

ERRATA

(Unfortunately some bugs crept into the printing of this booklet, so please make the following alterations:

page 3, para 4, line 3 - the phrase "covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay". Somehow this phrase (from Isa.51:16) was moved from its intended position on page 4, para 2, line 5, between the words "have" and "the". So line 3 should read: "every foul spirit". I have bracketed the phrase on p.3 and placed an arrow where it should be inserted on p.4.

On page 20 the third paragraph ("They shall be given...") is a subtitle.

On page 27 in 7 separate places, gaps have appeared in words. In the main they are obvious, "Separ ate" is, of course, "separate"; "I east" is "least", etc.

There are one or two other formatting mistakes, but they are of no real consequence.

I sincerely hope that these unfortunate errors do not spoil your appreciation of this booklet. If there is another printing these mistakes will be rectified, but in an attempt to keep prices down I have decided to release some copies with the errors still there.

May God bless you as you read this booklet,

The Author, Budapest, April 1992.

Lillian Jean Medry

Unveiling

**THE
MYSTERY
BABYLON**

*- Using Biblical
and Historical
Evidence*

by John Bishop

\$ 2.50

For further information

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WYBATT
MAYERS
LIFE

Page 100

IHS. The mother
The child
The father of the Gods

12. Burning of incense and candles.
13. The Rosary, Hail Mary, etc.
14. The crucifix.
15. The wearing of crucifixes and images displayed for protection.
16. Wafer used in Eucharist is round with IHS engraved on it.
17. Paintings of Mary and the child Jesus with halos or a glory of the sun around their heads.
18. Infant baptism by sprinkling of Holy Water.
19. Mysticism.
20. Change of the Sabbath to Sunday.
21. Pontifex Maximus one of the first titles for the pope.
22. Pope claims to have the keys of Peter.
23. Pope carried on a portable throne to the Basilica of Peter (Sedia Gestatoria)
24. Pope claims to be Christ's vicar here on earth.
25. Penance, indulgences, salvation by works.
26. Nuns.
27. Opposers of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic church burned at the stake.

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Unveiling THE MYSTERY BABYLON - Using Biblical and Historical Evidence

Part One - The Biblical Background to Rev.17:5

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with Gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornications. And on her head a name was written:

MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her I marvelled with great amazement." Rev.17:3-6.

"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time." Dan.7:25.

"And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul (covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay) spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury. And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues." Rev.18:2-4.

The warning given in these verses makes it a necessity that we are able to identify who or what Babylon is so that we are able to heed the warning to come out of her. The Bible gives a full description to the extent that, to the discerning reader of prophecy, Babylon may cease to be a mystery.

However to ensure that the interpretation is in harmony with the true meaning, the principles of interpreting Bible prophecy should be adhered to. For this reason, we shall initially use the Bible to interpret the Bible.

In Bible prophecy a woman represents a church, for example God's church is represented by an attractive woman: Jeremiah 6:2 "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman."(KJV) Zion represented God's people, or His church: Isaiah 51:16 "And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."(KJV)

Similarly a fallen woman represents a fallen church. When God's church fell not only was the fall described, but also Ezekiel records what the adultery, or fornication, was, once again using the symbol of a woman for a church, or part of a church: Ezekiel 23:2-5 "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother: And they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah* and Jerusalem Aholibah.** And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours." Later in the same chapter God's vengeance on the sisters is also recorded in verses 9 and 22/23: 9 "Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted." 22 "Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side; 23 The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses."(KJV)

The very countries with whom Samaria and Jerusalem committed fornication rose up against them. Specifically in prophetic terms fornication is the breaking of the 1st and 2nd Commandments and the Old Testament records the church of that day, the Israelites, as falling into fornication on many occasions.

* Lit. 'Her Own Tabernacle'

** Lit. 'My Tabernacle Is In Her'

11. Belief of the dead visiting the living, feast held for dead in November, all souls' day.

12. Burning of incense. Jer.11:17; Ezek.8:11

13. Chants and repetitious prayers. Matt.6:6

14. The symbol of the cross as a symbol of sun worship.

15. Amulets and idols to ward away evil spirits.

16. Round disk wafer. IHS symbol of Isis, Horus and Set. Eaten as food for the soul.

17. Painting of the mother and child with the glory of the sun around their heads.

18. Infant baptism, sprinkling of Holy Water.

19. Necromancy.

20. First day of the week, Sunday, kept sacred to honour Baal.

21. Pontifex Maximus name of the chief head of the pagan babylonian system of idolatry.

22. Janus and Cybele holders of the keys to heaven and hell.

23. High priest kings carried on a throne to the temple of his god

24. Pagan high priest king thought to be incarnation of the sun god.

25. Offerings to appease the gods.

26. Houses for the virgin priestesses, who are employed at pagan temples.

27. Human sacrifices burned by fire as offering to appease sun god.

27 Characteristics of the Roman Catholic Mystery Religion

1. The nativity of Jesus, Christmas, Dec.25th.

2. Nativity of St. John held Jan.24th.

3. The assumption of Mary who became the mother of God.

4. Virgin Mary worshipped as Queen of Heaven.

5. Hot cross buns with cross drawn on it.

6. 40 days of lent.

7. The festival of Easter. The procession of graven images of Jesus, Mary and Peter and of the saints. (Esp. during Easter).

8. Veneration of graven images of Jesus, Mary, Peter and the saints.

9. Belief in immortality of the soul and burning place of torment.

10. Doctrine of purgatory.

11. Festival of All Souls' Day held on Nov.2nd, All Saints' Day held on Nov.1st.

Today the same voice is calling you. Won't you turn from the Mystery Babylon before it is too late?

"Today, if you will hear His voice: Do not harden your heart" Ps.95:7,8.

"Jesus is tenderly calling thee home - calling today, calling today; Jesus is calling the weary to rest - calling today, calling today; Bring Him thy burden and thou shalt be blessed; He will not turn thee away.

Jesus is waiting - oh, come to Him now - waiting today, waiting today; Jesus is pleading - oh, list to His voice - hear Him today, hear Him today; They who believe on His name shall rejoice; Quickly arise and away."
(adapted from Fanny J.Crosby)

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev.3:20).

APPENDIX

The Babylon Mystery Religion and Roman Catholicism Compared

27 Characteristics of the Babylonian Mystery Religion

1. The nativity of the sun, the birth of Tammuz, Dec.25th.
2. Midsummer festival held June 24th.
3. The assumption of Semiramis who became the mother goddess.
4. Mother goddess worshipped as the queen of heaven. Jer.7:16.
5. Cakes decorated for the goddess with a 'T' for Tammuz drawn on them. Jer.44:17,19.
6. 40 days fasting for Tammuz. Ezek.8:16.
7. Resurrection of Tammuz at Easter and procession of graven images during Holy Week.
8. Veneration of graven images of Baal, Ishtar, Tammuz and lesser gods of the heavens.
9. Belief of immortality of the soul and burning place of torment.
10. Doctrine of purgatory.

Jeremiah 7:18 "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."(KJV)

Jeremiah 44:15-19 "Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?"(KJV)

Judges 2:12,13 "And they forsook the LORD of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth."(KJV)

Judges 10:6 "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him."(KJV)

1Kings 11:5 "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites."(KJV)

2Kings 23:13 "And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for

Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.”(KJV)

Milcom is the Chaldean version of the name Moloch which means “king of the gods”. The first ‘king of the gods’ was Nimrod (known in archeology as Ninus), who was the originator of fire/sun worship. He, along with his wife, Semiramis, and father, Cush (also referred to as Bel or Baal), was responsible for building the tower of Babel. Astoreth was also a common object of worship, she was the original ‘queen of heaven’, or mother goddess. Her name means ‘the woman who made the encompassing wall’ and it refers to Nimrod’s wife, Semiramis.

The Babylonian system of worship revolved around the worship of Nimrod, Semiramis and the supposed reincarnation of Nimrod, Tammuz. (Although the character and attributes of Nimrod and his father, Cush, were often interchangeable within the various systems). All three are mentioned as being worshipped by the Babylonians and under different names by the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, in fact every system that strayed away from worshipping the true God followed the Babylonian system. Typically these worship systems included the use of incense; idols; and processions.

Jer.44:19 above refers to the use of incense, Judges 2:12 the making of idols. At Mount Sinai when the people rebelled Aaron fashioned a calf of gold, which represented the Egyptian god Apis, a mystical representation of Osiris, the Egyptian version of Nimrod. Likewise the tribe of Ephraim in Hosea 13:2 made calves to worship. Isa.46:7 tells us that they carried these idols in processions before setting them up to worship them.

Rev.17:5 refers to the ‘abominations’, or wickedness of modern Babylon’s following of other gods and verse 6 says that it will be ‘drunk with the blood of the saints’. This statement is paralleled in Daniel 7:21 & 25 where the last kingdom on earth before Christ comes to set up His kingdom is described. As this is also a description of the last religious power (vs.20/25) we may incorporate these verses within our identification of Mystery Babylon. Particularly vs.25:

Daniel 7:19-26 “Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in

Adam in the garden of Eden wondered if God would really be so strict over the eating of a piece of fruit. Adam found out that any sin is large enough to separate us from God. “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)

Christ said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil (perform perfectly). For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt.5:17-19)

Many claim that when Christ “fulfilled” the law he did away with it. Is this possible? This same word “fulfil” is used in Matt.3:15. Talking to John the Baptist Christ says, “thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness”. Did they do away with righteousness? Paul uses the same Greek word in Col.1:25, “to fulfil the word of God”, did he do away with the word of God?

Romans 6:23 tells us that “the wages of sin is death”, as long as we see death in the world we can be sure that there is sin. What is sin? 1 John 3:4 tells us that “sin is the transgression of the law”. Every death reminds us that the law of God still exists.

At the end of time there will be people living on this earth who are keeping God’s commandments. Described in Revelation ch.7 as the “144,000”, “having the seal of the living God” on their foreheads, no guile in their mouths, faultless before the throne of God (Rev.14:5). These are the ones who having the faith of Jesus and keeping the commandments of God, have the patience to endure to the end (Rev.14:12).

God has preserved His commandment-keeping people through the ages, the apostolic church, the church in exile, the Albigenses, Pasagini, Waldenses, Bohemians, S abbatarians, Moravians, Abyssinians, Taipings. Right down to the present-day Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists.

John the Revelator says, “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (Rev.18:4).

serve their Master and keep his Sabbath." EUSEBIUS'S "Ecclesiastical History", b,3, chap.5.

"From the Apostles time until the council of Laodicea, which was about the year 364, the holy observation of the Jews' Sabbath continued, as may be proved out of many authors: yea, notwithstanding the decree of the council against it." J.LEY "Sunday a Sabbath", p.164 (pub. London, 1640).

At Sinai, speaking of the Sabbath, God said, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." (Exod.31:17) What does "for ever" mean? One may suggest that it only refers to the Jews, to "Israel", but in Isaiah, speaking of "the new heavens and the new earth", the Lord says: "And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before me." (Isa.66:23).

Even in the earth made new, a place where there will be no night to divide the days (Rev.22:5), God's people will still be keeping the Sabbath day. Not just any day, but the seventh day, because "it is a sign", "hallow my Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord thy God." (Ezek.20:20).

Just as the wicked receive "the mark of the beast", so God's people receive "the seal of the living God" (Rev.7:2,3) and this seal, or mark, is received in their foreheads (Ezek.8:4). It may be as well to examine what the seal of God represents.

In worldly terms a seal is a mark of authority, often used by Kings and Emperors to denote their jurisdiction. For example, in England the seal of the Queen would give her name, title and dominion. Or, in other words: Elizabeth II (name), Queen (title) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (dominion):

If we apply the same pattern to the seal of God, where do we find His seal? In the middle of the commandments, in the Sabbath commandment. Name: "the Lord thy God"; title: creator "who made"; dominion: "the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them". (Exod.20:10,11). When God's people are sealed it is the keeping of the Sabbath that will signify them as His. Does it strike you as strange? Could it really be that God would insist on one specific day as opposed to another? Is He really that strict?

his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."(KJV)

There are four clauses to verse 25:

1. **Speak great words against the most High (blasphemies)**
2. **Wear out the saints of the most High (persecution)**
3. **Think to change times and laws.**
4. **Persecute the saints for a time, times and the dividing of time'.**

Let us put together what we have so far regarding the Mystery Babylon. It is (a) an organisation existing now (according to Daniel 7:27,28 and Rev.18-20 it exists until just before Christ's second coming). It is (b) religious and (c) following the Babylonian religious system. This means that it is using (d) incense; (e) idols; (f) processions; and has as its goddess (g) the 'Queen of heaven'. It (h) 'speaks' blasphemies; (i) persecutes God's people; and (j) has changed 'times and laws'.

To this must be added the 4th clause of Dan.7:25 which defines a time over which the dominion of this organisation over God's people must take place. If we are to define this power it must exactly fit all eleven points, not just some, but all.

Part Two - The Historical Background of Rev.17:5

“Modern Babylon and the Pontifex Maximus”

As previously mentioned all pagan religions can ultimately be traced back to Babylon as their source. The last great pagan religion/world power was ancient Rome, it was preceded by Greece, the Medo-Persian empire and Babylon. Daniel was in Babylon at the height of its power and even witnessed the change of power to the Medo-Persians. In verse 17 of chapter 7 Daniel is told that he is seeing the last kingdom (Rome) which is the same as the last kingdom of chapter 2.

In 63 b.c. Rome had conquered the world, and, in common with his predecessors, Julius Caesar took the title of Pontifex Maximus, denoting that he was head of the mystery religion in Rome. This title came from the Babylonian title of Supreme Pontiff, or Supreme Bridge-builder. It shows that the one holding the title is able to 'bridge' the gap between heaven and earth (originally this title applied to Nimrod as the first head of the mystery religion in Babylon). This title is preserved today in Hinduism where Gurus are referred to as Pontiffs, and the chief guru is supreme pontiff. Collins Dictionary defines the word Pontifex as being of Etruscan origin via Latin.

In 325 a.d. the Emperor Constantine took this title and all Roman emperors held it until 376 when Gratian, for Christian reasons, refused it. The title was next taken up in 378 by the Bishop of Rome, Damasus, who became simultaneously the Pontifex Maximus of the pagan religion and the most important bishop of the Christian church (due in part to the claim of apostolic succession. After the Roman Empire split in 395 the Bishop of Rome became eventually the effective head of the Western Empire. The Emperor often relied on the Bishop's arbitration and judgements in place of his own because of the Bishop's religious influence.

During the next century the Roman Empire became decadent and unwieldy, and soon land was being lost to the various tribes that were attacking it, which were the: Ostrogoths; Visigoths; Franks; Vandals; Suevi; Alamanni; Anglo-Saxons; Heruli; Lombards; and Burgundians. The reader will note that there were 10 main tribes, each of which founded its own kingdom, exactly corresponding with the horns of Daniel 7:20.

their teacher the Bible, or, unwilling to abandon the tradition of the Catholic Church, which enjoins the keeping of Sunday, and which they have accepted in direct opposition to their teacher, the Bible, consistently accept her in all her teachings. Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping of Sunday. Compromise is impossible."

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us." - 1 John 2:19

So here we see a sign or 'mark' of papal authority, the changing of the day of worship, which is in opposition to the Bible. "I know that whatever God does it shall be for ever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before him." - Ecc.3:14.

Since the creation week the Sabbath day was established as a memorial that God created "heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day". Throughout the Jewish dispensation the nation of Israel held the seventh day (yom hash-shab-bath) as a holy day of rest, even prior to Sinai (Exod.16:4,5,14-36). Jesus Himself kept the seventh day Sabbath (Luke 4:16) and declared Himself Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28).

The Apostolic church also kept this same day (Acts 13:14; 17:2; 18:4) and in Antioch, a Gentile city, Paul met with the Gentiles on the Sabbath day when "the whole city came together to hear the Word of God" (Acts 13:42,44). Even John on the isle of Patmos some 63 years after the crucifixion speaks of "being in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev.1:10), i.e. the seventh day (see Mark 2:28; Isa.58:13).

There are also testimonies about the early Christians: "There is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come." Josephus, quoted in M'CLATCHIE'S 'Notes and Queries on China and Japan', Vol.4, No.s 7,8 p.100.

Philo declared "the seventh day to be a festival, not of this or that city, but of the universe." *ibid.*, Vol.4, p.99.

"Then the patriarchal seed of Abraham fled to Pella, on the other side of the Jordan, where they found a safe place to refuge, and could

the Catholic "Doctrinal Catechism", p.174: "Q.- Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept? A.- Had she not such power...she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

The second from Thomas Enright, CSSR, President of the Redemptorist College, "Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverend obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church." (Feb.18th, 1884)

Most of the Protestant churches are already following the Mystery Babylon, without realising what they are doing. Many of them struggle vainly to justify Sunday worship from the Bible, but cannot. Over the last one hundred years the offer of \$1,000 has been repeated many times for anyone who can prove from the Bible that the day of worship was changed. It remains unclaimed.

In 1893 "The Catholic Mirror" the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons published a series of four editorials which were reprinted as a booklet under the title, "Rome's Challenge - Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?". On p.32, it says, "The pages of this brochure unfold to the reader one of the most glaringly conceivable contradictions existing between the practice and theory of the Protestant world, and unsusceptible of any rational solution, the theory claiming the Bible alone as the teacher, which unequivocally and most positively commands Saturday to be kept 'holy', whilst their practice proves that they utterly ignore the unequivocal requirements of their teacher, the Bible, and occupying Catholic ground for three centuries and a half, by the abandonment of their theory, they stand before the world today representatives of a system the most indefensible, self-contradictory, and suicidal that can be imagined....The arguments contained in this pamphlet are firmly grounded on the Word of God, and having been closely studied with the Bible in hand, leave no escape for the conscientious Protestant except the abandonment of Sunday worship and the return to Saturday, commanded by

In 493 the Heruli were conquered by the Ostrogoths, and in 534 the Roman general Belisarius vanquished the Vandals and followed that with a campaign against the Ostrogoths. They were finally ousted from power in 538, and never regained that power in spite of briefly re-occupying Rome in 540. In 533 the Emperor Justinian had legally recognised the Bishop of Rome as the "head of all the holy churches" and "holy priests of God" and with the removal of the Ostrogoth's siege of Rome in 538 the Pontifex Maximus was able to finally exercise his power. Since that time all the Popes have held the title of Pontifex Maximus as can be readily verified by referring to any of the coins struck by Popes, including the present incumbent, John Paul II.

Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) presented himself before the people wearing a breastplate and helmet and holding a sword aloft proclaimed: "There is no other Caesar, nor king, nor emperor than I, the sovereign Pontiff and successor of the Apostles." Augustine's doctrine of papal jurisdiction over the secular state was accepted by the 5th Ecumenical Council held in 553 and in 593 Pope Gregory I introduced the Babylonian-inspired teachings of purgatory; salvation by works; the sacrificial offerings of Christ (the mass); and financed the first church army.

The title of "Universal Bishop" for the bishop of Rome was made official in 707, and in 709 the kissing of popes' feet began. In 1845 A.H.Layard, a British architect, whilst excavating the Babylonian city of Nimrud found an obelisk depicting Jehu (1 Kings 19:16) following the Babylonian tradition of kissing the feet of the king. In this case Shalmaneser III, king of Babylon (2 Kings 17:3; 18:9). This obelisk is today on display at the British Museum in London. Again following the system for the priesthood first devised by the Babylonians, in 1074 Pope Gregory VII insisted on celibacy for all ordinands and in 1123 Calixtus II invalidated all clerical marriages.

At the risk of overwhelming the reader with evidence in this first area alone I feel it is necessary to present two more historical evidences of the adoption of the Babylonian system into the Christian church of the middle ages.

"Sacrificial System"

Firstly the adaption of the sacrificial system into the church during the 4th Lateran Council of 1215. With 1500 clergy in attendance among

the dogmas added to the church was that of transubstantiation i.e. that the substance of the bread (or wafer) and wine are transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ at the consecration of the Eucharist. This is later ratified at the Council of Trent in 1563 where Canon 1 reads: "If any man shall deny that the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore entire Christ, are truly, really and substantially contained in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist; and say that He is only in it as a sign, or in a figure - let him be accursed!"

Consider this along with an earlier pronouncement from the Council of Trent in 1545, that anyone believing that salvation comes from faith alone in Christ or that Christ made perfect atonement at Calvary would be excommunicated. Paul wrote in 60 a.d., "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." - Romans 5:10,11. Paul wrote that Christ had made perfect atonement at Calvary, yet Pope Paul III denied this fact in favour of the Babylonian system of constant sacrifice. Because of the belief that Christ did not make perfect atonement for our sins it then became necessary to instigate the system of masses so that there may be a continual performance of sacrifice to atone for sin. At any given time somewhere in the world a mass is being held and Christ is being sacrificed anew.

The doctrine of transubstantiation brings out the second point. The wafer used in the mass becomes Christ when the priest blesses it, therefore the priest not only controls Christ, but also creates Christ. According to the reasoning of the church the priest controls Christ, so is of an equal or greater power to Christ. From this reasoning comes the ability to forgive sin. If Christ is able to forgive sin, and the priest can create and control Christ, then the priest also is able to forgive sin.

"Burning incense"

Burning incense, I do not propose to discuss this aspect as it speaks for itself. If anyone should venture into a Roman Catholic church they will see the incense being used liberally every day.

"Processions"

Processions, are a well known part of the yearly enactments of

Part Three

- The Relevance of this Warning to us Today

Let us be honest, this is a sad story to relate. It is, after all, the story of the corruption and decline of God's church. Yet it is not God's church now. It is a corrupt and degenerate church, described as a drunken whore in the book of Revelation. Was this the inheritance of the Apostolic church, the church of the pentecost that swept through the 1st. century. Enduring the terrible persecution of that century only to emerge as the persecuting power of the Dark Ages and beyond.

This is the church that the Protestant churches want to reunite with, and in doing so what will be the price in compromise that they will have to pay? The 1870 doctrine of papal infallibility states that when a pope speaks 'ex cathedra' he is "possessed of that infallibility wherewith the divine Redeemer wished His Church should be endowed in defining doctrine concerning faith and morals; and that for this cause such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irrefragable of themselves and not because of the consent of the church."

Unfortunately there has never been a definitive list of 'ex cathedra' statements (although it should be noted that the 20th century John XXIII said, "I am not infallible. I would only be infallible if I spoke 'ex cathedra', which I do not intend to do"). The only two that are certainly known are: the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary of 1854, and; the 1950 doctrine of the assumption of Mary (within which it was not clarified if she died before her assumption or not).

Ecumenicists should take note that full communion with Rome will entail whole-hearted acceptance of these doctrines for which there is not one shred of scriptural evidence. Yet this will not prove to be the sticking point some would think it to be as nearly all Protestant churches have already fully embraced a Catholic doctrine which has no scriptural basis.

Revelation 17:5 mentions that the mystery Babylon will be a "mother of harlots", so who are the daughters? They are those churches who compromised their doctrines by accepting the mark of papal authority, the "mark of the beast" (Rev.13:17).

What is the "mark"? Let me repeat two quotations, the first from

Vatican state in 1929, for 131 years its power was severely diminished and it had no claim to being a secular state, it was reduced to only ecclesiastical power. Just as the Bible foretold, the papal church held sway from 538 to 1798, a period of 1,260 years, no more, no less.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

So now let us compare our 11 points with what we have reviewed.

(a) An organisation existing now: yes, the Catholic church certainly is in existence today, and claiming a large following.

(b) Religious: yes.

(c) Following the Babylonian religious system: yes, confessions, the mass, 40 days of fasting, purgatory, the rosary and many others (See appendix).

(d) Use of Incense: yes.

(e) Worshipping Idols: yes, statues of saints, Mary and Jesus are all bowed down to and worshipped.

(f) Processions: yes, the processions of statues, sacraments and the Sedia Gestoria.

(g) Worshipping the 'Queen of Heaven': yes, this title was given to Mary in 1965

(h) 'Speaks' blasphemies: yes, doctrine of infallibility, Pope as Christ, Pope as God.

(i) Persecutes God's people: yes, the Inquisition.

(j) Changed 'times and laws': yes, change of the Sabbath, and removal of 2nd Commandment.

(k) Time of duration ('time, times and dividing of time'): yes, 538-1798 a.d., 1,260 years.

ceremony within the Catholic church. The parading of statues, sacraments and religious artifacts are so well documented and so readily seen, it hardly seems necessary to mention them here. However, perhaps it would be of use to supply some historical information.

According to 'Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics' an idol of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar was carried with great pomp and ceremony from Babylon to Egypt in the 15th century B.C. The ceremonies were typical of many of the old religions, and in some areas (Italy, Central and South America, India) these ceremonies have either survived or been adapted into the Catholic church. In India during the feast of Kum Mela the Pontiffs of Hinduism are carried with great ceremony, covered by canopies, escorted by armed guards and shaded by feathered fans.

In ancient Egypt, as Wilkinson relates, the same ceremonies took place: "Having reached the precincts of the temple, the guards and royal attendants selected to be the representatives of the whole army enter the courts...Military bands played the favourite airs of the country; and the numerous standards of the different regiments, the banners floating on the wind, the bright lustre of arms, the immense concourse of people, and the imposing majesty of the lofty towers of the propylaea, decked with their bright-coloured flags, streaming above the cornice, presented a scene seldom, we may say, equalled on any occasion, in any country. The most striking feature of this pompous ceremony was the brilliant cortege of the monarch, who was either borne in his chair of state by the principal officers of state, under a rich canopy, or walked on foot, overshadowed by a rich flabella and fans of waving plumes." From WILKINSON'S 'Egyptians', Vol.V, pp.285,286.

Now let us read an eye-witness account of the pope proceeding on the papal chair, the Sedia Gestoria: "The drums were heard beating without. The guns of the soldiers rung on the stone pavement of the house of God, as, at the bidding of their officer, they grounded, shouldered and presented arms. How unlike the Sabbath - how unlike religion - how unlike the suitable preparation to receive a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus! Now, moving slowly up, between the two armed lines of soldiers, appeared a long procession of ecclesiastics, bishops, canons and cardinals, preceding the Roman pontiff, who was borne on a gilded chair, clad in vestments resplendent as the sun. His

bearers were twelve men clad in crimson, being immediately preceded by several persons carrying a cross, his mitre, his triple crown, and other insignia of his office. As he was borne along on the shoulders of men, amid the gaping crowds, his head was shaded or canopied by two immense fans made of peacocks' feathers, which were borne by two attendants." from BEGG'S Handbook of Popery', p.24.

The similarities of the two accounts are striking, all the more so when Catholic writers admit that certain elements were adopted from the Egyptians, e.g. the *fabelli*, or fans, of feathers (see ARADI'S *The Popes - The History of How They are Chosen, Elected and Crowned*, p.108). Even the number of men chosen to carry the chair is exactly the same. There can be little doubt that the one system is but an extension of the other.

"Idol worship"

Idol worship is an interesting aspect of modern faiths. It is expressly forbidden by the second commandment, Exodus 20:4-6 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

It is very hard to argue against such a plain command, the seriousness of which is clearly shown in the reasons God gives for not having idols. As was mentioned earlier, throughout the history of the Jewish nation the use of idols immediately followed apostasy, or turning away from the true system of worshipping God. It is impossible to misinterpret this commandment yet the use of idols in Catholic churches cannot be denied. How then can they defend the use against what the Bible says. Well, the Catholic answer might well be: "What does the Bible say?"

Here quoting from "A Catechism of Christian Doctrine", revised edition 1971 printed by the Catholic Truth Society. Question 188, p 32, "What is the second Commandment?": "The second Commandment is, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.'" Reference to the Catholic Bible will also verify this answer, the shocking truth is that in the Catholic religion the second Commandment has been erased!

other words a year (time), 2 years (times), and 1/2 a year (half, or dividing of, a time).

What does this mean? That the saints, God's church, would be persecuted, given into his hand, for 1260 days? Yet we have seen that the Inquisition alone continued for hundreds of bloody years. We have still a further stage to go to understand this time prophecy.

"This shall be a sign to the house of Israel...thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee a day for a year." (Ezek.4:3-6)

"After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise." (Num.14:34). Here we are given the principal to use in interpreting days in prophecy, "a day for a year". Now our 'time, times and dividing of time', or 1260 days, becomes 1260 years. How does this fit in with the historical facts?

We have already established that the church of Rome was only able to exercise its power after the cessation of the siege of Rome by the Ostrogoths in 538 a.d. Counting 1260 years from that date we come to 1798. What is significant about that date as far as the papacy is concerned? Let us read from the "Pictorial History of the World", p.756:

"(Napoleon) Bonaparte now invaded the papal territories, and rapidly overran them. He had orders from the (French) Directory to destroy the papal government, but, on his own responsibility, he disregarded these instructions, and concluded with the helpless pontiff the peace of Talentino on the 19th of February, 1797. Upon the return of Bonaparte from Italy, General Berthier was ordered by the directory to carry out its instructions respecting the papal government, which Bonaparte had declined to execute. The people of the papal states were thoroughly discontented. Berthier marched to Rome, and was received as a deliverer. He proclaimed the restoration of the Roman republic; made Pope Pius VI a prisoner, and stripped him of all his property...and removed him to France, where he was detained in captivity." If Napoleon had captured the pope in 1797, prophecy would not have been fulfilled. It was left to Berthier in 1798 to take the pope prisoner and destroy papal power after the exact number of years prophesied in the Biblical books of Daniel and Revelation. "...the scriptures cannot be broken." (John 10:35). Although the papacy regained control of the

the world. Christ said, "come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt.11:28)

Unfortunately for many Christians today the Sunday sabbath consists of 2 hours at church and back to the cares and worries of the world. For many people there is very little about Sunday which is special. "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt.15:9).

"They shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time"

In the last clause of Daniel 7:25 we must once again understand the correct meaning of this word 'time'. Previously we had referred to the Chaldee word zem'awn, now, however, we find another Chaldee word being used, id-dawn', meaning 'a set time, technically, a year' (see Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary entry number 5732). As this clause of Daniel 7:25 is obviously referring to a set time we must interpret this word in its technically exact sense as 1 year. This also corresponds with the use of the Hebrew word shaw-naw', meaning 'a year (as a revolution of time)', as found in Daniel 11:13. Although this word is translated as 'years' in the King James Version a margin reference notes the Hebrew as 'the end of times, even years'. (See also Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary entry number 8141 and Daniel 4:16,23,25,32).

So we can look at this phrase again as "They shall be given into his hand until a time (year) and times (years) and the dividing of time (year)". This phrase is also found in the New Testament's great book of prophecy, Revelation. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." (Rev.12:14) As was shown previously a woman in prophecy represents a church, in this case God's church which is being persecuted.

This verse is again similar to a previous verse: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days." (Rev.12:6). Now according to the Jewish calendar the year consists of 12 months each of 30 days, so a year consists of (12x30) 360 days. If we divide this number of days into 1260 we get (1260/360) 3 1/2. Or in

This was, of course, an act of necessity, all Catholic churches contain idols that are bowed down to as a part of the ceremonials of worship. It was necessary that if members of the church started to read their Bibles they should not find out the error of reverencing pieces of stone and wood. Many idols, or statues, of Jesus are found in Catholic churches but they are often outnumbered by the many statues of the "Blessed Virgin Mary" (BVM).

It was at the Third Ecumenical Council held at Ephesus under Theodosius II and Valentinian III in 431 a.d., when Mary's rise to prominence began. 500 bishops attended the Council and there they approved Cyril of Alexandria's teaching that Mary could be called the "Mother of God". Then, 20 years later at the General Council of Chalcedon the doctrine of "Mariolatry" was officially introduced. Mary was seen as a co-intercessor, and prayers were presented to Christ through her. She became the mediator in the same way that the Queen of Heaven was the mediator in the Babylonian system. To pagan idol-worshippers the mother-goddess was (and still is today) a familiar deity.

"Queen of Heaven"

This role of the BVM as the intercessor is still held very strongly today. For example, in 1965 at the Vatican II Council Pope Paul VI pronounced that the church's virgin was now the "Mother of the Church" and in so doing moved Christ further away from His mediatorial role. Mary was also given a new title, and she has now officially become the "Queen of Heaven".

In effect the removal of the second Commandment has paved the way for idolatry of the worst kind, which is nothing less than a revival of the old methods:

"And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, 'Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?' - Acts 19:35. Diana was not only a mother-goddess, but also the "queen of heaven".

"Speaking blasphemies"

What does it mean to blaspheme? This word comes from the Greek [blasphemos] via Latin and came into English usage in the 14th century. It means "to show contempt or disrespect for God, or sacred things, especially in speech." How can we now match this prophetic quality?

The apostle Paul quoted from Psalm 14 when he wrote in his letter to the Romans (chapter 3 verse 10) that "there is none who are righteous, no, not one." However, this statement was contradicted by Pope Gregory when, in 1074, he stated: "The Roman Church was founded by God alone; the Roman pope alone can with right be called universal; he alone may be judged by no one; the Roman church has never erred, nor will it err in all eternity."

This is, of course, only a statement made by a man, as good or bad as any other man, and so it remained until 1545. The Council of Trent in that year ruled that "tradition" (human teachings) is of as great authority as the Bible. What is the authority of the Bible? 2 Timothy 3:16 says: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God", does the ruling of the Council of Trent then mean that those who compiled the "traditions" of the church, the "founding fathers", speak as God? God is perfect, unable to make mistakes, does this apply to those who hold exalted office in His church?

The church's Canonical law terms it thusly: "Christ entrusted His office to the chief Pontiff...but all power in heaven and in earth had been given to Christ...therefore the chief Pontiff, who is His vicar, will have His power." (Roman Canon Law, 1556 ed., Extravagantes Communes, col. 29, b.1, ch.1)

On the 18th of July 1870, Pope Pius IX published a Bull called "Pastor Aeternus" which declared that the pope is infallible, 'supreme' and above any ecumenical council of bishops. With the publishing of this doctrine the popes were placed in as high an authority as God, notwithstanding an earlier statement by Pope Adrian VI. Speaking of Pope John XXIII who, in 1415, had 54 criminal charges brought against him, Adrian VI said, "If by the Roman faith you mean the head, it is without doubt that he can err." What do we make of such statements? Was Adrian VI speaking infallibly when he said that the popes are not infallible? And what of John XXIII, who was found guilty of 5 charges (the lesser ones) of piracy, rape, murder, incest and sodomy? Pope Leo XIII seems to have agreed with Pius IX when he wrote his encyclical letter on June the 20th 1894 which stated, "We hold upon this earth the place of God almighty." So did the writer in "The Catholic National" of July 1895 who wrote: "The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ himself, hidden under the veil of flesh."

194. How are we to keep Sunday holy? We are to keep Sunday holy by hearing Mass and resting from servile works.

195. Why are we commanded to rest from servile works? We are commanded to rest from servile works that we may have time and opportunity for prayer, going to the Sacraments, hearing instructions, and reading good books."

Now another problem creeps in, the question of which day is the Sabbath. The catechism says Sunday, whilst the Bible said "the seventh day". Ignoring all other arguments we could just consider the Jews, the original recipients of the written 10 Commandments at Mount Sinai, who worship on the seventh day, Saturday, and call it God's Sabbath day, even today. Which day is God's day?

In answer to this question I shall quote a Roman Catholic theologian, Thomas Enright, CSSR, President of the Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Mo. "Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverend obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church." (Feb.18th, 1884)

From the Roman Catholic "Doctrinal Catechism", p.174: "Q.- Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept? A.- Had she not such power...she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

So the actual day was changed from the seventh to the first, and so was the usage of the day. Regarding the purpose of the Sabbath day God said that on it we should bear no burdens (Jer.17:21), do no buying or selling (Neh.10:31; 13:15) in fact do no work (Exod.20:10). Part of the reason for doing this was that we should not lose sight of the fact that it was God who created "the earth, the sea, and all that in them is". In other words by remembering the Sabbath day we keep creation in our minds rather than consider the theory of evolution. Also we should be keeping a Holy day, not just a couple of hours break from

draw and quarter it. We would impale it and hang it up for the crows to eat. We would tear it with pincers, and fire it with hot irons. We would fill it with molten lead, and sink it in a thousand fathoms of hell fire." This was the Catholic attitude towards Protestantism less than one hundred years ago. In light of the continuing existence of the Holy Office is there any reason to suppose the attitude has changed just because it is not spoken of any more?

"Think to change times and laws"

In approaching the next clause of Daniel 7:25 we will refer back to the "Catechism of Christian Doctrine" and the Bible. But first let us look at the word times' as used here. This word is translated from the original Chaldean word zem'awn which means: appointed occasion, season, time. (See Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary entry number 2166.) As will be noted from the following the meaning of 'appointed occasion' is probably the most apt here.

Now let us read Exodus 20:8-11. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Here we are reading the fourth commandment, it is the longest commandment of the ten and very specific in its instruction. Of course as we noted earlier, due to the removal of the second commandment, if we go to the fourth commandment of the catechism we will find "Honour thy father and thy mother", so in fairness we should compare it with the third.

"Catechism of Christian Doctrine", p.33, question 192: "What is the third Commandment? The third Commandment is, 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day'."

The first thing one notices is the brevity of the Catholic version of this Commandment. What was four verses of over eighty words has been cut down to just eight. Let us continue reading...

"Question 193. What are we commanded by the third Commandment? By the third Commandment we are commanded to keep Sunday holy.

From Ferraris' Ecclesiastical Dictionary (a Roman Catholic work) article titled "The Pope": "The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as were God, and the vicar of God...the Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom." Surely this is the Papacy speaking "great words against the most High".

Having quoted from Daniel 7:25 again, let us look at another clause in that verse, remember all the points must apply for fulfillment of prophecy.

"Persecute the saints of the most High"

Since the first Church Army was organised and financed by Pope Gregory I in 593 there was the possibility that the church would be tempted to use force to convert' new members to the faith. Similarly there is also the temptation within any religion that may lay claim to an exclusivity of salvation to justify persecution of those who do not hold the same tenets of belief. Certainly the Church of Rome was born through bloodshed and war as previously noted.

Yet, once established one would expect God's true church to put aside all forms of prejudice and coercion, especially considering the bloody persecution suffered by the 1st century church. Unfortunately the prejudices remained, during the years 778-840 Archbishop Agobard wrote five anti-jewish pamphlets. Of which it has been said that "all the anti-semitism of the Middle Ages has its source". In 848 at the Council of Meaux, canonical decisions were made against the Jews and in the early years of the 11th century the first general massacres of Jews took place at Rouen, Orleans, Limoges, Mainz and Rome.

In themselves, although contrary to the Christian theology of freedom of belief, these events do not fulfill Daniel 7:25 as the verse applies specifically to the saints, or God's true believers. But in 1096, the year of the first crusade begun by Urban II, when Jerusalem was captured supposedly to free Palestine from Moslems the church also caused massacres of Jews, Orthodox and dissident Christians throughout Europe. Here the Christian church had turned upon itself. Those who disagreed with papal rule were not met with reasoned argument from scripture or

a loving admonishment from a brother-in-Christ. The 'sword of God' was put down and the sword of steel picked up.

In 1179 the Third Lateran Council was called to condemn the disobedience and teachings of the Waldenses and Albigenses. The Council ordered their elimination by the sword. These churches were descended from the early Christian church and had never accepted the authority of the Roman church or its pope, and maintained 'primitive' Bible-based christianity. Until the 9th century they had enjoyed the protection of the Lombards, who, likewise, had rejected the Roman church's authority. For the Roman church one of the biggest problems with the Waldenses and Albigenses was that they had their own pure copies of the scriptures. The Roman church's attitude to copies of the Bible being freely available may be summed up very clearly in the following papal quote.

In 1079 Vratislaus (later king of Bohemia) asked Gregory VII's permission to translate the Bible into the local language. The pope replied: "It is clear to those who reflect often upon it, that not without reason has it pleased almighty God that holy scripture should be a secret in certain places, lest, if it were plainly apparent to all men, perchance it would be little esteemed and be subject to disrespect; or it might be falsely understood by those of mediocre learning, and lead to error."

Many crusades were led against the 'people of the valleys', the Waldenses, Bohemians, Albigenses and others. In 1184 at the Council of Verona, Pope Lucius III inaugurated the "Holy" Inquisition against all heretics and all dissidents or non-conformists. Europe became awash with the blood of those faithful to the gospel, none were spared, men, women and even babes in arms were put to the sword or burnt. We tend to think of the Inquisition as something that happened in the 'Dark Ages', but the sad truth is that it has survived into modern times.

In 1808 an officer of Napoleon's army during the Spanish conquest forced his way into a Dominican monastery in Madrid. Although it was denied the troops found the place to be the home of an Inquisition torture-chamber. Concealed under the floor were chambers full of prisoners, all naked, some insane, in a state that shocked even the battle-hardened soldiers. 5 years later in 1813 the Inquisition was finally suppressed in Spain, only to be re-introduced the following year by Pope Pius VII for 'blasphemy, immorality, disrespectful attitude towards the church, non-participation in its festivals, neglect of its fasts, and espe-

cially abandonment of the faith'. At least in 1816 Pius VII did forbid the use of torture at the tribunals, but the Inquisition still continued for another 20 years.

In 1856 by edict of Pius IX 'excommunications, confiscation, banishment, imprisonment for life, and secret execution in heinous cases' were still permitted. In Papal States such 'crimes' as eating meat or drinking milk on fast days and reading proscribed books merited imprisonment, and young boys and girls could be excommunicated for not reporting these crimes of their parents. As late as 1870 political offenders were tried by the Santa Consulta before priests, with no defence lawyers allowed and no confrontation with witnesses. When found guilty they were put into prisons to suffer the most appalling conditions.

The Inquisition has never been denounced by Rome, neither has Rome apologised for what became over the following centuries the most horrible system of torment, murder and cruelty that has ever afflicted the imagination of mankind. The Christian church numbers over 55,000,000 believers martyred at the hand of the Roman Catholic church. Yet perhaps one of the most shocking things is that the Inquisition has never been officially closed. Even today the 'Holy Office' still exists. Is it possible that its activities could ever be revived?

I would not dare to write the following if it were not for the fact that the authority quoted is such a high one. In 1965 immediately after the Vatican II Council, Pedro Arrupe, the Supreme General of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), announced the following: "It is time for the new and final purification of the church in preparation for the New Age Kingdom".

In 1912 The Western Watchman (a Catholic periodical) printed the following: "You cannot excite any pity in our souls by whining accounts of Catholic atrocities in the 17th century. We have never written a line in extenuation or palliation of the Inquisition. We never thought it needed a defense."

In 1983 Catholic tribunals were set up to record the names and activities of those unfaithful to the church. I repeat, the office of the Inquisition still exists today, if the Catholic church had the power that she enjoyed previously would it be an active office? Is there any other reason to keep the office open other than to use it?

The Western Watchman, Dec.24th 1908: "Protestantism—we would