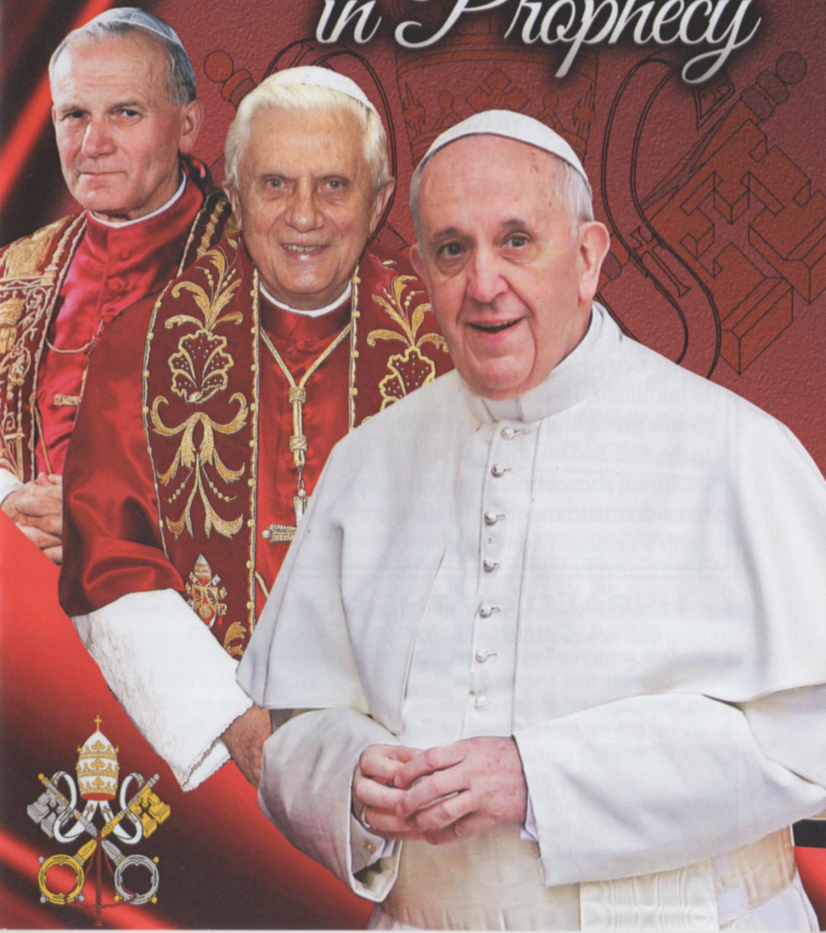


The Papacy *in Prophecy*



THE Bible clearly teaches that the divine purpose revolves around the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth. The drama that unfolded 2,000 years ago in the city of Jerusalem will soon be replayed upon earth. But this time the personality will not be a "carpenter's son," a "meek and mild" teacher of Nazareth, a man prepared to suffer the ignominy of a cruel and vengeful mob. When the Saviour of mankind appears for the "second" time (cp. Hebrews 9:28), he will complete the purpose of his heavenly Father to rid this world of its evil, bloodshed and violence, and establish the glorious Kingdom of God on earth. Jesus Christ will appear as the "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (Revelation 17:14), as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (ch. 5:5), with divine authority to "execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jeremiah 23:5). *This is the second stage of God's plan of salvation, and will vitally affect the way of life of every living being.* No longer will man be allowed to exert wicked dominance over his fellows. Good and wise laws will be proclaimed throughout the earth, requiring mankind to respond to God's precepts and principles in life. *But when will Jesus Christ appear?* There is clear evidence that his return is imminent. In fact, of the many Bible prophecies concerning events preceding his second coming, it appears not one remains to be fulfilled. Certain dramatic events, which have recently occurred, show conclusively that this world is on the eve of the most dramatic moment in all history: the majestic presence of earth's greatest Monarch!

HERALD OF THE COMING AGE

A Christadelphian Publication

DECLARING THE TRUTH OF THE SCRIPTURES REVEALED FOR THE SALVATION
OF THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO EXAMINE THE CLAIMS OF GOD'S WORD;
AND PRESENTING THE GLORIOUS MESSAGE OF THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM ON EARTH.



Edited by G.E. Mansfield,
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THE PAPACY IN PROPHECY

The World's Largest Religious Organisation

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest religious organization in the world. In 2010 it had over a billion adherents, about 500,000 priests, nearly a million nuns, some 4000 Bishops, over 130 Cardinals, with 40,000 deacons and about 135,000 religious schools with nearly 50 million students (*CARA published data, 2010*).

The membership of this huge church comprises nearly 20% of the estimated population of the world, and its influence is on the increase. For example: due to the Church's policy on family planning the growth of population of Catholic countries is overwhelming. In Catholic Latin America, it is assessed that the increase in population is at an average rate of 3.2% every year, as compared with 2% in India. This means that in Latin American countries the average birth rate is between forty and fifty per thousand, the highest birth rate in the world. The populations of these countries are increasing by the millions. In 1966 the population of South America was assessed at 120 million; but today it is in excess of 300 million! The vast majority being classified as Catholic.

Head of this vast and powerful community is the Pope. Once a Pope is appointed by the conclave of the Cardinals who claim to be guided in their choice by the Holy Spirit, he exercises complete and absolute authoritative power.

*"How many
divisions does the
Pope command?"
— Stalin's
celebrated
response when he
contemptuously
swept aside the
opinion of the
Papacy as of
little concern.*



Pope
Benedict

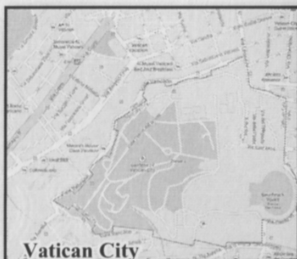
Everything is subject to his decree, including the Foreign Policy and the Economics of the Organisation. Although he listens to his advisers and hearkens to their counsel, the Pope's decision is absolute in every regard: doctrinal, political, and financial. What he decides becomes the policy and law of the Church, for he is deemed by the decree of 1870, to be infallible in such matters. As his decisions can affect the attitude of some one billion people, they must have a profound effect upon world history.

Therefore, Catholicism is more than a religious organization: it is also a political one. It rules the tiniest country in the world, called the Vatican State, but because of its following it is among the most influential of powers.

Vatican State is a tiny tract of territory in Rome, Italy. A mere 108 acres, it is a landlocked and walled enclave within the capital of Italy; a mere 1.035 kilometres (1,132 yards) in length and 0.742 kilometres (812 yards) across; but this little stretch of territory gives status and temporal power to the Holy See, the authorities court which has episcopal jurisdiction of the Catholic Church in Rome and with diplomatic representation exercised through the offices of the Secretariate of State.

The influence of this huge organization, therefore, can govern the future. The fall of the Marcos régime in the Philippines in 1986 was directly due to its influence, for some 85% of Philipinos are Catholics. The attitude and recommendations of the Church to its members during the Marcos crisis had widespread impact. And obviously, if Catholicism could bring about a change of Government there, it can dominate elsewhere in trends and politics, exercising a profound effect upon the course of history. Indeed it has done so.

In his book, *Murder in the Vatican*, Avro Manhattan writes: "Thanks to such global influence, a new Pope, by creating, dissolving or neutralizing alliances, can balance or unbalance world equilibrium. The support or opposition of a Pope, therefore, is of vital concern to any major group of nations. Thanks to the fact, that mankind today has become global minded, the influence of the Catholic Church has become global. That spells the reality that her influence can encompass,



besides the Christian regions, also the Islamic, Hinduist, Buddhist ones, all over the earth. Because of that, the Vatican, or rather the current monarchical conception of the papacy, has become a world superpower, and it is treated as one. As a result, the Pope is a world potentate. The paramouncy of his policies, consequently, must be taken with the same gravity as with those formulated by the USA and by Russia".

The Most Travelled Pope

Recent popes have travelled extensively, seeking to extend the influence of the Church. But the late Pope John Paul 11 exceeded them all in that regard. He was the most travelled pope in history, constantly on the move. This, combined with his charismatic personality, not only made him a popular visitor to any country, Democratic and Socialistic alike, but assisted in strengthening and extending the power of the Church.

As a State as well as a Church, the Papacy has experienced reverses as well as enjoying successes. Prior to 1870, the Pope exercised domination over half of Italy. But in 1870 he lost his temporal, autocratic power when the rebel Garibaldi seized authority in Italy, and unified the country by annexing the Papal States. Stripped of temporal power the Pope became "a prisoner in the Vatican" without political authority. However, in 1929 the Papacy was granted territory in Italy by a Concordat signed by Mussolini. This restored temporal power to the Pope, and the Vatican State came into being. Since then the Papacy has sought to extend its influence, both politically as well as religiously. Freed of the shackles of the previous restrictions, the popes have travelled throughout the world, on that mission.

There would be nothing wrong with the Papacy seeking to extend its influence *if* it proclaimed Bible Truth. But though the Church claims to be christian in concept, we respectfully affirm that, in fact, its doctrines are anti-christian. Therefore, its billion adherents are travelling a road that leads to an eternal abiding place in hell: a biblical term denoting the grave.

Religious Decline Predicted in The Bible

The Bible prophetically warned that there would develop within Christendom an apostate system that would dominate the majority of so-called believers, jeopardizing their eternal salvation.

The apostle Paul warned: "*Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*" (Acts 20: 28-30).

Again: "*The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils [demons, imaginary spirits]; speaking lies in hypocrisy...*

forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats..." (1Timothy 4:1-3).

Christendom at large is sadly astray from the teachings of the Apostle and the Bible. Such ideas as the theory of an immortal soul, heaven-going at death, a Trinitarian God who is supposed to be both three and yet one; a devil with superhuman power tempting weak, mortal folk to do wrong, as taught by Protestant and Papal churches alike, are completely astray from the Bible. They form the pattern of doctrinal error that unites them as one, fulfilling the prophecy of the apostle Paul as mentioned above. Apostasy, therefore is not limited to Catholics.

Consider the ordination of women to preside over the celebration of Communion as now permitted by the Church of England, the Episcopal Church of Christ of USA and other denominations. This is entirely opposed to the express teaching of the Bible (see 1Timothy 2:11-12). Then there is the toleration by the Church of England of such heretics as the Bishop of Durham who rejected the physical resurrection of Christ, but was still allowed to officiate. Others deny the doctrine of the Kingdom of God on earth, when Christ will visibly reign from Jerusalem over a world of peace, as is clearly presented in the Bible. Such churches ignore the saving truths of Bible teaching, whilst Christadelphians claim to have revived the original apostolic doctrines of the Bible.

How Error Triumphed Over the Truth

In fulfilment of the predictions of the Bible, the original apostolic faith was first opposed, and then every attempt made to crush it by the Church.

In the fourth century after Christ, Constantine the Great, Emperor of Rome, decided to use the growing body of Christian opinion as a stepping-stone to world power. The Church was officially recognised by the Roman Government: Christianity became State-sponsored. It was not the Christianity of the Bible, however, but a perverted form of the original faith. A few people still clung tenaciously to the original beliefs,



but as their testimony embarrassed those in power, they were ruthlessly persecuted, and every effort made to suppress them. A vigorous censorship was imposed on all doctrine. People had to believe and think in conformity with what the official body

taught. The arms of Rome were used not to destroy the enemy of the frontier, but to crush conscientious citizens of the State because of their religious scruples.

This commenced a long history of persecution, in which a Church based in Rome, claiming to be Christian, condemned and executed thousands, whose only crime was their determination to follow Christ according to their conscience, at the cost of their lives if need be. A ruthless and tyrannical system tried brutally to repress all criticism or opposition. Men and women endured unspeakable torments, of which death itself was the least painful, rather than succumb to the dictates of the so-called priests of Christ. They were the heroes and heroines of the Dark Ages who matched moral courage against the threats and violence of Rome. And though all whom Rome persecuted, did not hold Bible Truth in its purity, there always have been those "few" (Luke 12:32) from the days of the apostles to the present age, who have kept the light of Truth shining brightly amid the prevailing darkness of ignorance and clerical error.

The evidence of history supports what the Bible predicted and warned against: that false teaching would be superimposed again upon the Christian religion. The historian Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, traces the development of Catholicism out of the decline of the original doctrines of the apostles.

He recorded, as is true, that the basic fundamental doctrine of early Christianity, which Christadelphians today proclaim, is the teaching of Christ's second advent. Christ is to return personally and visibly, to put down "*all rule, authority and power*" and to establish a new world order on earth (Acts 1:11; 1Corinthians 15:24). This will involve tremendous political and social changes. Instead of national anarchy and international antagonism as today, there will be one universal rule (Daniel 2:44; Zechariah 14:9). Instead of mankind looking to Moscow, Washington, London or Rome, for a political or religious lead, Christ's law will emanate from Jerusalem to regulate the social, moral, political, and ecclesiastical wellbeing of mankind. The prophet Isaiah declared: "*Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*" (Isaiah 2:2-4).

Instead of mankind living in rebellion against God's laws, as it does today, there will be manifested "glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men".

The millennial (thousand years) reign of Christ on earth (Revelation 20:6), is closely related to the hope of a resurrection — for nowhere

does the Bible teach that immortal souls find their reward in heaven. Instead Christ will raise from the dead and reward with eternal life those who have lived in accordance with his teaching (Revelation 22:12; 1Corinthians 15:20-23, 52-54). They will then be appointed his associates in the governing of the nations (Revelation 2:26; 5:9-10; 20:6). They will constitute an immortal aristocracy under an immortal king (Matthew 19:28), exercising divine authority over the mortal inhabitants of the earth (Psalm 22:28).

How different this is to the Papal doctrine of souls being purified by the fires and pains of purgatory; of a supernatural devil influencing weak humanity to sin and presiding over a hell of sulphuric flame; of sins being forgiven through the sale of indulgences; and other doctrines and practices that have disgraced the Church.

The original Christian beliefs were perverted by what history recognizes as the Catholic Church. The facts are recorded in the works of Edward Gibbon, who, though an agnostic, is acknowledged as an outstanding historian. In outlining the decline and perversion of the original apostolic teaching, he wrote: *"The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ... a joyful sabbath of a thousand years; when Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had revived, would reign upon earth... The assurance of such a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine..."*

Gibbon records that this teaching was gradually supplanted by error. He states: *"The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was first treated as a profound allegory, then was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism".*

Is the Church The Kingdom of God?

Catholicism teaches that instead of the Kingdom of God revived on earth by the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming, the Kingdom is already in existence and identifies it with the Church. Therefore its leader, the Pope, reigns as King, the Vicar of Christ and of God on earth. In 1870 the infallibility of the Pope was endorsed by the Church with the result that all that he enunciates officially (ex-cathedra) in doctrine is accepted as authoritative, as the voice of heaven, and so beyond dispute. To challenge it in any fundamental manner is to risk excommunication, to be anathematized by its priests, and consigned to hell.

It claims that the first Pope was the apostle Peter, and that to him

was granted divine authority such as the Church claims today. The Pope pretends to be custodian of the "keys of heaven", wresting this upon the statement of the Lord to Peter: "*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church [Greek: Ecclesia]; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it... And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven...*" (Matthew 16:18-19). The word "Peter" is a translation of the Greek *petros*, which signifies a rolling or movable stone; the word "rock" is from the Greek *petra* and denotes an immovable stone; thus the two words are quite different in meaning. The Lord did not say that he would build his community on Peter, but on the **confession of belief he had uttered**, and which is as an immovable rock: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*". It was this very confession that led to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus (Mark 14:61; Luke 22:67), and became the basis of true faith.

The Bible does not teach that Peter was bishop or pope of Rome, nor that he was infallible. In fact, it plainly sets forth the fallibility of all the apostles, including Peter, and records how on one occasion he was rebuked by Paul "*because he was to be blamed*" (Galatians 2:11). In fact, there is no evidence that Peter ever visited Rome, although the apostle Paul certainly did. We should place no confidence in prelate or pope, but search out for ourselves the saving truths of God's Word.

Roman Catholicism, as with most Protestant Churches refutes Peter's confession of faith. It teaches that Jesus Christ is the Second Person of a Trinity, and not the **Son** of God. But Christ never claimed equality with his Father. Instead he declared: "*My Father is greater than I; I can of myself do nothing*". Throughout Scripture, the subordinate status of the Son is stressed. For example, Paul, referring to the coming triumph of Christ on earth, when every enemy will be brought into subjection to his rule, states that even then he will continue to be in subjection to the Father, for, "*when... all things be put under him [Christ], it is manifest that He [God] is excepted, which did put all things under him [Christ]; and when all things shall be subdued unto him [Christ], then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him [God] that put all things under him [Christ], that God may be in all in all*" (1Corinthians 15:27-28).

Contrary to True Bible Teaching

The Bible clearly teaches: "*There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus*" (1Timothy 2:5).

Catholicism does not treat the Lord Jesus as a "man" in any regard. It depicts him either as a babe in the arms of Mary, or as "very God". The worship of Mary, nowhere advocated in the Bible, is paramount in Catholicism, and is favoured by the present Pope. In contrast, the Bible reveals the mother of the Lord as weak and human. It describes her as failing to comprehend the true mission of her son Christ Jesus,

and joining with other members of her family in an attempt to restrain him in his ministry (Mark 3:21, 31), causing him to gently rebuke her by saying: *"Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"* (Matthew 12:49-50).

The Catholic adoration of Mary, the mother of the Lord, has led it to deny other clear teaching of the Bible. For example, Catholicism teaches the immaculate conception of the Lord because of the inordinate adoration it pays to his mother; but this is inconsistent with a woman who inherited the common weakness of all humanity. Associated with this teaching is the claim that she bodily ascended into heaven; which even Protestantism rejects. The Roman Church also rejects the clear record of the Bible which, beyond dispute, shows that Mary had children other than the Lord (see Matthew 12:46; 13:55; Mark 6:3, etc).

Even the title of Pope is contrary to Bible teaching. It signifies *Father* and Christ specifically condemned the use of such religious titles: *"Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven"* (Matthew 23:9). In direct contradiction to this clear teaching, the Church encourages the use of such and further titles for its Chief Bishop and its other officials.

Did Peter Ever Visit Rome?

There is no Bible evidence at all that Peter ever visited Rome, much less that he was ordained an elder of the Christian Community in that city.

If he was Bishop of Rome, why did not Paul make mention of him as such when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans? It is significant that whereas extending personal greetings to many believers in that city whom he names (chapter 16), he makes no mention of Peter, the so-called Bishop of Rome! It is further significant that in this Epistle to believers in Rome, in which he outlines Christian belief and practice, there is not listed any distinguishing doctrine or practice of Roman Catholicism. He makes no mention of a pope, dispensations, pardons, indulgences, canonisations, pilgrimages, confessions, purgatories, masses, holy water, christenings, rosaries, and so forth! On the other hand, all these church additions were prominent in ancient pagan religions. In short, they have been borrowed from paganism and superimposed on Christianity by the Church, as Alexander Hislop shows in his book, *The Two Babylons*.

Babylon The Great: A Symbol Of The Papacy

It is inconceivable that the Bible which claims to be the revelation of

God, and of which at least a third is prophetic, should not make some reference to this system of so-called Christianity!

Indeed, the Book of Revelation, penned by the apostle John in approximately AD 96, unmistakably sets forth a prophetic outline of "things which must shortly come to pass" (Chapter 1:1); and that this includes ecclesiastical affairs as well as historical developments, is clearly obvious from the first three chapters which expound trends and proclaim warnings relating to "the seven churches" (more correctly, *ecclesias*) of Asia (Chapter 1:20; 2:1, etc). This last book of the Bible warns of the controversies that would disturb the communities claiming allegiance to Christ; and prophetically foretells the development of a system of ecclesiastical apostasy that would arise; and which can be clearly identified with Roman Catholicism and its associated religionists.

This is summarized in Revelation chapter 17. The apostle John is invited to view "the judgment of the great whore [harlot] that sitteth upon many waters" (verse 1). He is shown a vision of a woman seated upon a beast, arrayed in scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and fornications. She is given the title: "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (verse 5).



To understand the significance of this, it must be recognized that the Book of Revelation is a book of symbols. The message contained therein was "sent and signified" by Christ (chapter 1:1). The term "signified" denotes that its message is given in sign language or symbols. So the book describes stars falling from heaven; rivers drying up; a multiheaded beast that combines a leopard, bear, lion and dragon; a dragon, or crocodile, whose tail encircles a third of the stars of heaven and casts them on to the earth; and other symbols that can only be understood if their meanings is searched out.

Scattered throughout the book of Revelation are many explanations of symbols. For example, the unfaithful woman is first seen "sitting upon many waters" (verse 1), and the explanation is given that the waters represent "peoples, and multitudes, and nations" (verse 15), thus describing her universal influence.

From this it is obvious that "the whore" does not refer to a literal harlot, but to an unfaithful ecclesiastical system. In contrast, Paul

likened the faithful Christian community as “a chaste virgin” espoused to be figuratively married to Christ at his coming (2Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:6-8). If a faithful community can be represented as a “chaste virgin”, an unfaithful one would be illustrated as an unfaithful whore (see James 4:4). There was a group within some of the communities of believers in the first century, described as “that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess”, but who taught and seduced Christ’s servants to depart from the purity of the faith (Revelation 2:20). Actually, Jezebel was the name of a Phoenician queen, mentioned in the Old Testament, who seduced Israelites from the true worship; and the Book of Revelation, uses her name to describe an apostate sect which developed into the powerful apostate church clearly described in Revelation 17.

But can we be specific in identifying the Babylon of the book of Revelation with Rome? Yes we can, for that identification is given by the Bible itself. This explanation is: “The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (Revelation 17:18). The only city that reigned over the earth in the days of John the apostle was Rome, the metropolis of the Roman Empire. The identification of “Babylon the great” with the Papacy is clear and complete! No wonder that Catholicism forbids its members to read the Bible. Its true state in the light of God’s Word is there obvious to Bible students.

Political Aims

Having identified the Papacy in Bible prophecy, we now consider as to whether this system answers to the description given it in this chapter. The prophecy describes it as seeking universal political influence: “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”.

The reference to “fornication” is not literal but figurative. Rome is prepared to compromise with governments and authorities in order to extend her influence for personal gain. That is what is meant by the term. Before the Second World War, the Papacy first supported Hitler, then opposed him. Pope Pius XI described the brutal Italian Dictator Mussolini who bombed defenceless Ethiopia into submission, as “the man sent by providence”. Having wooed the Italian Fascist government, the Papacy gained rich rewards. These were summarized in the Lateran Treaty between Italy and the Papacy which was signed in the Lateran Palace, Rome, on 11th February, 1929 — in the same room in which Charlemagne had been the guest of Leo 111 over a thousand years earlier, when the historical Holy Roman Empire came into existence.

Under this treaty Italy agreed to the creation of the new State of Vatican City; a Financial Convention, which granted payments to the

Church for the loss of temporal powers; and the Concordat which gave the Vatican powers and privileges to administer its own special affairs.

Vast sums of money were paid into the Vatican treasury as a result; and the Papacy emerged once more governing a State, exercising tremendous political influence.

Since then Catholic political influence has increased, quite contrary to Christ's teaching of non-participation in political affairs. Many events of outstanding significance took place. The Pact of Rome was signed, and the European Common Market came into existence. This agreement unites the nations of western Europe into a common economic alliance, much the same as did the Holy Roman Empire in the time of Charlemagne (800 AD), which was overthrown following the French Revolution a thousand years later.

The Prophecy before us requires such a development. The "woman" named "*Babylon the Great*" is depicted seated upon a beast, which is said to have "*seven heads and ten horns*" (v. 3). The seven heads are explained as "*seven mountains, on which the whore sitteth*" (v. 9), once more identifying Rome which is built upon seven mountains. Indeed, during the time of the Roman Empire, it was depicted on medals as the "seven hilled city". The "horns" are described as "kings" or nations (v. 10). In other words, the chapter associates Roman Catholicism with a political union of nations in western Europe developed out of Rome. This will play a prominent part leading to Armageddon.

Ecumenical Movements

Revelation 17 also describes a union of ecclesiastical churches: "*BABYLON THE GREAT: THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*". The Church of Rome is described as a "mother church" united again with her "daughters". This implies a world union of churches that both Catholic and Protestant ecumenical organisations are trying to achieve. The Papacy has given itself to this project of unification of religion with great zeal. The former Pope went out of his way to encourage it, moving to co-operation with the Greek Catholic Church, Protestant clerical leaders and even Buddhists, Hindus, and Moslems.

Evangelisation of Christian principles is commendable if the basis is the Truth as set forth in God's Word. But unfortunately, that is not so in this instance. The object is power, authority and influence.

In reality, there is little difference in the teaching of Catholic and Protestant Churches. Gibbon, the historian writing in the 18th Century declared: "*During the ten centuries of blindness and servitude, Europe received her religious opinions from the oracle of the Vatican, and the same doctrines already varnished with the rust of antiquity was admitted without dispute into the creed of the Reformers who disclaimed the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff. The symbol of Chalcedon still triumphs*

in the Protestant churches..." (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 47). The "Synod of Chalcedon" was a meeting of Bishops held in AD451, that determined Church doctrine. The Protestants retained most of the doctrines previously accepted when they broke away from the Catholic Church on account of the Romish claiming of the infallibility of the Pope.

The attempt at unity today is succeeding! The leaders of churches once violently opposed to Catholicism now welcome a union with the system that they once went out to destroy. And the Pope's charismatic personality helps to make him amenable to all. Liberal "Protestants" welcomed the overtures of the Papacy. The National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches are energetically attempting to bridge the gulf that once existed between the Churches they represent and Catholicism; whilst, at the same time, they are lending increasing support to Socialism.

The Inquisition

Such efforts to establish unity ignore the violence once used by Roman Catholicism to destroy any Protestant witness. But the Bible does not overlook this. The description it gives of Babylon the Great, centred in Rome, but extending out to all countries, includes the violence it has used to enforce its authority. The apostle John wrote: "*I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*" (v. 6).

Does that describe the Church? It does! In order to enforce its rule, Catholicism established the Inquisition which by threats and torture, by use of the rack, the thumbscrews, and by every form of violent coercion endeavoured to break the spirits and change the beliefs of Protestants and Jews. To extend their influence, the priests of Rome discouraged the individual reading and study of the Bible, for they found that when men and women turned to that wonderful Book, they began to challenge the authority of the Church and its priests in regard to its teaching and their authority. The Inquisition, called the "Holy Office", was instituted by Pope Innocent III in 1198, and perfected by Pope Gregory IX in 1227-1233. It was the Church Court for the detection and punishment of heretics. Anyone suspected was liable to the most brutal torture, without knowing the name of his accuser. The proceedings were



secret. The Inquisitor pronounced sentence, and the victim was turned over to the civil authorities to be imprisoned for life or to be burned at the stake. The victim's property was confiscated and divided between the Church and the State. The most painful forms of torture were ruthlessly used to extract a confession or cause the sufferer to recant. It later was used to violently crush the Reformation. It is claimed that in the thirty years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 Protestants were put to death after the most heartless and inhuman torture. Many innocent men and women were burned alive in the name of Christ, by the direct order of the so-called Vicar of Christ.

In 1557 Pope Pius ordered the extermination of the Huguenots (French Calvinist Protestants) in France. The French king issued a decree for their massacre, and commanded all loyal subjects to help in hunting them out. The massacre



Coins issued by Pope Gregory XIII at the time of the slaughter of the Huguenots.

of the Huguenots began on the eve of the Catholic feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, in August 1572, resulting in the slaughter of 70,000 Huguenots. Traditionally this is believed to have been instigated by Catherine de' Medici, the mother of King Charles IX. Pope Gregory XIII afterwards issued a medal to commemorate the event.

Before the violence was over, no less than 200,000 had been killed.

Bohemia, in 1660, had a population of 4 million people, 80% of which were Protestant. When the Hapsburgs and Jesuits had done their work, 800,000 were left, all Catholics.

The prophetic description of Revelation 17:6, is painfully and sadly factual.

Opposition To Christ At His Coming

Bible prophecy also predicts the impending overthrow of Babylon the Great, the latter-day Roman system. Referring to the political organization upon which the harlot system is represented as riding, the prophecy predicts that it will openly and vigorously oppose the reign of Christ on earth: *"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful"* (Revelation 17:14).

This describes the Lord Jesus Christ in company with his resurrected and glorified followers who are redeemed from mortality. They will

associate with him in the worldwide governance of the nations he will set up (Revelation 5:9; 20:6).

But his rule, whilst it will aim to establish "*glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men*" will be opposed by those countries dominated by Babylon the Great. They will "*make war with the Lamb*", the Lord Jesus Christ. This will be the culminating drama of this age, toward which national trends are moving today.

It is a theory of the Roman Catholic Church that Antichrist will arise to threaten the Church's future. It claims that Antichrist will establish his power in Jerusalem; seek to revive the Kingdom of Israel; proclaim his intention of re-building the temple that once existed in Jerusalem, and proclaim himself King and Messiah, ordering all nations to submit to his rule. But, in fact, it is claimed, he will be Antichrist, Satan in human form.

What this theory attributes to Antichrist, the Bible teaches will be accomplished by Christ. He will return to raise from the dead and grant eternal life to those who have been faithful to his teaching (see 1Corinthians 15:50-55); he will overthrow the nations that will gather to Jerusalem for battle (Zechariah 14:1,3; Daniel 2:44); shall establish himself there as King (Zechariah 14:9), and call upon all nations to submit to his worship and rule (Psalm 2:10-12); Revelation 14:6-8).

Some will submit; but those under Catholic influence will belligerently resist. Under the mistaken idea that the Lord Jesus is the personification of Satan, they will combine militarily to oppose his rule. They will be overthrown, as the verse before us teaches, and the Kingdom of God will replace the quarrelling, antagonistic and warlike nations of today. The Bible declares: "*The God of heaven will set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed; the Kingdom will break in pieces and consume all nations, and shall stand for ever*" (Daniel 2:44). "*He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more*" (Isaiah 2:2-4).

There will be no place for Popes, Bishops, Cardinals, Dictators or power-seeking Politicians in that realm. Instead, a Theocracy blending beneficent power with peace and truth will replace the present-day rule of flesh. The superstition of Rome will cease, economic stability will be established, and a universal government set up that will honour God and elevate the people: Christ's then immortal faithful followers.

They are depicted as singing: "*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth*" (Revelation 9:5-10).

The Sequel to Armageddon

Christ's world-wide empire governed from Jerusalem will introduce the Millennium: a thousand years of peace (Revelation 20:6).

But it will be preceded by the Battle of Armageddon which will involve all nations, and decide the future of Jerusalem, Israel, and the whole world. The prophecy of Ezekiel 38:19, and that of Daniel 11:40-45, give this in great detail, and has been briefly outlined in our booklet: ***"Israel, Russia, Christ's Coming and Armageddon"***. A copy will be sent to you entirely free of charge on application to the address on the back cover of this booklet.

This battle will not only involve the nations but the world's religions as well. Various Scriptures make this perfectly clear. Daniel 8:25 declares that the northern power of Russia that shall stand up against the Prince of princes (the Lord Jesus Christ and his associates) will *"cause craft to prosper"*. The term denotes false religion (Jeremiah 9:6). Catholicism will co-operate with Russia in an attack upon the Middle East and Jerusalem. Currently Catholicism and Socialism are drawing closer together in their political aims.

In *The Vatican Moscow Alliance* Avro Manhattan wrote: *"The deadliest opponent of the Catholic Church, until yesterday, was Communism [today seen as Socialism—Ed]. Today, the power élite of this same Communist system have become her allies. What has prompted the Catholic Church to align herself with her former enemies? The answer to that question is to be found in the logic of events. It lies in the Church's realistic assessment that capitalism is doomed; that democracy has failed; that traditional Western culture is disintegrating, and that the West's ability to defend itself is being eroded on all fronts"*.

Politically, the trend of events since World War 1 has seen remarkable developments fulfilling the requirements of Bible prophecy. World War 1 produced Communist Russia. World War 11 resulted in Communist China. The Korean War produced Communist North Korea. The Vietnam War produced Communist Vietnam. It is obvious, that in the shape of things to come; World War 111 (if it did not destroy mankind as most fear — but which God's purpose will not permit) would produce a Socialist world if Christ did not intervene.

But He will.

Fulfilling Bible Prophecy in our day guarantees that. The great sign of Christ's coming is Israel. Its amazing revival as a nation in spite of the opposition Israel has faced as a nation, is God's witness to mankind (Isaiah 43:8-10). He has promised a set time for her restoration and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ: *"When the LORD shall build up Zion, He will appear in His glory"* (Psalm 102:13, 16).

Bible prophecy anticipates an attack upon Israel by a confederacy

of European Catholic nations dominated by Russia, but resisted by the West. One aim will be control of the holy places of the Middle East by Catholicism (Ezekiel 36:2), as well as political aggrandizement by Russia. The defeat of this attack will destroy Russian militarism; but the Catholic countries will remain for a time to resist the reign of Christ. However they will experience the irresistible might of the Lord Jesus, and ultimately will succumb to his rule. A world transformed politically, ecclesiastically and socially will reflect to God's glory (Numbers 14:21).

What Should Be Done At This Crisis

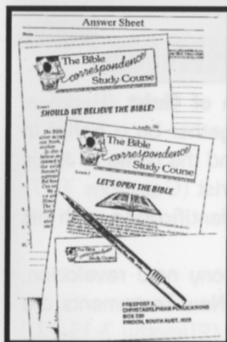
Can anything be done to prevent the world rushing headlong toward world war and destruction? No; it is beyond the ability of human minds to divert that crisis. Economically, politically, ecclesiastically, and socially, the world is deranged, out of human control. It is exactly in the condition described by Christ when he prophetically declared: *"Men's hearts shall fail them for fear... upon the earth there shall be distress of nations with perplexity"* (the word signifies "without a way of escape" — Luke 21:25, 26).

But to those who have made their peace with God in the way appointed, the Master declared: *"When these things begin to come to pass; lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh"*.

What must one do to be in that favoured state? The answer is that declared by the Lord when he commissioned the apostles: *"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel, he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved"* (Mark 16:15-16).

Your destiny will be determined by what you do in that regard now. A sound understanding of the Gospel, the key to the understanding of the Bible, is the first essential. That must be followed by baptism into Christ Jesus and building into one's life the principles of righteousness as displayed by him. To do this will bring one under his influence. Life will be lived objectively, providing peace of mind now in anticipation of the great reward of life eternal in the age to come (John 14:27).

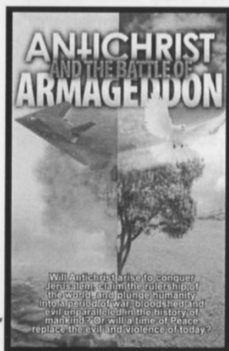
We urge upon you, reader, the value of seeking God's truth. The fruits of study make it well worthwhile. Salvation will not be found in the Confessionals of Rome, in the paying of "Peter's pence" to escape an imagined prolongation in purgatory, nor in the celebration of mass; but in the personal endorsement of the Truth, and the application of its principles in a life morally acceptable to Christ at his coming. That is your responsibility! We offer our help to that end. Send now, for the free booklet advertised on the inside back cover of this booklet and read yourself rich in the teaching and hope of God's Holy Word, the Bible.



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This booklet makes a wake-up-call to today's careless generation! Scripture warns of multitudes from all nations becoming embroiled in deadly conflict in the Middle East conflagration of Armageddon. World War 3 has already become a household watchword! Those conscripts would fight in ignorance of the fact that the "enemy" is really Jesus Christ and his immortalised followers! What a dreadful fate is assured to these armies and expressed in the Word of God! Let us therefore, while there remains any opportunity, enlighten as many as possible as to the true identity of the "Antichrist," namely apostate Christendom — the scriptural papal-protestant antichrist-system to be destroyed at the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and glory.

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