself." – Review and Herald, Nov. 13, 1913."<sup>35</sup>

1913: "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>36</sup>

1914: "We are on the borders of the eternal world."<sup>37</sup>

As one reviews these thoughts, it is clear that the need to present a given message varies. There are definitive thoughts in several statements that time is prolonged. These are in the context of her understanding and/or to present a serious warning. As an example, in 1903, while addressing the General Conference, she used the words "I know."

They are always in a context when preparation is to occur or the spread of the gospel message should be finished.

In 1896 an important principle was presented, defining her message. If Satan can come into God's church, the preparation will be prolonged. Yet –

God has an appointed time to bind off the work. "Urgency," "rally to finish" the work and pay attention to "current events" runs through these quotations.

What about 1903 when she noted that "today" God's people could have been in the heavenly Canaan? She repeated this again twice in 1908. How can we reconcile that with the GWT?

In Daniel's day the 490 years was to bring in "everlasting righteousness" by AD 34. If that was true, the Gentiles would never receive the gospel message. That would have been, according to Daniel 9:24, the very end of time! Yet, God already told Daniel that time would go on for more than two thousand years (Daniel 8:14). How could all this play out? It appears on the surface that the end was coming and yet it was not coming.

In *everything* there is always a "might have been." But in God's great foreknowledge He knows "what will be." In that context He operates, gives prophecy and warns. E. G. White counseled in both spheres. The GWT is prophetic in the "what will be" realm.

There is a danger that we overread the intent of the incredible writings of E. G. White. If we take the issues at hand and apply her words to the reason she wrote them, the era of her understanding and the context of her eschatological warnings, they do not conflict.

A sovereign principle that reaches to the very depths of this insight:

"But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. 'Afterward,' He said, 'shall they come out with great substance.' Gen. 15:14. Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh's proud empire battled in vain. On 'the self-same day' appointed in the divine promise, 'it

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 694 (emphasis added).

<sup>31</sup>*Review and Herald*, 03/03/03.

<sup>32</sup>*Southern Watchman*, 04/14/1908.

<sup>33</sup>*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 29 (emphasis added).

<sup>34</sup>*The Signs of the Times*, 03-22-1910

<sup>35</sup>*Evangelism*, p. 219 (emphasis added).

<sup>36</sup>*Review and Herald*, 09/18/1913.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 10/29/1914.

came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.' Ex. 12:41. *So in heaven's council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined.* When the great clock of time pointed to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

"When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son.' Providence had directed the movements of nations, and the tide of human impulse and influence, until the world was ripe for the coming of the Deliverer. The nations were united under one government. One language was widely spoken, and was everywhere recognized as

the language of literature. From all lands the Jews of the dispersion gathered to Jerusalem to the annual feasts. As these returned to the places of their sojourn, they could spread throughout the world the tidings of the Messiah's coming."<sup>38</sup>

Is there a "great clock of time" that is pointing to Christ's second return? It is the Great Week of Time. Perhaps within that timing theme we can realize a balanced view of the eloquent thoughts from Ellen G. White. Hers was a matured ministry of preparation for a soon-returning Savior.

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<sup>38</sup>*Desire of Ages*, p. 32 (emphasis added).



# LIBERTY

IN THE

# BALANCE

### **Two Bombs Kill Christians in Tentena, Indonesia.**

Two bombs exploded in a busy market in a refugee village for Christians in Tentena, Indonesia, on Saturday, killing 21 people and injuring 49. The timing of the attack was calculated to inflict the greatest possible damage. One source reported that phone communication was cut off immediately after the explosions and that only two ambulances were available to attend to the wounded. Observers believe the attack could stir up renewed fighting between Christians and Muslims in the troubled province. The bombing may be linked to an earlier raid on a Christian village in Mamasa regency on April 24. A young man arrested in connection with that incident was carrying documents that revealed a wider terrorist plot to carry out bombings and attacks throughout Indonesia. – *Compass Direct*

### **Saudis Shred Bibles, Rights Campaigners Claim.**

Bibles found in the possession of visitors to Saudi Arabia are routinely confiscated by customs officials, and in some cases copies allegedly have been put through a paper shredder, according to religious rights campaigners.

**Russian Christians Claim Discrimination.** (May 26, 2005). Taking their concerns to the streets, a small group of Christians in Russia protested at the weekend against policies they say violate their religious freedom.

Some 200 members of an evangelical church staged a demonstration in downtown Moscow, protesting about difficulties their

church was experiencing in getting the authorities to approve the allocation of land for places of worship.

“Our task is to teach people how to defend their rights,” church leader Alexander Purshaga told the gathering.

The protest was the latest sign that all is not well when it comes to freedom to worship in Russia, where some Protestant groups are lumped together with sects and all regarded as troublesome.

Last month, police raided a Pentecostal Church seminar in Izhevsk, a city northeast of Moscow, briefly detaining dozens of believers.

In the Chekhov district south of Moscow, local Baptists are struggling to hold onto their new church, built to replace their previous one, which was destroyed in an arson attack last September. Similar attacks have occurred elsewhere.

In February 2005, two U.S. lawmakers who chair the Washington-based Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe wrote to the Chekhov district administration expressing concern about threats of violence against the congregation and alleged official efforts to bulldoze the newly rebuilt place of worship.

In its annual report released earlier this month, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom argued that conditions in Russia “have deteriorated in recent years.”

Growing government authoritarianism was a problem, as was the favored treatment enjoyed by the Russian Orthodox Church, it said.

Some religious groups were prevented from registering – a legal requirement – and

from being able to practice freely. Anti-Semitism was another troubling issue, the group said.

Some Russian officials have criticized what they call "totalitarian sects" and accuse the U.S. of using such groups to undermine the state.

Among the organizations lumped together and described as "imported sects" are such diverse groups as the Salvation Army, Scientologists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Sun Myun Moon's Unification movement.

Reflecting the official view, a Moscow school textbook – endorsed by city Mayor Yuri Luzhkov – counts the Salvation Army among "pseudo-religious organizations seeking all possible methods of using the Russian education system to spread their so-called religious teachings."

The book also accuses the Salvation Army, which is in fact a mainstream Protestant organization, as "posing as an evangelical Protestant Church."

Recently, two high-ranking British and Danish Salvation Army representatives were denied permission to enter Russia "in the interests of state security."

Officially, the Russian constitution has put an end to Soviet-era religious persecution. The fall of communism in 1991 brought not only a revival in the Russian Orthodox Church, but also the growth of other Christian denominations as well as sects.

Many Russians became fearful of the arrival of some of these groups, and to address public concerns, the controversial law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Association" was approved in 1997.

The legislation was backed by the Orthodox Church, but other religious groups, the Vatican, human rights advocates and Western governments described it as discriminatory.

The law, which ostensibly targets cults, requires religious groups to prove that they had been operating in Russia for at least 15 years – a requirement that effectively undercut most groups but favored the Orthodox Church.

The law also describes the Russian Orthodox Church as the country's dominant religion and mentions Islam, Judaism and

Buddhism as other "traditional" faiths. Other denominations are relegated to a secondary status, subjecting them to tough registration requirements.

Groups failing to meet the 15-year requirement are unable to distribute literature or invite foreigners to preach. They are also barred from establishing educational centers or media outlets, and their clergy are not exempt from military service.

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexiy II has praised the law, calling it a barrier against foreign "pseudo-missionaries" whom he said had inundated Russia. – *CNSNews.com*

### **Hindu Extremists in India Attack Bible College**

**Students.** PATHANAMTHITTA, India – A group of extremists of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) attacked and beat eight students from Beersheba Bible College, a school affiliated with the Indian Pentecostal Church of God at Maraman, Chettimukku, on May 12, 2005.

The Bible college students were on their way to attend a funeral when the band of RSS extremists mounted on motorcycles descended on the group and assaulted them with knives and other sharp weapons. Local police have confirmed that the assault came without provocation and have pressed charges against the assailants.

Beershe students Blessen Abraham, George Abraham, Binu Babu, R. Ravindran, Rajesh, B. Rony, T.E. Varghese, and Vinod were treated at a district hospital in nearby Kozhencherry for injuries sustained in the attack.

Babu and Blessen Abraham were admitted to the hospital because of the severity of their wounds. The pair was discharged yesterday. Varghese also required a hospital stay to recover from lacerations he suffered in the attack.

Rajesh narrowly escaped being blinded in one eye, according to sources. He received a serious wound just above the brow.

According to witnesses, the students were attending a funeral service of a former Pentecostal Church of God member. The attack occurred as the body of the deceased was

being transferred from his home to the cemetery.

The students were walking from the house to a main road to catch a bus that would take them to the cemetery for the graveside service when two RSS extremists passed on a motorcycle and noticed them. The RSS pair evidently decided to stage the attack on the group of Christians, probably because their organization was meeting the same day nearby in Kozhencherry.

Soon about 15 armed RSS extremists on motorcycles and riding in a jeep converged on the scene. They started beating the students without warning and shouted anti-Christian slogans.

The attackers, all under 25 years of age, are reportedly led by a man named Sunil who goes by the alias "Visham." In the local dialect, "visham" means "poison."

When the bus which was to carry the students to the cemetery arrived, they ran into it for protection. The RSS attackers followed them onto the bus and continued beating them until other Christians and bystanders started to arrive at the scene.

The incident has instilled fear in the students. Reports of further threats against the Bible college have added to the tension. On Saturday afternoon, a group of RSS extremists gathered outside the college shouting anti-Christian slogans and issuing general warnings against the student body.

Police have provided protection for the campus.

The Beersheba Bible College has been in existence for 12 years and currently enrolls nearly 40 students. The Pentecostal Church of God has ministered in the Maraman area since 1983.

The Bible school's response to the incident has surprised residents of the area. The Rev. Shibu Nalweli, principal of the college and pastor of the local church, said the Bible school community has chosen to forgive the attackers and does not wish to press charges against them.

However, local police have registered a criminal case against the 15 RSS workers involved in the incident. – Compass Direct

**California Teacher Suing Schools Over Religious Discrimination.** A California school district will be put on trial after allegedly targeting an elementary school teacher for discrimination because of his Christian beliefs. Judge James Ware has refused to dismiss a lawsuit filed by elementary school teacher Stephen Williams against the Cupertino School District.

**Level Of Anger Being Spewed At People Of Faith Has Risen To New Heights.** A Christian leader in Washington, DC, says the level of anger being spewed at people of faith has risen to new heights. Pat Mahoney of the Christian Defense Coalition believes differing views on social issues are driving an angry wedge between the debaters, especially those on the liberal side, and mean-spirited name calling has become a mainstay of Democrat lawmakers in particular. Mahoney observes, "I think we are seeing the Democratic Party scrambling. I think they don't know how to deal with the faith and values community, particularly on abortion." Recently, Christian organizations and leaders have been called the anti-Christ, Nazis, and hate mongers by those who disagree with their values, and a conference was convened in New York City in an effort to fight what participants called the growth of a theocracy. Mahoney and other Christian leaders feel things will only get worse. – *Agape Press*

**Eritrea: Sixteen Full-Time Pastors Are Among Nearly 900 Christians Jailed.** Sixteen full-time pastors are among nearly 900 Christians who are jailed in prisons and military camps, according to a documented list recently compiled by evangelical sources in the tiny African nation. Despite a heavy-handed clampdown by the country's security police, the sources have managed to compile the list of 883 Christians now being held without trial or charges because of their faith, Compass Direct reported. Only a handful of prisoners have been released — after recently being coerced to sign pledges to stop attending religious services of the unregistered, "illegal" denominations. Of the pastors and hundreds of church members arrested since January, most were apprehended either at prayer meetings in

homes of fellow believers or while attending wedding ceremonies. Several others were arrested individually. – *Charisma News Service*

**Church Attacked And Burned To The Ground.** A church affiliated with Gospel for Asia has been burned to the ground by insurgents. This is the third attack on the building this year and the sixth time it has been targeted by arsonists. GFA officials said that police are investigating the April 19 attack on the Believers Church located in the Thoubal district in the northeastern Indian state of Manipur. Four Christians associated with the church were injured in the violence, including one man who had to be hospitalized for his injuries. "Such opposition is a daily fact of life for our missionaries on the front lines in many parts of Asia," said Gospel for Asia Founder and President K.P. Yohannan in a news release. In an emergency meeting, Christian leaders in Manipur agreed to form an Inter-Church Peace Council and contact the state's Minorities Commission. According to ministry officials, the Believers Church had been previously attacked twice this year, and a local court had ordered police to provide security while reconstruction took place. A local newspaper reported that opponents have warned church members to abandon the premises or "face the consequences." Church officials vowed to rebuild. "We will not be deterred from sharing the love of Christ and obeying what Jesus has called us to do, no matter what the cost." Yohannan said in the news release. – *ASSIST News Service*

**Pastor Slain Outside His Church Prayed for Flock to "Win Neighborhood."** A Los Angeles-area pastor who was recently gunned down outside the church he founded had a passion to see his crime-laden community come to Christ. A week ago, Charlie Williams, assistant pastor of 250-member Christian Unity Missionary Baptist Church in Inglewood, was shot before he could get a few feet from the church's doors, The Los Angeles Times reported. Williams, 70, died a

few hours later at a local hospital. Police said the motive for the shooting was unknown. Williams' death has shaken a working-class neighborhood where gang crime has been a persistent problem and where Williams was a reassuring face, the Times noted. Williams was known for buying toys for children, feeding the needy and spreading the Word of God. Friends and family described him as a voice of optimism in a neighborhood filled with more than its share of troubles. "He would pray that the church could win the neighborhood," his wife, Lois Moore-Williams, who is the church's main pastor, told the newspaper. Williams and his wife constantly prayed that God would allow the church to be a beacon of light for the people in the neighborhood, Moore-Williams said. She could not bring herself to preach last Sunday, but plans to return to the pulpit later this month. She has already chosen the title of her sermon: "All Is Well." – *Charisma News Service*

**Hindu Extremists in India Attack Church, Burn Bibles.** A crowd of nearly 500 Hindu villagers attacked a house church in Mangalwarapete village, Karnataka state, India, on May 1. Assailants molested some of the women among the 60 people present at the Sunday service and burned Bibles and other Christian literature. The mob beat Pastor Paulraj Raju of King Jesus Church. His wife and an elder of the church were also seriously injured in the attack. According to Pastor Charles Isaac of the Evangelical Free Church Urban Movement of India, the attackers identified themselves as members of the Hindu fundamentalist group Bajrang Dal and the nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party. Raju, who is still in the hospital recovering from his injuries, was beaten by local people in January and later arrested by police on charges of attempting to convert Hindus. Only one million of the 52.8 million inhabitants of Karnataka state are Christians. Hindus number 44.3 million, according to 2001 census figures. – *Compass Direct*

# The Garden Patch



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## Pest Control – Overview

### A Promise of Protection

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 3:11.

### Pest Prevention and Control

The verse above follows immediately after a call to faithfulness in tithes and offerings. We should always remember that there is a spiritual aspect to pest control that should not be overlooked. A careful study of nature reveals many methods that can help a gardener to control pest problems without using chemical pesticides. Our focus will be how to apply some of these methods to our garden and, hopefully, create an environment such that pests will rarely be a problem.

For the purpose of this article, I will be focusing mostly on insect pests but will also cover briefly some of the larger pests that are a problem in the garden. We will start with a broad overview of some of the principles of how to control pests, then in the next two articles show how to apply those principles in a practical way in the garden.

### Role of Diversity

One important principle we learn from nature is the role of diversity in bringing stability and keeping pests under control. Many studies have shown that the more diverse (or complex) a

community, the more stable it will be. With a stable community, there is less likelihood of any one insect increasing to such a point that it becomes a pest.

It has also been shown that diversity is directly related to the number of predators – the more predators you have, the more diversity you’ll have. At first glance this may seem illogical. Aren’t the predators eating other insects and thus reducing diversity? What’s been discovered is that the predators usually control the most aggressive pests, which if allowed to run unchecked, would eliminate many other beneficial insects.

### Pesticides and Diversity

How do chemical pesticides play into all this? It has been found that chemical pesticides are not only good at controlling the target pest, but are often even better at killing beneficial insects – many of whom are predators. With the loss of predators, the insects they were controlling will increase in number until they become pests. This is not to say that we should never use pesticides – there are times when they offer the only solution to certain pest problems. Yet, one needs to realize that often the unintentional result of using chemical pesticides is an increase in pest problems.



David Stottlemeyer

## Encouraging Diversity in the Garden

So, to increase diversity in the garden, we want to encourage the beneficial insects – especially the predators. How do we do this? One way is to simply have a variety of different plants in your garden. This will encourage a bigger diversity of insects and make it less likely that any one insect will rise to pest status. Another thing, most beneficial insects feed on pollen or nectar, either in their adult stage or as an alternate food source. For example, the green lacewing larva is a voracious predator of aphids, but the adult is a “vegetarian,” feeding on pollen and nectar. The Lady Bug Beetle (ladybug) is another beneficial insect you want in your garden. Like the lacewing, the ladybug larva feeds on aphids and other pests – and so will the adult who adds pollen and nectar to the diet as well. To encourage these beneficial insects, you want to have flowers in or around your garden. A variety of flowers that bloom at different times would be best. Pictured below are two classes of flowers that have been shown to be very effective in attracting beneficial insects.

Umbelliferae family:



Flowers shaped like an “umbrella”  
Examples: dill, carrot, parsley, and fennel

Compositae family:



Daisy type flowers  
Examples: daisy, sunflower, chrysanthemum

## Starting to Solve the Pest Problem

Even with a garden full of flowers you can still expect to see some pests. But just because you see a few undesirables in the garden does not mean you have a problem. The following points should be kept in mind when confronting a pest problem.

1. Control methods are adequate if pests are held to a tolerable level. An insect is only “bad” if it is out of control. The key is what is a “tolerable” level for you – which leads to the next step.
2. Elimination of pests is unrealistic. No amount of effort can eliminate all pests.
3. Is the damage bad enough to require control methods? This brings us to the point where we decide if we need to act and what action is required.
4. If action is needed, use the least disruptive method available. If possible, you want to control the pest without harming the beneficial insects that are helping you in the garden.

## Conclusion

Even under the best conditions we can expect occasional problems with pests. How we react to these pests is important since our intervention can have long lasting consequences – either improving or degrading the situation. With this in mind, we will try to apply some of these principles in the next two articles – “Pest Prevention” and “Control Methods.”



## FOCUS ON THE *Sabbath*

[This section is devoted to news, articles, special messages, laws, sermons and political events that draw attention to the Sabbath. We are especially interested in how the Christian world views a weekly “rest day” – a pivotal prophetic end-time issue.]

### Pope Benedict XVI’s Emphasis on Sunday

**The reign of Pope Benedict XVI is going to highlight several key areas:**

1. Ecumenism
2. Sunday worship
3. Closer ties in church and state relationships
4. Heavy promotion of the eucharist
5. Demanding loyalty from priests

**Interest in promoting Sunday was a key concern in Pope John Paul II’s** epistle dated May 31, 1998, called *Dies Domini*, which means “The Day of The Lord,” or the “Lord’s Day.” This is an epistle about the Lord’s Day. In it he contended that Sunday is the true Lord’s Day and not the Sabbath. He urged the use of civil power to assure that Sunday could be preserved as a holy day.

**Benedict XVI has quickly adopted Sunday promotion as part of his pontificate.**

From Vatican News sources have come these recent headlines:

#### **Pope Recalls Martyrs Who Died for Sunday Mass**

Perished Under Emperor Diocletian – BARI, Italy, MAY 29, 2005 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)). – “In an age of widespread religious indifference, Benedict XVI offers as models the martyrs of North Africa who gave their lives for celebrating Mass on a Sunday.

“Presiding at today’s closing Mass of the 24th Italian National Eucharistic Congress, the Pope spoke in his homily about the group of Christians who were killed in 304 during the persecution of the Roman emperor Diocletian.

“The theme of the congress was the motto of the martyrs: ‘We Cannot Live without Sunday.’”

#### **Sunday Mass Should Be Seen as a Joy, Says Pope**

VATICAN CITY, JUNE 12, 2005

“In this singular Eucharistic time, one of the recurring topics is Sunday, the Day of the Lord, a topic that was also at the center of the recent Italian Eucharistic Congress, held in Bari,” Benedict said. “We Can’t Live Without It.”

“To meet with brothers, to listen to the Word of God and to be nourished of Christ, immolated for us, is an experience that gives meaning to life, which infuses peace in the heart. Without Sunday, we Catholics cannot live.”

#### **Concrete Gestures Achieve Unity, Says Pope**

“Expressions of Good Sentiments Are Not Enough” – BARI, Italy, MAY 29, 2005 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)). – “Benedict XVI reiterated his commitment to Christian unity, saying that he will offer ‘concrete gestures’ to foster progress on the ecumenical path. Sunday as an ecumenical day is of great interest to him as an ecumenical ‘gesture.’”