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Babylon the Great

Or, The Coming Destruction of the One World Religion

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

(Revelation 17:5).

by Tom Stewart

Part 1: **The Purpose and History of Babylon the Great**

Preface

Any attempt to describe the final destruction of Babylon the Great-- "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5)-- demands an identification of that system, i.e., its purpose, history, as well as present and prophetic future. Because the spiritual warfare of the Saints involves wrestling not with simply flesh and blood, but "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12); it becomes increasingly apparent to us-- the earthly participants-- as the end draws near, that the identity of Babylon the Great has been plainly written "upon her forehead" (Revelation 17:5) by our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

Understanding the true nature of Babylon the Great is as simple as knowing whether a child is good or bad. "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11). It only remains for God's people to "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24) concerning Babylon the Great. To act consistently with that understanding, will require coming out of her that "ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). Also, to reach out to those still enslaved by Babylon the Great, is consistent with Christian love. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).

Purpose of Babylon the Great: To Seduce the World to Worship Antichrist

Eve was seduced by Satan. "And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Genesis 3:13). And, through Adam's transgression "death passed upon all men" (Romans 5:12), because Adam sought to please his wife more than God. The LORD Jesus Christ said, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37). Satan seduced Eve, the "weaker vessel" (1Peter 3:7), to get at Adam, both to whom were given "dominion" over the Earth (Genesis 1:28). In so doing, Satan usurped dominion of the planet from both of our original parents, becoming the "god of this world" (2Corinthians 4:4).

And so, "death reigned" (Romans 5:17), because the Seducer questioned the "goodness of God" (2:4)-- "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1)-- and contradicted the truthfulness of God-- "Ye shall not surely die" (3:4). Thus, the Seducer, who "is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44), seeks not just dominion over God's creation; but, Beelzebub seeks the worship reserved only for the Almighty. "13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14).

The purpose of Babylon the Great is to direct the world in worshipping the Antichrist, the Man of Sin (2Thessalonians 2:3); so **"that [the Antichrist] as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God"** (2:4). In somewhat the same fashion that the Father, Son, and Spirit "are one" (John 17:22); even so, Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet are one. At least for a time, the False Prophet will direct the world to worship the Antichrist. "And he [the False Prophet] exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:12). Accordingly, worship of the Antichrist "in the temple of God" (2Thessalonians 2:3) will be the same as worshipping the "Adversary the Devil" (1Peter 5:8), whose heart's desire is to "exalt [his] throne above the stars of God" (Isaiah 14:13). And, Babylon the Great, who employs the "servants of corruption" (2Peter 2:19), is the vehicle to accomplish that worship.

Subtily, deception, and seduction are the necessary modes of operation for those who descend to so low a level as to serve Babylon the Great. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13). Notice that the servants of Babylon the Great are not just **guilty** of "deceiving" but also of "being deceived" (3:13). Any time man submits to obey sin and the Devil, he becomes the "servant of sin" (John 8:34). The Tempter thus enlists his followers through a voluntary servitude-- "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2Corinthians 4:4). The success of Babylon the Great will finally be so great that all but the Elect, the "Called, and Chosen, and Faithful" (Revelation 17:14), will be seduced. "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the Elect" (Mark 13:22).

History of Babylon the Great: Beginning of Babylon and the Tower of Babel

Nimrod, whose name means "rebellion", was the great-grandson of Noah, through the lineage of Ham. He was a "mighty one in the Earth" (Genesis 10:8)-- a "mighty hunter before the LORD" (10:9). Nimrod's might and skill in the hunt easily lent itself to the exercise of human government; for God intended the force of arms to be used in human government's punishment of evil doers. "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain" (Romans 13:4). The cunning employed to hunt an animal can be as easily applied to snare the "souls of men" (Revelation 18:13).

Babel-- also translated as "Babylon"-- was the city that was the "beginning of [Nimrod's] kingdom" (Genesis 10:10). It was situated "in the land of Shinar" (10:10)-- modern Iraq. In that location, we are told by Scripture, a significant event occurred "in the Earth after the flood" (10:32)-- the building of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11). Though Scripture does not use the expression Tower of Babel, nor does it pointedly declare that Nimrod built the infamous Tower of Babel, we are informed that the people purposed to build "a city and a tower" (11:4), i.e., implying that Nimrod built both the city of Babylon and the Tower of Babel. It providentially connects the location of Nimrod's city to the location of the site of the Tower-- a "plain in the land of Shinar" (11:2). The very name Babel means "confusion", just as we presently describe one whose speech we cannot understand as "babbling". "Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the Earth" (11:9).

What is the significance of the Tower of Babel to Babylon the Great? The opening statement of Genesis 11 gives us the setting for the construction of the fabled Tower. "And the whole Earth was of one language, and of one speech" (Genesis 11:1). Following the Almighty's destruction of the planet by the Flood, the Earth had yet to be overspread by the migration of man. "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole Earth" (11:4). Man's unity is a blessing from God. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1). However, it is an insolent and disgusting thing for man to unite against the LORD God. "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished" (Proverbs 16:5). Ultimately, all attempts at unifying man without God, and especially against God, will fail; for the LORD Jesus Christ will "rule all nations with a rod of iron" (Revelation 12:5) and shall "dash [all rebels] in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psalm 2:9).

Just as the Creator evicted Adam (and Eve) from the Garden of Eden "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree Of Life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3:22), and as Jehovah destroyed the Earth by the Flood because "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually" (6:5); even so, God Only Wise (Romans 16:27) scattered man from building the Tower of Babel, lest "nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6). Therefore, the God of Love and Peace (2Corinthians 13:11) has continued to restrain man from **the purpose of the Tower of Babel, which was the exaltation of the name of man in the face of God**. "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole Earth" (Genesis 11:4).

The Mystery of Iniquity (2Thessalonians 2:7) will finally be unleashed and unrestrained-- at the time of the Pre-Tribulation

Rapture (2:7)-- to allow for the exaltation of the Antichrist, the Son of Perdition (2:3), as the final affront against the Blessed and Only Potentate, the King of Kings, and LORD of Lords (1Timothy 6:15). [See our article, "Must There Be a Pre-Tribulational Rapture?", for an exposition of 2Thessalonians 2.] But, this affront is doomed, because we have it on God's own Word that (prophetically) "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen" (Revelation 18:2).

History of Babylon the Great: Baal Worship Plagues the People of God

Israel's reoccurring plague had to be its constant confrontation with the worship of Baal, the sun-god whose name meant "lord". "The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the Law knew Me not: the pastors also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit" (Jeremiah 2:8). The wicked prophet Balaam, who counselled Balak against Moses and the children of Israel, was responsible for introducing this offence and stumbling to Israel. **Balaam told Balak that Israel could be defeated by encouraging the Israelites to intermarry with the Canaanites, who would teach Israel to worship Baal; and then, Israel's God would be forced against His own people.** "1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. 2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. 3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel" (Numbers 25:1-3).

We have a limited idea of the nature of Baal worship-- limited to the Word of God-- because we are intentionally "simple concerning evil" (Romans 16:19). However, Scripture does wisely describe the degradation of Baal worship, in that:

- (1) Israel gave their children over as a sacrifice to Baal, i.e., they murdered their own children. "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind" (Jeremiah 19:5).
- (2) Israel worshipped before the image of Baal, i.e., they paid homage to the god that the image represented. "For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim" (2Chronicles 28:2).
- (3) Israel kissed the image of Baal, i.e., they gave submission and affection to an inanimate "thing". "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1Kings 19:18).
- (4) Israel burned savour and incense to Baal, i.e., they attempted to cultivate the favour of their god. "Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols" (Ezekiel 6:13).
- And (5) Israel promoted abuse of themselves with mankind, i.e., they descended to the level of Sodom and Gomorrha. "And he brake down the houses of the sodomites [homosexuals], that were by the house of the LORD [i.e.,where Baal was being worshipped], where the women wove hangings for the grove" (2Kings 23:7).

History of Babylon the Great: Elijah Confronts the Prophets of Baal

About 300 years before the Babylonian Captivity, Israel's contest with Baal worship reached a climax when the prophet Elijah confronted the 450 prophets of Baal atop Mount Carmel. "17 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? 18 And he answered, **I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.** 19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. 20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel" (1Kings 18:17-20).

Put simply, Elijah challenged the people to serve God. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (18:21). Elijah conspired with God to humiliate Baal in front of the nation of Israel. "22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: 24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the Name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people

answered and said, It is well spoken" (18:22-24).

The prophet Elijah gave the prophets of Baal the opportunity to transact their Baal worship in a familiar environment, i.e., "upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains" (Ezekiel 6:13). "25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. 26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made" (1Kings 18:25-26). Even as Jehovah "will mock when [their] fear cometh" (Proverbs 1:26); likewise, Elijah mocked these prophets of Baal, "whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Philippians 3:19). "27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded" (1Kings 18:25-29).

Elijah was not simply attempting to rebuild the LORD's altar, but to call the people back to obedience to the Living God, Who acknowledges that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1Samuel 15:22). "30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. 31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the Word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: 32 And with the stones he built an altar in the Name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed" (1Kings 18:30-32).

As the Great God has condescended to teach man "precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isaiah 28:10); also, He will resort to the dramatic, i.e., an End Time angel flying "in the midst of heaven, having the Everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth" (Revelation 14:6). "33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. 34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. 35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water" (1Kings 18:33-35).

Elijah gave what modern, evangelical Christians might term an "altar call", like Joshua before him. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15). "36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy Word. 37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the LORD God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again" (1Kings 18:36-37).

Elijah knew that the LORD's "secret is with the righteous" (Proverbs 3:32), and he was "bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1), when he stood in front of the people waiting for God's answer to his prayer. "Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench" (1Kings 18:38). The people responded immediately. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, He is the God; the LORD, He is the God" (1Kings 18:39). But, since "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26), Elijah demanded the people to act, i.e., to slay the prophets of Baal. "And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1Kings 18:40).

Conclusion

Since Satan, who is the "prince of this world" (John 12:31), has been so successful in promoting the rebellion against our LORD Jesus Christ, "Who is the Blessed and Only Potentate, the KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords" (1Timothy 6:15), it would be a mistake to assume that God's people do not have good reason to rejoice, because:

- (1) The Almighty is sovereignly controlling **all** of the present circumstances, i.e., concerning Babylon the Great. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain" (Psalm 76:10).
- (2) The Judge of All the Earth (Genesis 18:25) is allowing the cup of Babylon the Great's iniquity to be filled until it is ready for her slaughter. "For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the Earth shall wring them out, and drink them"

(Psalm 75:8).

- (3) The LORD of the Harvest (Luke 10:2) is allowing more time to bring the unredeemed to Christ, i.e., "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6).
- And, (4) Our Hope, which is the LORD Jesus Christ (1Timothy 1:1), is even more preparing His people for the Blessed Hope of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture (Titus 2:13) as Babylon the Great's wickedness increases. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your Redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

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Part 2: **The Reformation and the Church of Rome**

Preface

In the Apocalypse-- the Book of Revelation-- the Apostle John was directed to align Nimrod's Babylon with the finally destroyed Babylon of Daniel's 70th Week (Daniel 9:27), which indicates a **clear line of succession** for Babylon the Great. "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5). It has always been, is, and will always be right for those who name "the Name of Christ [to] depart from iniquity" (2Timothy 2:19) by separating themselves from Babylon the Great. "Wherefore **come out** from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and **I will receive you**" (2Corinthians 6:17).

Pastor Charles Chiniquy (1809-1899)-- a former Roman Catholic priest, who for 25 years zealously promoted Catholicism in Canada and the United States of America-- offered us this clue to the identity of Babylon the Great in the Dedication of his book, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome" (1886): "**Rome is** the great danger ahead for the Church of Christ, and you do not understand it enough... The atmosphere of light, honesty, truth, and holiness in which you are born, and which you have breathed since your infancy, makes it almost impossible for you to realize the dark mysteries of idolatry, immorality, degrading slavery, hatred of the Word of God, concealed behind the walls of **that Modern Babylon** [WStS emphasis added]... It is that ignorance which paves the way to the triumph of Rome, in a near future, if there is not a complete change in your views on that subject... It is that ignorance which paralyses the arm of the Church of Christ, and makes the glorious word "Protestant" senseless, almost a dead and ridiculous word. For who does really protest against Rome today? where are those who sound the trumpet of alarm?... modern Protestants have not only forgotten what Rome was, what she is, and what she will for ever be; the most irreconcilable and powerful enemy of the Gospel of Christ; but they consider her almost as a branch of the church whose corner stone is Christ." "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3). "**Nevertheless** the foundation of God standeth sure" (2Timothy 2:19). And, "I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). [Read in Chiniquy's substantial work, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome", his firsthand insights into the workings of the Church of Rome, and **see if indeed the "leopard [has changed] his spots"** (Jeremiah 13:23).]

History of Babylon the Great: Baal Worship Confronts the Early Church

After the Jews returned from their Babylonian Captivity, Baal worship was not one of the sins with which their rebuffed Messiah would later condemn them. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:29). Instead, the LORD Jesus Christ cried out against the hypocrisy of a superficially righteous nation. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the **greater** damnation" (Matthew 23:14). But, with Israel's rejection of the Messianism of the LORD Jesus, the attention of the Church was turned to the conversion of the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul stated well the sentiment. "27 For the heart of this people [Israel] is **waxed gross**, and their ears are **dull of hearing**, and their **eyes have they closed**; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Acts 28:27-28).

However, the First Century Church was already dwelling in the midst of a superstitious and idolatrous environment, which also traced much of their religious practices back to Babylon. For example, the Church at Pergamos in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) had a conflict with some adhering to the "doctrine of Balaam" (Revelation 2:14)-- remembering that Balaam introduced Baal worship to Israel. [See the "History of Babylon the Great: Baal Worship Plagues the People of God" section of our article, "Babylon the Great (Part 1)", to see Balaam's connection to Israel's Baal worship.] "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even **where Satan's seat is**: and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth" (2:13).

The Church was never intended by its Head, the LORD Jesus Christ, to coexist with the world's religions as simply **part** of the scenery of a pagan Mars Hill. Jesus affirmed, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). The Great Commission is to convert the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by moral persuasion through the influence of the Holy Spirit. "19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Either the Church would convert the world, or the world would convert the Church. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30). It was obvious that the LORD Jesus Christ was intended from antiquity to be the Victor. "7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for Thy possession" (Psalm 2:7-8). If the Church would not rely upon the saving and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, then the battle must necessarily be decided in favor of the enemy, which would still be, Babylon the Great. "12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13).

James A. Wylie's "History of Protestantism" (1878) observed how the Church began to neglect the "Light unto [their] path" (Psalm 119:105) and slip into the corruption of Babylon the Great. "From the fourth century the corruptions of the Christian Church continued to make marked and rapid progress. The Bible began to be hidden from the people. And in proportion as the light, which is the surest guarantee of liberty, was withdrawn, the clergy usurped authority over the members of the Church" (Volume 1, Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 16). The Apostle John recorded in the Revelation that the Church at Pergamos, which was infected by the pro-Baal worship policies of Balaam, had those who were also tolerating the "doctrine of the Nicolaitans" (Revelation 2:15). "Nicolaitans" comes from two Greek words, nikao (to conquer) and laos (the people), which denote "conquering the people", i.e., through a system of priestcraft, which elevated the "clergy" above the "laity".

The human builders of the Living Body of the Church, which is the "flock of God" (1Peter 5:2), were inevitably tempted into the old, pagan ways of Babylon the Great. "While the, 'living oracles' [Scripture] were neglected, the zeal of the clergy began to spend itself upon rites and ceremonies borrowed from the pagans. These were multiplied to such a degree, that [even] Augustine complained that they were 'less tolerable than the yoke of the Jews under the law.'" (Wylie, "History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 18). Though the "cords of the wicked" (Psalm 129:4), i.e., pagan rites and ceremonies, may be inviting; like "whoredom and wine" (Hosea 4:11), "whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).

As the Roman Empire declined, the power of the Bishop of Rome increased. "The [Roman] emperor saluted him as Father; foreign Churches sustained him as judge in their disputes... till at last the presbyter of Rome... raised his seat above his equals, mounted the throne of the patriarch, and exercised lordship over the heritage of Christ" (Wylie, "History of Protestantism" Volume 1, Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 18). "2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1Peter 5:2-4).

History of Babylon the Great: John Wycliffe Prepares the Reformation

John Wycliffe (1324-1384) was called by James A. Wylie, the "Forerunner of all the Reformers, and the Father of all the Reformations of Christendom" ("History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 15, p. 206). "A Good Name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1). Those who are familiar with the name of Wycliffe, associate him with the translation of the Scriptures into the English tongue. "O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the LORD" (Jeremiah 22:29). In a time in which the Church of Rome, dictated dogma and interpretation of the Word of God, the common man had no access to the Scriptures but what the priests of Rome allowed. "Now for a long season Israel hath been without the True God, and without a teaching priest, and without Law" (2Chronicles 15:3).

Though Wycliffe's name is associated with the return to the Scriptures that characterized the Reformation, John Wycliffe's initial renown was as a skilled debater and a philosopher of scholasticism-- the medieval method of thought that applied pagan Aristotelian ideas to the Church of Rome's doctrine. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth" (2Timothy 3:7). In 1348, God providentially reorganized the affairs of Europe, England, and Wycliffe through the onslaught of the Black Death-- the bubonic plague that arose out of Asia, swept over Europe, killing as much as half the population by 1350. "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the LORD" (Amos 4:10). "Bradwardine [mathematician and astronomer, who had embraced the study of the Word of God, and Its doctrines of free grace] had already brought him [Wycliffe] to the Bible, the plague brought him to it a second time; and now, doubtless, he searched its page more earnestly than ever. He came to it, not as the theologian, seeking in it a deeper wisdom than any mystery which the scholastic philosophy could open to him; nor as the scholar, to refine his taste by its pure models, and enrich his understanding by the sublimity of its doctrines; nor even as the polemic, in search of weapons wherewith, to assail the dominant superstitions; he now came to the Bible **as a lost sinner, seeking how he might be saved**. Nearer every day came the messenger of the Almighty. The shadow that messenger cast before him was hourly deepening; and we can hear the young student, who doubtless in that hour felt the barrenness and insufficiency of the philosophy of the schools, lifting up with increasing vehemency the cry, 'Who shall deliver me from the wrath to come?'" (Wylie, "History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 104).

In 1205, King John I of England became embroiled with the English representatives of the Church of Rome as to the filling of the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Consequently, both disputants appealed to the Roman pontiff, Innocent III, for resolution. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1Peter 5:8). Pope Innocent III immediately saw the precedent of a secular king appealing to the Papal See for permission to appoint to an ecclesiastical post, a post viewed second in power to only the throne of England. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). The result was that Innocent contradicted all, appointed an entirely different man, and incurred King John's defiance. Innocent responded by interdicting John and thus, the whole of England. To a nation already wrapped in the superstition of Rome, this was unbearable. After 2 years, on May 15th 1213, King John of England promised **unreserved submission** of himself to the Papal See.

The English barons recognized that they were now pledged to be the vassals or slaves of the Pope, and they revolted. On June 15th 1215, they forced King John I to sign the Magna Carta-- which was the constitutional restriction of government, and a roadblock to Papal absolutism-- at Runnymede. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Daniel 4:25). Predictably, the Pope anathematized the rebels and declared the Magna Carta to be null and void. This resistance to the Papacy was marked by a rise in the power and wealth of England. "When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase" (Proverbs 28:28).

More than 100 years after the signing of the Magna Carta, John Wycliffe found himself a teacher and mentor of many of those who walked in the tradition of the English barons who stood against the absolutism of King John I and Pope Innocent III at Runnymede. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men" (Proverbs 18:16). He was appointed a royal chaplain of King Edward III, and was singled out to reply to the claims of a monk, who defended the claims of Pope Urban V. The monk argued that "as vicar of Christ, the Pope is the feudal superior of monarchs, and the lord paramount of their kingdoms. Thence he deduced the following conclusions: -- that all sovereigns owe him obedience and tribute; that vassalage was specially due from the English monarch in consequence of the surrender of the kingdom to the Pope by John" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 120). Wycliffe responded: "A third and more of England is in the hands of the Pope. There cannot be two temporal sovereigns in one country; either Edward is king or Urban is king. We make our choice. We accept Edward of England and refuse Urban of Rome" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 121). Though Wycliffe's response did not face the nation of England with the sovereign claim of the Almighty over England, i.e., "all souls are Mine" (Ezekiel 18:4), as opposed to the claims of the Papacy, it did give Wycliffe the platform to later promote the Reformation. And, the foundation of that Reformation was the giving of the Scriptures to the common man in his **own** language, i.e., the "Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee **wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2Timothy 3:15).

The closing chapters of John Wycliffe's life belong to the translation of the Scriptures into the English tongue. Wycliffe's "On the Truth and Meaning of Scripture" advocated "'the supreme authority of Scripture,' 'the right of private judgment,' and that 'Christ's law sufficeth by itself to rule Christ's Church.'" This was to discrown the Pope, and to raze the foundations of his kingdom. Here he drops the first hint of his purpose to translate the Bible into the English vernacular -- a work which was to be the crown of his labours" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 174). Today, as the availability of the Scriptures is so common to so much of the world-- and Its value discounted accordingly-- we find it difficult to envision a world without access to the Bible. "Thy Words were found, and I did eat Them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine

heart" (Jeremiah 15:16).

As a good Latin scholar, John Wycliffe set about translating into common English Jerome's Latin Vulgate (c. 400 AD). In four years time, Wycliffe completed his work (1382); but, Johann Gutenberg's printing of the first book-- the Gutenberg Bible (1455)-- was yet to be for 73 years. Enlisting the help of many willing and skilled copyists, Wycliffe's English Bible obtained a wide circulation. "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: It shall not return unto Me void, but It shall accomplish that which I please, and It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent It" (Isaiah 55:11). Though anathematized as a heretic-- to have broken into the sanctuary of God, stolen the sacred jewels, and given them to be trampled under the feet of swine-- **Wycliffe lifted the Banner of Truth, which exalts Him Who Is The Truth (John 14:6); and thus, took away from Rome, its monopoly on the Word of God.** This enabled the common man to be his own priest. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous Light" (1Peter 2:9). Thus, John Wycliffe completed his earthly sojourn on December 31st 1384, "in a good old age, full of days" (1Chronicles 29:28). Only after his death was he condemned by the Council of Constance (1415), and his body was ordered exhumed and burned. But, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars **for ever and ever**" (Daniel 12:3).

History of Babylon the Great: The Conversion of Martin Luther

Though Martin Luther (1483-1546) came from the household of a simple working man; his father, John Luther-- a German miner by trade-- saw to it that Martin had the opportunity of education. With great diligence on the part of the young Luther, he eventually attained graduation from Erfurt University as a Doctor of Philosophy (1505). "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps" (Proverbs 16:9). Since Luther had taken the opportunity to avail himself of the University's library, he came into his first contact with the Bible-- an all but inaccessible Book to the common man-- still, It is "able to make thee **wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2Timothy 3:15). His attraction and fascination for the Scriptures caused him to be convicted of his own sin. "He was returning to Erfurt, and was now near the city gate, when suddenly black clouds gathered overhead, and it began to thunder and lighten in an awful manner. A bolt fell at his feet. Some accounts say that he was thrown down. The Great Judge, he thought, had descended in this cloud, and he lay momentarily expecting death. In his terror he vowed that should God spare him he would devote his life to His service" (James A. Wylie, "History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 2, p. 365). "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD" (Proverbs 16:33).

Martin Luther described his life-- prior to his ordination into the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church (1507)-- as an Augustinian monk (1505-1507), thus: "If ever [a] monk could obtain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 5, Chapter 3, p. 371). "Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall **no** flesh be justified in His sight: for by the Law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). James Wylie described Luther's monkish struggle to find peace with God: "He shrank from the sight of his own vileness... he trembled when he thought of the holiness of God. It was not the sweet promise of mercy, but the fiery threatening of the Law, on which he dwelt. 'Who may abide the day of His Coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?' [Malachi 3:2]" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 5, Chapter 4, p. 374).

John Staupitz, the Vicar-General of the Augustines in Germany, was unique in that he was one who understood God's Simple Plan of Salvation; and providentially, God led him to counsel Luther concerning that "plain path" (Psalm 27:11) of salvation. "I cannot and dare not come to God," replied Luther, in effect, 'till I am a better man; I have not yet repented sufficiently.' 'A better man!' would the Vicar-General say in effect; 'Christ came to save not good men, but sinners. [They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick' (Luke 5:31).] Love God, and you will have repented; there is no real repentance that does not begin in the love of God [We love Him, because He first loved us' (1John 4:19)]; and there is no love to God that does not take its rise in all apprehension of that mercy which offers to sinners freedom from sin through the blood of Christ.' 'Faith in the mercies of God!' [**Not** by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost' (Titus 3:5).]" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 5, Chapter 4, p. 375). Before Staupitz departed from Luther, he gave him the gift of a Bible. Staupitz said, "Let the study of the Scriptures be your favorite occupation" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 5, Chapter 4, p. 375). "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

Wylie continues the account of how Martin Luther came to salvation in "full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22). "Luther's faith was as yet but as a grain of mustard-seed. After Staupitz had taken leave of him he again turned his eye from the Savior to himself; the clouds of despondency and fear that instant gathered; and his old conflicts, though not with the same violence, were renewed. He fell ill, and in his sore sickness he lay at the gates of death. It pleased God on this bed, and by a very humble instrument, to complete the change which the Vicar-General had commenced. An aged brother-monk who, as Luther afterwards said, was doubtless a true Christian though he wore 'the cowl of damnation,' came to his bedside, and began to recite with much simplicity and earnestness the Apostle's Creed, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins.' Luther repeated after

him in feeble accents, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins.' 'Nay,' said the monk, 'you are to believe not merely in the forgiveness of David's sins, and of Peter's sins; you must believe in the forgiveness of your own sins.'"

"[12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath **made us meet** to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light: 13 Who hath **delivered us** from the power of darkness, and hath **translated us** into the Kingdom of His Dear Son: 14 In Whom we **have redemption** through His blood, even the **forgiveness of sins**' (Colossians 1:12-14).] The decisive Words had been spoken. A ray of Light had penetrated the darkness that encompassed Luther. He saw it all: the whole Gospel in a single phrase, the **forgiveness of sins** – not the *payment*, but the *forgiveness*" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 4, Chapter 5, p. 375-376). "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18). "In this cell at Erfurt died Martin Luther the monk, and in this cell was born Martin Luther the Christian, and the birth of Luther the Christian was the birth of the Reformation in Germany" (Wylie, Vol. 1, Book 4, Chapter 5, p. 376). The Kingdom of God that flowered from that Reformation in Germany "is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it" (Luke 13:19).

History of Babylon the Great: Luther vs. the Church of Rome

In 1517, a "Dominican monk, named John Diezel, or Tetzel, the son of a goldsmith of Leipsic" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 8, p. 400) declared: "Indulgences avail not only for the living but for the dead" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 8, p. 402). Pope Boniface VIII had enacted this doctrine two centuries before; but, Pope Leo X was now using it and Tetzel to restore the empty coffers of the Vatican. And, Tetzel went on to make particular application of the dogma of indulgences. "Priest, noble, merchant, wife, youth, maiden, do you not hear your parents and your other friends who are dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss: 'We are suffering horrible torments! A trifling alms would deliver us; you can give it, and you will not?'" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 8, p. 402). Tetzel then delivered these chilling words. "At the very instant that the money rattles at the bottom of the chest, the soul escapes from purgatory, and flies liberated to heaven. Now you can ransom so many souls, stiff-necked and thoughtless man; with twelve groats you can deliver your father from purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him! I shall be justified in the Day of Judgment; but you – you will be punished so much the more severely for having neglected so great salvation. I declare to you, though you have but a single coat, you ought to strip it off and sell it, in order to obtain this grace... **The Lord our God no longer reigns, he has resigned all power to the Pope.**" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 8, p. 402). "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (2Peter 2:3).

These indulgences were **sold** by Tetzel-- "whose damnation is just" (Romans 3:8)-- in the form of a letter: "May our Lord Jesus Christ have pity on thee, N. N., and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy passion. And I, by virtue of the apostolic power which has been confided to me, do absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties which thou mayest have merited, and from all excesses, sins, and crimes which thou mayest have committed, however great or enormous they may be, and for whatsoever cause, even though they had been reserved to our most Holy Father the Pope and the Apostolic See. I efface all attainders of unfitness and all marks of infamy thou mayest have drawn on thee on this occasion; I remit the punishment thou shouldest have had to endure in purgatory; I make thee anew a participator in the Sacraments of the Church; I incorporate thee afresh in the communion of the saints; and I reinstate thee in the innocence and purity in which thou wast at the hour of thy baptism; so that, at the hour of thy death, the gate through which is the entrance to the place of torments and punishments shall be closed against thee, and that which leads to the Paradise of joy shall be open. And shouldest thou be spared long, this grace shall remain immutable to the time of thy last end. In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen... Brother John Tetzel, Commissioner, has signed it with his own hand." (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 8, pp. 403-404).

At that time, Luther was a university professor, preacher, and confessor; since, he still ignorantly held allegiance to the Church of Rome. "One day, as he sat in the confessional, some citizens of Wittemberg came before him, and confessed having committed thefts, adulteries, and other heinous sins. 'You must abandon your evil courses,' said Luther, 'otherwise I cannot absolve you.' To his surprise and grief, they replied that they had no thought of leaving off their sins; that this was not in the least necessary, inasmuch as these sins were already pardoned, and they themselves secured against the punishment of them. The deluded people would thereupon pull out the indulgence papers of Tetzel, and show them in testimony of their innocence. Luther could only tell them that these papers were worthless, that they must repent, and be forgiven of God, otherwise they should perish everlastingly" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 9, p. 408). "In Whom [Jesus Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7). In effect, Luther differed more widely with the Church of Rome than he was aware of.

On October 31st 1517, the day before the Festival of All Saints, at noon Luther strode to the castle-church with the throngs of people, and nailed a document to the church's door-- the celebrated 95 Theses on the doctrine of indulgences. "And from the

days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12). Luther was beginning to contend with the whole Papal system. Briefly,

- Article 6 stated: "The Pope cannot remit any condemnation, but can only declare and confirm the remission that God himself has given", i.e., "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine Own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:25).
- Article 8 declared: "The laws of ecclesiastical penance can be imposed only on the living, and in no wise respect the dead", i.e., "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it" (1John 5:16).
- Article 37 announced: "Every true Christian, dead or living, is a partaker of all the blessings of Christ, or of the Church, by the gift of God, and without any letter of indulgence", i.e., "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).
- Article 51 stated: "We should teach Christians that the Pope (as it is his duty) would distribute his own money to the poor, whom the indulgence-sellers are now stripping of their last farthing, even were he compelled to sell the Mother Church of St. Peter", i.e., "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you" (2Corinthians 12:15).
- Article 52 remonstrated: "To hope to be saved by indulgences is a lying and an empty hope, although even the commissary of indulgences – nay, further, the Pope himself – should pledge their souls to guarantee it", i.e., "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers" (1Peter 1:18).

On the night before the very day that Martin Luther affixed his 95 Theses to the church door of Wittenburg, the Elector Frederick of Saxony-- where Luther abode-- had a dream, which he related the next morning to his brother, Duke John. Wylie relates that the dream was "recorded by all the chroniclers of the time" (Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 9, p. 413). "Brother, I must tell you a dream which I had last night, and the meaning of which I should like much to know. It is so deeply impressed on my mind, that I will never forget it, were I to live a thousand years. For I dreamed it thrice, and each time with new circumstances... Having gone to bed last night, fatigued and out of spirits, I fell asleep shortly after my prayer, and slept calmly for about two hours and a half; I then awoke, and continued awake to midnight, all sorts of thoughts passing through my mind. Among other things, I thought how I was to observe the Feast of All Saints. I prayed for the poor souls in purgatory; and supplicated God to guide me, my counsels, and my people according to truth."

"I again fell asleep, and then dreamed that Almighty God sent me a monk, who was a true son of the Apostle Paul. All the saints accompanied him by order of God, in order to bear testimony before me, and to declare that he did not come to contrive any plot, but that all that he did was according to the will of God. They asked me to have the goodness graciously to permit him to write something on the door of the church of the Castle of Wittemberg. This I granted through my chancellor. Thereupon the monk went to the church, and began to write in such large characters that I could read the writing at Schweinitz. The pen which he used was so large that its end reached as far as Rome, where it pierced the ears of a lion that was crouching there, and caused the triple crown upon the head of the Pope to shake. All the cardinals and princes, running hastily up, tried to prevent it from falling. You and I, brother, wished also to assist, and I stretched out my arm; – but at this moment I awoke, with my arm in the air, quite amazed, and very much enraged at the monk for not managing his pen better. I recollected myself a little; it was only a dream."

"I was still half asleep, and once more closed my eyes. The dream returned. The lion, still annoyed by the pen, began to roar with all his might, so much so that the whole city of Rome, and all the States of the Holy Empire, ran to see what the matter was. The Pope requested them to oppose this monk, and applied particularly to me, on account of his being in my country. I again awoke, repeated the Lord's prayer, entreated God to preserve his Holiness, and once more fell asleep. Then I dreamed that all the princes of the Empire, and we among them, hastened to Rome, and strove, one after another, to break the pen; but the more we tried the stiffer it became, sounding as if it had been made of iron. We at length desisted. I then asked the monk (for I was sometimes at Rome, and sometimes at Wittemberg) where he got this pen, and why it was so strong. 'The pen,' replied he, 'belonged to an old goose of Bohemia, a hundred years old. I got it from one of my old schoolmasters. As to its strength, it is owing to the impossibility of depriving it of its pith or marrow; and I am quite astonished at it myself.' Suddenly I heard a loud noise – a large number of other pens had sprung out of the long pen of the monk. I awoke a third time: it was daylight" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 5, Chapter 9, pp. 413-415). Wylie then added, "The elector has hardly made an end of telling his dream when the monk comes with his hammer to interpret it" (p. 415). "What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh" (Genesis 41:28).

Luther the Reformer began to develop doctrinally as he carefully considered the Word of God. "I am a stranger in the Earth: hide not Thy commandments from me" (Psalm 119:19). As many of Luther's old friends began to melt away, new acquaintances came to his aid. When told that Luther's life was in danger, powerful German barons, i.e., Sylvester of Schaumburg, Francis of Sickingen, and Ulrich of Hutten, offered Luther their sword of protection-- as well as opposition to Papal tyranny. Ulrich even proposed to crush the fury of the devil by the force of arms-- to which Luther recoiled. Luther said, "I will not have recourse to arms and bloodshed in defense of the Gospel. It was by the Word that the Church was founded, and by the Word also it shall be re-established" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 1, p. 474). "Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight" (John 18:36).

On June 15th 1520, a papal bull of excommunication was issued against Martin Luther. Within the space of 60 days, any town where Luther resided would be interdicted. Luther was to be banished by all princes and magistrates, or sent to Rome. "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire beside Thee" (Psalm 73:25). Pope Leo X sent a letter to the Elector Frederick of Saxony, hoping to gain his support against Luther; but Frederick had now rejected Romanism and determined to protect Luther. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1).

While waiting for the papal bull to reach him, Luther published "The Babylonish Captivity of the Church" on October 6th 1520. Luther wrote, "I denied that the Papacy was of Divine origin, but I granted that it was of human right. Now, after reading all the subtleties on which these gentry have set up their idol, **I know that the Papacy is none other than the kingdom of Babylon, and the violence of Nimrod the mighty hunter** [WStS emphasis]. I therefore beseech all my friends and all the booksellers to burn the books that I have written on this subject, and to substitute this one proposition in their place: The Papacy is a general chase led by the Roman bishop to catch and destroy souls" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 2, p. 489). **Luther understood that Romanism is identified with Babylon the Great.** "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11).

About this same time (October 1520), Luther wrote a letter to Pope Leo X. The following are excerpts of that letter: "It is true that I have attacked the court of Rome; but neither yourself nor any man living can deny that there is greater corruption in it than was in Sodom and Gomorrah, and that **the impiety that prevails makes cure hopeless.** Yes, I have been horrified in seeing how, under your name, the poor followers of Christ were deceived... You know it. Rome has for many years been inundating the world with whatever could destroy both soul and body. **The Church of Rome, formerly the first in holiness, has become a den of robbers, a place of prostitution, a kingdom of death and hell; so that Antichrist himself, were he to appear, would be unable to increase the amount of wickedness.** All this is as clear as day... You should perish by poison even before you could try any remedy. It is all over with the court of Rome. The wrath of God has overtaken and will consume it. It hates counsel--it fears reform--it will not moderate the fury of its ungodliness; and hence it may be justly said of it as of its mother: **We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed--forsake her** [Jeremiah 51:9]" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 2, pp. 491-492).

Girolamo Aleander, a special envoy of the Papal See, was delegated the task of looking after the affair of Luther. Aleander asked for and received an audience from Frederick of Saxony. Quickly, Aleander pointed out the necessity of the Elector punishing Luther. To this Frederick pointed out that no one had yet refuted Luther, and it would be scandalous to punish a man uncondemned. This was reminiscent of the Apostle Paul's case before Festus, i.e., "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him" (Acts 25:16). The stage was set for Luther to appear before the Diet of Worms.

Luther was summoned on March 6th 1521 to appear within 21 days before the Diet of Worms, the assemblage that had the power to burn him at the stake. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). On his journey to Worms, he passed through Erfurt, the place of his conversion at the Augustinian monastery. To give you an idea of how mature this former monk had become, hear an excerpt of a sermon from John 20:19- "Peace be unto you." He states: "Philosophers, doctors, and writers have endeavored to teach men the way to obtain everlasting life, and they have not succeeded. I will now tell it to you. There are two kinds of works--works not of ourselves, and these are good: our own works, they are of little worth. One man builds a church; another goes on a pilgrimage to St. Iago of Compostella, or St. Peter's; a third fasts, takes the cowl, and goes bare-foot; another does something else. All these works are nothingness, and will come to naught, for our own works have no virtue in them. But I am now going to tell you what is the true work. God has raised one Man from the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ, that he might destroy death, expiate sin, and shut the gates of hell. This is the work of salvation. Christ, has vanquished! This is the joyful news! and we are saved by his work, and not by our own... Our Lord Jesus Christ said, 'Peace be unto you! behold my hands--that is to say, Behold, O man! it is I, I alone, who have taken away thy sins, and ransomed thee; and now thou hast peace, saith the Lord.'" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 5, pp. 519-520). Amen, and Amen!

Luther entered Worms on the 16th of April, 1521. Some say he sang a hymn as he approached the city, a hymn which he

composed two days earlier-- "A strong Tower is our God' ['A Mighty Fortress Is Our God']" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 5, p. 521). The next day, Luther was summoned to appear before the Diet. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (Matthew 10:19). Upon entering the crowded assembly of dignitaries of the states of the Holy Roman Empire, Luther was implored to acknowledge his authorship of some 20 books and retract his opinions. Luther respectfully admitted authorship, but he asked for another day to consider his reply. His opponents felt he was ready to recant, but Luther was desirous of circumstances that would make his reply all the more weighty and irrevocable. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

On the April 18th 1521, Luther made his final reply to the Diet of Worms. He began by admitting again to the authorship of his books on faith and morals, on the exposure of papal usurpations and degeneracy, and against the defenders of error. He invited all to point him to Scripture that would or could correct him. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the Common Salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints" (Jude 3). Luther then turned the tables on his judges. "In conclusion, he warned this assembly of monarchs of a judgment to come: a judgment not beyond the grave only, but on this side of it: a judgment in time. They were on their trial. They, their kingdoms, their crowns, their dynasties, stood at a great Bar. It was to them the day of visitation; it was now to be determined whether they were to be planted in the earth, whether their thrones should be stable, and their power should continue to flourish, or whether their houses should be razed, and their thrones swept away in a deluge of wrath, in a flood of present evils, and of eternal desolation" (Wylie, Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 6, p. 534). Again, like the Apostle Paul, Luther pricked the conscience of his judges. "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26:26).

To this, the impatient question returned, Would he, or would he not retract? Luther responded: "Since your most Serene Majesty, and your High Mightiness, require from me a direct and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this. I cannot submit my faith either to the Pope or to the Councils, because it is clear as day they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless, therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or on plain and clear grounds of reason, so that conscience shall bind me to make acknowledgment of error, I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything contrary to conscience.' And then, looking round on the assembly, he said--and the words are among the sublimest in history-- 'HERE I STAND. I CAN DO NO OTHER. MAY GOD HELP ME. AMEN'" (James A. Wylie, "History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 6, Chapter 6, pp. 535-536). "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1Thessalonians 2:13).

Conclusion

Historical proofs such as Alexander Hislop's "The Two Babylons: Or, The Papal Worship Proved to be the Worship of Nimrod and His Wife" (1853) demonstrate to the willing mind the certain connection of Ancient Babylon to the final form of the One World Religion ruled by the False Prophet, who "causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship" (Revelation 13:12) the Antichrist. Hislop's classic work focuses on "Rome [i.e., the Roman Catholic Church] as the Apocalyptic Babylon". He concludes, "Let every Christian henceforth and for ever treat it as an outcast from the pale of Christianity. Instead of speaking of it as a Christian Church, let it be recognised and regarded as the Mystery of Iniquity, yea, as the very Synagogue of Satan." "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (18:4).

However, though Hislop accurately followed the evolution of Babylon the Great through the history of the Roman Catholic Church, his perspective from the mid-1800's did not foresee the modern development of a one world religion in its final form-- the United Religions, a type of spiritual United Nations, whose charter is scheduled to be signed in June 2000. "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (Isaiah 28:18).

To those who can be warned of the coming judgment and destruction of Babylon the Great: "4 Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts. 5 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of Hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame" (Nahum 3:4-5). Your professed love for the LORD Jesus Christ should plead for immediate separation from Babylon the Great. "15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? **know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body?** for two, saith He, shall be one flesh" (1Corinthians 6:15-16).

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Part 3: **The Ecumenical Movement and the Church of Rome**

Preface

The New Birth is as those who awake out of the Sleep of Sin, only to find themselves "as lambs among wolves" (Luke 10:3) in the midst of a "perverse and crooked generation" (Deuteronomy 32:5). With the Holy Spirit as Guide, Comfort, and Teacher, the Believer seizes upon the Scriptures, and devours "every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Invariably, that knowledge imparted by the Spirit of Christ places the Saints in direct opposition to the "spirit of Antichrist" (1John 4:3) and the multifaceted Babylon the Great.

Just as Christian-- from John Bunyan's "[The Pilgrim's Progress](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Stories/Bunyan.Pilgrims.Progress.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Stories/Bunyan.Pilgrims.Progress.html> -- battled Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation with his Two-Edged Sword; likewise, while defending ourselves with the "Shield of Faith" (Ephesians 6:16), we draw our "Sword of the Spirit" (6:17) to put the Enemy to flight. Thus, we find ourselves regrouping and ministered unto by our LORD's angels, who are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of Salvation" (Hebrews 1:14).

And, just what does the Awakened Saint understand that causes him to form the battle line against Babylon the Great? Perhaps it is that Babylon is so ancient a foe of our LORD and King. "Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD" (Jeremiah 50:14). Possibly it is that Mystery Babylon has troubled the nations, robbing them of the tranquility bestowed upon those who are called by the Name of the LORD. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (Psalm 33:12). And maybe it is that the Mother of Harlots has counterfeited the "pure religion and undefiled" (James 1:27) causing the eternal destruction of untold numbers of those deceived by her. "They have forsaken me the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13). But certainly it is that the Almighty has called upon all those that love the name of Christ Jesus to seek Babylon the Great's complete and utter destruction. "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double" (Revelation 18:6).

Historic Ecumenism

The word "ecumenical" comes from the Greek word "oikoumene", meaning the whole inhabited Earth. "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world [Greek, oikoumene; Strong's # 3625] for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). By itself, "ecumenicity" can easily be applied to the Gospel outreach of the New Testament Church; however, the historic and modern context of the word has caused thoughtful Believers to utterly abhor it. "A Good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth Good fruit" (7:18).

Church History records twenty-one Ecumenical Councils from 325 AD to October 11,1962:

- (1) Nicaea (325 AD)- condemned Arianism, i.e., which denied the full deity of the preexistent Son of God,
- (2) Constantinople (381 AD)- called to settle Apollinarianism,
- (3) Ephesus (431 AD)- called to settle the Nestorian controversy,
- (4) Chalcedon (451 AD)- called to settle the Eutychian controversy,
- (5) Constantinople (553 AD)- to settle the Monophysites controversy,
- (6) Constantinople (680 AD)- doctrine of two wills in Christ,
- (7) Nicaea (787 AD)- sanctioned image worship-- which is idolatry,

- (8) Constantinople (869 AD)- final schism between East (Constantinople) and West (Rome),
- (9) Lateran (1123 AD)- Rome decided bishops to be appointed by the Pope,
- (10) Lateran (1139 AD)- Rome's effort to heal schism between East and West,
- (11) Lateran (1179 AD)- Rome enforced ecclesiastical discipline,
- (12) Lateran (1215 AD)- Rome did the bidding of Pope Innocent III
- (13) Lyons (1245 AD)- to settle quarrel between Pope and Emperor,
- (14) Lyons (1274 AD)- Rome's new effort for union of East and West,
- (15) Vienne (1311 AD)- Rome suppressed the Knights Templar,
- (16) Constance (1414-1418 AD)- attempted to heal Papal Schism and burned John Huss,
- (17) Basel and Ferrara-Florence (1431-1439 AD)- attempted to reform the Catholic Church,
- (18) Lateran (1512-1518 AD)- another attempt to reform the Church of Rome,
- (19) Trent (1545)- Rome's attempt to counteract the Reformation,
- (20) Vatican (1869 AD)- declared dogma of Papal Infallibility, and
- (21) Vatican [Vatican 2] (October 11,1962)- announced Rome's effort to bring all Christendom into one Church-- back to Rome.

[Dates, places, and events were taken essentially from "Halley's Bible Handbook" on the "Ecumenical Councils", p. 765.]

Since the Church was not born in a vacuum, each generation of Believers must determine "what saith the Scripture?" (Romans 4:3), then "earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints" (Jude 3). And, understanding that the Christian is "not of the world" (John 15:19), he must place supreme value upon the Scripture of Truth (Daniel 10:21) over the "tradition of men" (Colossians 2:8) or "science falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20). In this, the Ecumenical Councils were not to be blamed for their condemnation of anti-Scriptural heresies, i.e., Arianism; but, they were to be blamed for the use of their ecumenical power against those who stood for the Scriptures, i.e., John Huss, who was condemned and burned by the Council of Constance (1415 AD). "They [e.g., the Church of Rome] shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

The very concept of a Christian Church evokes to the average person a picture of structure and organization epitomized by a church building; but, our LORD viewed the Church in a much more primitive form. "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). **Christian unity** is to be highly prized by the Saints-- "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)-- but **not** at the expense of Truth. "Therefore I esteem all Thy Precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (119:128). We have freedom as moral agents to choose to believe or do wrong, but that does not constitute a license to sin, e.g., promulgating the anti-Christian theology of the Infallibility of the Pope (Vatican Council of 1869). "Cursed be he [Babylon the Great] that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully" (Jeremiah 48:10).

"Ichabod": The Early Church Degenerates into Babylon the Great

The Old Testament Scriptures teach us that the name "Ichabod" was given to the child born to Eli's daughter-in-law, when the Ark of the LORD was captured by the Philistines, and both Eli and her husband died. "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the Ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband" (1 Samuel 4:21). This calamity illustrated how the Living God departed from those who departed from Him.

"Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Malachi 3:7). This reciprocal relationship is affirmed in the New Testament. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). In fact, the LORD God expounded to the prophet Ezekiel the exact nature of how He views the falling away of the formerly righteous. "17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me... 20 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall **not** be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezekiel 3:17,20).

The Early Church that walked with the LORD Jesus Christ during His Earthly Ministry, compares to the Church of Ephesus in the Book of Revelation, i.e., "hast borne, and hast patience, and for My Name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted" (Revelation 2:3). However, toward the end of the First Century-- when the Apostle John penned the Revelation-- Ephesus had backslid, i.e., "thou hast left thy First Love" (2:4). If we use the Seven Churches of Revelation 2-3 to outline Church History-- First Century Ephesus to Twentieth Century Laodicea-- the Church of Thyatira would be the fourth and middle Church representing the Medieval period of World History or the Thyatiran period of Church History-- and would point clearly to the institution of Roman Catholicism. "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (2:20). [See the "[Tribulation Saints' Experience: Revival, Persecution, or Deliverance?](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Thy.Hidden.Ones.html#REVIVAL_DURING)"-- [http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Thy.Hidden.Ones.html#REVIVAL DURING](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Thy.Hidden.Ones.html#REVIVAL_DURING) -- section of our article, "[Thy Hidden Ones](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Thy.Hidden.Ones.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Thy.Hidden.Ones.html> --, for a discussion of the Seven Churches representing seven successive periods of Church History, as well as Tribulation Week Progress.]

But, how did the Primitive Church become "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5)? Babylonianism was the offspring of Nimrod the Great, who "was a mighty hunter before the LORD" (Genesis 10:9). It was foisted upon Israel in the form of Baal worship by the evil prophet Baalam, "who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (Revelation 2:14). Though Israel forsook idol worship after her Babylonian Captivity, the Gentile world was sufficiently pagan, that Pergamos, the third Church of Revelation 2-3-- and immediately preceding Thyatira-- had already succumbed to the "doctrine of Balaam" (2:14), i.e., Babylonianism's Baal worship. The stage was set for the Bishop of Rome to claim supremacy over all the other bishops. Leo the First claimed for himself the title of Primate of All Bishops (445 AD) with the imperial recognition of Emperor Valentinian III, while Attila the Hun (452 AD) and Genseric the Vandal (455 AD) were breaking up the Roman Empire-- and, both finally consented to spare Rome. "And all the inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing: and [the LORD God Almighty] doeth according to His will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the Earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Daniel 4:35).

Leo the First, considered by some non-Catholic historians to be the First Pope, "proclaimed himself Lord of the Whole Church; advocated Exclusive Universal Papacy; said that Resistance to his authority was a Sure Way to Hell; advocated the Death Penalty for heresy" ("Halley's Bible Handbook", p.770). Leo did not heed the inspired warning of the Apostle Peter. "2 Feed the flock of God **which is among you**, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 **Neither as being lords over God's heritage**, but being ensamples to the flock" (1Peter 5:2-3). Thus, the reign of the Church of Rome as Babylon the Great began about the time of the Fall of the Roman Empire (476 AD)-- which roughly corresponds to the Thyatiran period of Church History (Revelation 2-3)-- 500 AD to 1500 AD.

Catholicity and Ecumenicity

"The word 'catholic' means 'universal,' in the sense of 'according to the totality' or 'in keeping with the whole'" (from "The Catechism of the Catholic Church" [1992], paragraph 830). The dictionary definition of the term "universal" means that which extends to or affects the entire world. Hence, even Rome's name makes no qualms about its claim to a monopoly of the religion of the world. "11 And I beheld another beast [the False Prophet] coming up out of the Earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and **causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein** to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:11-12).

Though the Church of Rome's term of "catholicity" has the sound of Scripturalness, it is only a **usurpation** of the true concept of the dominion that the LORD Jesus Christ intended for the spread of His Gospel-- universal, worldwide. "19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20). And, that dominion is also granted to the smallest of Saints-- without regard to human ecclesiastical affiliation-- so long as fellowship and faith are maintained with Christ Jesus, the "Head of the Church" (Ephesians 5:23). "19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask,

it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:19-20).

The Papacy's "keys of the kingdom" (Catechism, 553) actually belong to Jesus Christ, the LORD of the Candlesticks, i.e., "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have The Keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18). And, further, what was said to the Apostle Peter about his authority to bind and loose-- "And I will give unto thee The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (Matthew 16:19)-- was also spoken to the other disciples of Christ. "18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven. 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you [**not just Simon Peter**] shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven" (18:18-19).

The word "ecumenical" denotes that which is worldwide in range or applicability; hence, universal. It is not without surprise that Roman Catholicism claims to be more than merely one of many Christian Churches, but the Mother Church of us all, e.g., "the Church, further, which is called 'that Jerusalem which is above' and 'our mother' [Galatians 4:26]" (from "The Catechism of the Catholic Church" [1992], paragraph 757). The Apostle Paul used the expression "mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26) in **allegorical** reference to Jerusalem as the symbol of our freedom from the bondage of the Law. "28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of Promise... 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (Galatians 4:28,31). And, it is not that the "Jerusalem which is above" (4:26) cannot be construed as representative of the Church of the Gospel; but, it just does **not** represent Rome, for the Church of Rome traces its lineage through Hagar back to Babylon-- and **not** to Jerusalem. [See "[Babylon the Great \(Part 2\): The Reformation and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html> -- for a more detailed historical development of the Church of Rome as Babylon the Great.] Instead, our union is with the LORD Jesus Christ Himself. "14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, 15 Of Whom the whole family in Heaven and Earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14-15).

It has been an historic dogma of the Catholic Church that "outside the [Catholic] Church there is no salvation". "They could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it" (from "The Catechism of the Catholic Church" [1992], paragraph 846). This was intended by the Papacy to place the world in **universal** need of coming to Rome to receive the benefits of their ecumenical salvation. But, "what saith the Scripture" (Romans 4:3)? Salvation is:

- (1) **universal** in that it is addressed to the world, i.e., "God so loved the world" (John 3:16),
- (2) **graciously and freely offered**, without possible payment, i.e., "it is the Gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8),
- (3) **common** in that it is offered to "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17), i.e., "I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common Salvation" (Jude 3),
- (4) accessible solely by **faith**, i.e., "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2Timothy 3:15),
- (5) granted to only those who **repent** of their opposition to God, i.e., "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38),
- (6) not for those who **presume** they can or will repent tomorrow, i.e., "as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His Voice" (Hebrews 3:7), and
- (7) for only those who **persevere** in faith, i.e., "ye shall be hated of all men for My Name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22).

[See our article, "[Promises for Patience and Endurance in the LORD](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Promises.Patience.Enduranc.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Promises.Patience.Enduranc.html> --, for Scriptural foundation for your faith to persevere upon.] So, the LORD Jesus Christ-- and **not** the Church of Rome-- offers the truly universal ("catholic") Salvation to the entire ("ecumenic") world; for the Only Begotten Son of God "hath done all things well" (Mark 7:37).

The counsel of Scripture is plain concerning the Universal-Catholic-Ecumenical designs of the Church of Rome-- "cast out

the bondwoman" (Galatians 4:30). Separate from Rome. "30 Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (4:30-31). If our Mother is not "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5), then why would we consort with Rome? But, would it not be more prudent to appear less divisive, and remain in the Catholic Church? Nay! "Remove thy way **far** from her, and come not nigh the door of her house" (Proverbs 5:8). This is a sin that we are not merely to avoid-- but to **flee**! "Flee fornication" (1Corinthians 6:18). "Flee from idolatry" (10:14).

Liberalism and the Exaltation of Human Reason

Man's trouble with the Creator lies in their unwillingness to accept God's testimony about God and themselves. "19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20). Consequently, rebellious man has produced his own philosophies to account for what God has already declared in the Scriptures. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8).

Religious Liberalism finds historical roots in the Enlightenment (the Age of Reason) which was centered in Europe during the 1700's. "For after that in the Wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God" (1Corinthians 1:21). With Sir Isaac Newton's "Principia" (1687), the science of physics established the investigation of nature through mathematical representations; and, human reason strove for earthly dominion. But, "what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). Though Newton was a serious student of Biblical Prophecy later in life, his scientific work was interpreted by his contemporaries as proof of the superiority of human reason over Biblical Revelation. John Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (1690) bulwarked this insistence upon knowledge gained only by human experience, and lent itself to those who emphasized that genuine certainty could only be achieved through the precision of mathematics. "And every one that heareth these Sayings of Mine, and doeth Them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand" (Matthew 7:26).

The flood of Liberal philosophers and theologians that followed, left the Church of Jesus Christ with a "little strength" (Revelation 3:8), but that was still enough for the Christians of the Philadelphian Church Age (c. 1700-1900) to promote the Gospel worldwide through the "Open Door" (3:8) held open by the Saviour Himself. "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an Open Door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name" (3:8). Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), George Whitefield (1714-1770), John Wesley (1703-1791), Charles Wesley (1707-1788), Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), D. L. Moody (1837-1899), R. A. Torrey (1856-1928), and multitudes of others represent the Church of Philadelphia's response to Religious Liberalism. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). [See the section of our website, "[Voices From the Church of Philadelphia](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/W.S.t.S.Voice.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/W.S.t.S.Voice.html> --, which features many of the above Philadelphians.]

On Liberalism's part, the Scottish empiricist, David Hume (1711-1776) advanced arguments for skepticism, i.e., absolute knowledge is impossible, in his "Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding" (1748); and therefore, the existence of God could not be proved. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22). Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), encouraged by the works of Hume, wrote the "Enquiry into the Proofs for the Existence of God" (1763). He held that it was a mistake for metaphysicians to go beyond sense experience to define concepts like God, freedom, or the immortal soul. Naturally, it would be contemptible to the Religious Liberal's mind to resort to the question, "What saith the Scripture?" (4:3), for the authorization or limitation of undertaking any given task. After all, he might argue, that which is important is what **you** perceive to be true, i.e., God, to be your duty, i.e., moral law, or to be beautiful, i.e., in the eyes of the beholder. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves" (2:14). Thus, with names such as Friederich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), Liberalism stormed the bastions of traditional Biblicism, enthroned human reason, and ridiculed the simplicity of Biblical faith. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). But, "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the Righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3).

Modernism and the Social Gospel

Religious Modernism began as a "loosely defined movement **within the Roman Catholic church** [WStS emphasis added] aimed at adapting Catholic belief to the intellectual, moral, and social needs of modern times. It developed spontaneously toward the end of the 19th century principally in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States.

Proponents of the movement accepted the findings of modern science and supported the critical view of the Bible, thereby establishing a link with liberal Protestantism" ("Grolier's Multimedia Encyclopedia", article on "Modernism" by John E. Booty). "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13). Like Liberalism, Modernism questioned the authority of the Scriptures, preferring instead human reason. "O LORD, the Hope of Israel, all that forsake Thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from Me shall be written in the Earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the Fountain of Living Waters" (Jeremiah 17:13).

By 1924, Shailer Mathews of Chicago Divinity School-- founded and endowed by John D. Rockefeller (1891), and the **largest** single institutional educator of faculty members for theological seminaries, departments of theology, and programs in religious studies across America-- had penned "The Faith of Modernism", stressing that Christian doctrines were not timeless truths but merely reflections of the culture. But, "that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith" (2Thessalonians 3:2). In America, with the economic unrest of 1870-1918-- punctuated by the Nation's encounter with the monopolistic capitalists, i.e., John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, etc.-- Modernism emerged advancing the Social Gospel, which championed the themes of love and justice in education, society, and political life, i.e., "whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42). With statements of purpose, such as Modernist leader Walter Rauschenbusch's "A Theology for the Social Gospel" (1917), the emphasis was taken away from the Salvation of the immortal soul and given to the economic and social advancement of mankind. "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing" (1Corinthians 13:3).

An older testimony (early 1900's) is offered from a former Modernist, Professor Kanamori of Doshisha College, Japan: "I was brought up in puritanic strictness of doctrine and practice, so when I read those easy-going Modernist books I felt as though I was coming out of a frozen zone into the warmth of the tropics. I enjoyed the reading of those Modernist books so very much that I was completely carried away by their clever arguments... When I embraced this Modernism and Higher Criticism I lost my Christian message entirely, and I became a messageless man... When I lost faith in the absolute divine authority of the Bible, and faith in the deity of Jesus Christ, I lost everything. I could still preach the moral precepts of the Bible, and thought that perhaps I could apply them to some of the social questions of the day. But I could not preach the central fundamental doctrine of Christianity, salvation by the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross" (from "The Scriptures and the Mistakes of the Critics", p. 24). "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

Pope Pius XII opened the way for Biblical Criticism in Catholicism, which was the critical view of the Bible promoted by Modernism, through his encyclical "Divino afflante Spiritu" (1943). In effect, Rome was preparing to harness the power of Liberal Protestantism for Babylon the Great. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of Light" (Luke 16:8). Modernism is felt most by the vacuum it creates through the deemphasis of the authority of the Scriptures, opting instead to blend their Social Gospel with the economic, social, and political agendas of the contemporary culture. However, "16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, **thoroughly** [thoroughly] **furnished unto all good works**" (2Timothy 3:16-17). The supremacy of the Scriptures fueled the Reformation and angered Babylon the Great; while the present apathy toward Scripture opens the way for the appearance of the Antichrist. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away [literally, apostasy] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (2Thessalonians 2:3).

World Council of Churches: Promoting a "Eucharistic Vision"

In 1983, the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Vancouver Assembly spoke of a "eucharistic vision" which unites two of their "profoundest ecumenical concerns: the unity and renewal of the church and the healing and destiny of the human community" (from the WCC's "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches" [September 1997], paragraph 2.4). "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error" (2Peter 2:18). Surely the Roman Pontiff took great delight in this ecumenical announcement of purpose, with deference given to the more Catholic identification of the LORD's Supper as the Eucharist. "Their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16).

But, why all these bold words against the World Council of Churches? "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). "An important affirmation made in the early phase of collaboration between **the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches** was that the two **share in 'one and the same ecumenical movement'**... The oneness of the ecumenical movement refers fundamentally to its orientation towards a

'common calling'" (from the WCC's "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches", paragraph 2.10). This affirmation from the World Council of Churches makes simple their own condemnation. "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD" (2Chronicles 19:2).

The Harlot Church of Rome is an implacable enemy of Jehovah Jesus, for she is the Great Whore "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" (Revelation 17:1-2), and the World Council of Churches' "common calling" collaboration with the Church of Rome is spiritual adultery. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Rome's doctrine damns her faithful, and her history betrays her origin-- Babylon. "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence" (Jeremiah 51:6). [See our articles, "[An Earnest Appeal to Roman Catholics, Or, Roman Catholicism Examined in Light of the Scriptures](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html> -- and "[Babylon the Great \(Part 2\), The Reformation and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html> -- , for an exposition of Rome's doctrine and history.]

And, just what is the World Council of Churches? "But the Wisdom that is from Above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). "The World Council of Churches [WCC] is a fellowship of churches, now 324, in more than 100 countries in all continents from virtually all Christian traditions. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member church but works cooperatively with the WCC. The highest governing body is the Assembly, which meets approximately every seven years. The WCC was formally inaugurated in 1948 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Its staff is headed by general secretary Konrad Raiser from the Evangelical Church in Germany" (from the official "WCC COMMENT ON ENCYCLICAL ON ECUMENISM" [June 1,1995]). "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1John 4:1). "It is impossible to speak of the World Council of Churches apart from the ecumenical movement out of which it grew and of which it is a highly visible part... the term 'ecumenical' embraces the quest for Christian unity, common witness in the worldwide task of mission and evangelism, and commitment to diakonia [Greek, service or ministry] and to the promotion of justice and peace" (from the WCC's "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches", paragraphs 2.1, 2.2). "Prove all things; hold fast that which is Good" (1Thessalonians 5:21).

From whence did the World Council of Churches arise? Prior to the formation of the World Council of Churches, three major ecumenical bodies had been formed among non-Roman Catholics: the International Missionary Council (1910), the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work (1925), and the Faith and Order Conference (1927). Presently, these three bodies are incorporated into the World Council of Churches. But, "though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the Righteous shall be delivered" (Proverbs 11:21). "Within the ecumenical movement the WCC has sought to integrate the vision of John 17:21 ('that they may all be one... so that the world may believe') with the vision of Ephesians 1:10 (God's 'plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth'). But the effort to integrate these two biblical visions has been challenged by a continuing tension and sometimes antagonism between those who advocate the **primacy of the social dimension of ecumenism** [WStS emphasis, i.e., the Social Gospel of Modernism] and those who advocate the primacy of spiritual or ecclesial ecumenism" (from the WCC's "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches", paragraph 2.5). "15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every Good tree bringeth forth Good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A Good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth Good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth Good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:15-20).

A Statistical View of Ecumenism and Roman Catholicism in the USA (1998)

World Council of Churches: USA Member Churches With More Than 1,000,000 Members (1998)	
United Methodist Church	8,495,378
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.	8,200,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	5,180,910
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	3,637,375
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.	3,500,000
African Methodist Episcopal Church	3,500,000
Episcopal Church	2,536,550
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.	2,500,000
Orthodox Church in America	2,000,000

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American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.	1,503,267
United Church of Christ	1,452,565
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	1,252,369

	43,758,414
Roman Catholic Church: USA Membership (1998)	61,207,914
Total Population of USA (1998)	269,816,000

(Source: World Council of Churches, "Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, 1998", and infoplease.com.)

- Roughly **16.2%** of the total population of the United States of America belongs to a religious body that is a **voting member of the World Council of Churches**.
- Approximately **22.7%** of the same United States population are recorded as **members of the Roman Catholic Church**.
- A combined total of **38.9%** of America's population is numbered with Babylon the Great-- nearly **4 out of every 10** people in a country once regarded as a Christian nation. "How are the mighty fallen!" (2Samuel 1:19).

The Second Vatican Council (1962): Catholicism's Modern Identification With Ecumenism

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) is **not** a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC); and, it has **never** applied for membership. Rome saith, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Revelation 18:7). "The RCC's self-understanding has been one reason why it has not joined" (from an FAQ at the WCC's website [1999], which asks if the Roman Catholic Church is a member of the World Council of Churches). Rome **understands** that the Road of Ecumenism does **not** lead to Geneva-- the WCC's headquarters-- but it leads **back to Rome**. "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" (Proverbs 1:22). Apparently, the WCC's affirmation that the RCC and WCC promote "one and the same ecumenical movement" (from the WCC's "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches", paragraph 2.10) demonstrates that at least the leadership of the WCC understands the destination and purpose of ecumenism-- back to the Mother Church of Rome, i.e., towards a "eucharistic vision". "1 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! saith the LORD. 2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed My people; Ye have scattered My flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:1-2).

One of the "principal concerns" of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was the "restoration of unity among all Christians" (from the Second Vatican Council, "Decree on Ecumenism- Unitatis Redintegratio", paragraph 1). But, beware of the harlotry of Rome, for the "mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein" (Proverbs 22:14). Commenting on the term "ecumenical movement", the "Decree on Ecumenism" stated that "when the obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion have been gradually overcome, all Christians will at last, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, be gathered into the one and only Church in that unity which Christ bestowed on His Church from the beginning. We believe that this unity subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time" (from the Second Vatican Council, "Decree on Ecumenism- Unitatis Redintegratio", paragraph 4). And indeed, the "leopard [has **not** changed] his spots" (Jeremiah 13:23)!

As if to make plain that the Church of Rome-- and **not** the World Council of Churches-- originated the Ecumenical Movement, the **21st Ecumenical Council of Roman Catholicism**-- known also as the Second Vatican Council (1962)-- announced her intentions:

- (1) a removal of the "obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion" [translation: "no more opposition to Rome"], i.e., "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1Peter 5:8),
- (2) a promoting of a single worship in the "common celebration of the Eucharist" (1962)-- which was unsurprisingly announced by the WCC (1983) as the driving purpose of the Ecumenical Movement, i.e., a "eucharistic vision"-- "LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?" (Psalm 94:3), and

- (3) a regathering or reintegration of "all Christians" back "into the one and only Church" [translation: "Back to Babylon"], i.e., "O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us" (Psalm 137:8).

Conclusion

Such a stark picture of the ecumenical allies of Babylon the Great cannot but produce a dark foreboding in the earnest Believer. But, "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a Standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). Understanding our God's purpose in the past, present, and future aids in our obedience to His Plan. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of Wisdom: a Good Understanding have all they that do His Commandments: His praise endureth for ever" (Psalm 111:10). It would be woefully inappropriate for the reader of this article to simply dwell on the enormity of the ecumenical hordes of Babylon the Great; instead, we need to steel ourselves with the "[Exceeding Great And Precious Promises](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Exceeding.Promises.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Exceeding.Promises.html> -- (2Peter 1:4) that enable us to be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). Our victory is already assured through faith in "Jesus the Author and Finisher of Our Faith" (Hebrews 12:2). "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1John 5:4). Already many of our Brethren are watching us from Heaven as we "finish [our] course" (Acts 20:24). They also sense the excitement of the **soon appearing** of the KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords, as they cheer us on. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). But, when all is said and done, we labor for the Master in obedience to His Plan, because we love Him and what He has done for us. "10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins... 19 We love Him, because He first loved us" (1John 4:10,19).

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Part 4: Come Out of Her, My People

Or, Love Alone Will Cause Us to Obey the Command to Separate From Babylon the Great

"Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"
(Revelation 18:4).

Preface

Love is the very essence of God, for the Scriptures testify that "God is Love" (1John 4:16). And, it encompasses all that is right about our motivation to obey God. "For this is the Love of God, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are **not** grievous [literally, burdensome]" (5:3). What True Saint can wittingly complain to the One Who "Loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (4:10), that He is asking too high a price of us to keep His Commandments? "Greater Love hath no man than this, that a Man lay down His Life for His friends" (John 15:13). **Can we truly say to Jesus that we are His friend, when we disobey Him?** "Ye are My friends, **if** ye do whatsoever I command you" (15:14). Is any demand too great or expectation too high that we can rightfully say to the LORD Jesus, "That is too much"? **"If** ye love Me, keep My Commandments" (14:15).

Is God such an unfeeling taskmaster that He would demand from us that which we are incapable of giving? But, "God is Faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to Escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1Corinthians 10:13). Does God despise our True Happiness so much that He would load us with unreasonable demands? Yet, a "bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory" (Matthew 12:20). **How can we persist in calling ourselves by the name of Christ while steadfastly refusing Him obedience?** "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth **not** His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is **not** in him" (1John 2:4). **Dare we maintain our innocence and acceptance with God while maintaining unholy**

disobedience? "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which **no** man shall see the LORD" (Hebrews 12:14).

Should we not, instead, thank our Saviour **for the opportunity to fulfill the highest calling of our existence-- to do the will of God from the heart**, by obedience to His right and just commands? "Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6). Is it not our **privilege** to "spend and be spent" (2Corinthians 12:15) for the "High and Lofty One" (Isaiah 57:15)? "I have commanded My sanctified ones, I have also called My mighty ones for Mine anger, even them that rejoice in My highness" (13:3). Then, like the Apostle Paul, we can say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

Love: Christ's Example for Our Obedience

Coming Out of Babylon. Our Lord's example of loving obedience to the Father is seen throughout the New Testament. "For I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38). Even as Samson tore the "doors of the gate of the [Philistine] city" (Judges 16:3) of Gaza off their hinges and carried them away, even so the LORD Jesus has stormed Babylon the Great to make our escape possible. "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them" (Psalm 68:18). If the LORD Jesus Christ had not obeyed the Father, none of us would ever escape Babylon. "**If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My Love; even as I have kept My Father's Commandments, and abide in His Love**" (John 15:10). Thank God for the LORD Jesus' **commitment** to deliver us! "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50).

The Humanity of Christ. A great puzzle to the human mind is the humanity of the Son of God-- why the Eternal Logos "was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)? You correctly respond that He was born to die for our sins, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2Corinthians 5:21). But, such pain and suffering-- couldn't the Father have simplified it with less of each? Evidently not, for "His way is perfect" (2Samuel 22:31). Because the LORD Jesus is both truly God and truly man, His human sufferings served the purpose of perfecting the human character of our Sinless High Priest (Hebrews 4:15). "For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through sufferings" (2:10).

Sanctified by Suffering. If this suffering was necessary for the perfecting of the Messiah, a "Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1Peter 1:19), then how much **more** necessary is our suffering for our sanctification? "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin" (1Peter 4:1). Would this not also explain the timeless question of why God allows the Saints to suffer, i.e., "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7)? Sanctification like justification-- "justified by faith" (Romans 5:1) and "sanctified by faith" (Acts 26:18)-- is acquired by man through **faith** alone, i.e., "according to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). "And the very God of Peace **sanctify you wholly**; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our LORD Jesus Christ" (1Thessalonians 5:23).

A Faith Which Worketh by Love. Our rebellion at the prospect of our pain causes us to rationalize that our additional suffering is useless because Christ's work on the Cross is a finished work-- which it is. But, do not the Scriptures teach us that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20)? Truly, it was a necessity for the Reformers to emphasize the primacy of Salvation by faith alone-- "the just shall live by faith" (Galatians 3:11). But, though Romanism perverted the very idea of works-- emphasizing self-righteous works, i.e., of which are truly said that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6)-- the works of faith are a **vital fruit** for any who are genuinely planted in the Vine of Christ. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth **much fruit**: for **without Me ye can do nothing**" (John 15:5). Rather than making war against works in the name of faith, i.e., Antinomianism, should we not simply admit the supremacy of a "**faith which worketh by Love**" (Galatians 5:6)? "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith **by** my works" (James 2:18).

God Worketh in Us to Will and to Do. Certainly, we take too much upon ourselves to equate any amount of our own suffering as the expiation for any amount of sins. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). **Only** the work of Christ on the Cross finishes and settles forever the atonement for our sins. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**" (Hebrews 10:10). However, "though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8); therefore, the "Shepherd and Bishop of [our] souls" (1Peter 2:25) sanctifies us by the "washing of water **by the Word**" (Ephesians 5:26), allowing us to "work out [our] own Salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12), recognizing that it is still "God which worketh in [us] both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (2:13).

Love is Perfected in Them That Obey Him. It is recorded that Christ said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father Which hath sent Me" (John 5:30). The Lamb of God was committed to do the will of the Father and to keep His Commandments. "**If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My Love; even as I have kept My Father's Commandments, and abide in His Love**" (15:10). In the Garden of Gethsemane, our LORD prayed to the Father, "I have glorified Thee on the Earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do... For I have given unto them the Words which Thou gavest Me; and they have **received** them" (17:4,8). Thereby, the LORD Jesus verified **why** the Heavenly Father loves His Son, because the Son **always obeys** the Father. "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7). When the LORD Jesus was baptized, the Father said, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). And, why, but for obedience, would the Father be so well pleased? "But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected: **hereby know** we that we are in Him" (1John 2:5).

Following the Example of Christ. As with the Son, so it is with the Saints. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow His steps" (1Peter 2:21). In Charles M. Sheldon's worthy book, "In His Steps" (1896), the author attempted to portray a story based upon the proposition, "What would Jesus do?" Sheldon's main character, a minister by the name of Henry Maxwell, attempted to follow in the steps of Christ. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40). "In His Steps" came at a time when the Social Gospel was competing with the Old Time Religion for relevance to the plight of modern man. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). The sickly, unemployed tramp that stumbled into the First Church was Sheldon's device to prick the conscience of his readers to practice the religion of Jesus in **all** areas of human endeavor. "Thou shalt Love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:39). [See the section, "[Modernism and the Social Gospel](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html#Modernism)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html#Modernism> --, of our article, "[Babylon the Great \(Part 3\)](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html> --, to see this concept developed. Also, read Charles M. Sheldon's "[In His Steps](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Stories/In.His.Steps.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Stories/In.His.Steps.html> -- in the "[Stories](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/WStS.Stories.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/WStS.Stories.html> -- section of our website.]

Obedience is a Test of Sonship. If the professed Christian can debate about the necessity to obey a clear command of the LORD Jesus, then the Spirit of Christ has pledged to withhold His testimony to the debater's sonship, i.e., even to testify of the debater's **complete lack** of sonship. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now" (1John 2:9). A test of the Truth of whether we Love God, Whom we have not seen, is whether we obey the command to "Love [our] neighbour" (James 2:8), whom we have seen. "If a man say, I Love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God Whom he hath not seen?" (1John 4:20). **In short, failure on the part of any professed Christian to follow the example of Christ's obedience to the Commandments of the Father is to despise the Word of God.** "Because he hath despised the Word of the LORD, and hath **broken** His Commandment, that soul shall **utterly** be cut off; his iniquity **shall be upon him**" (Numbers 15:31).

The Secret to a Life of Obedience is to Abide in Christ. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me" (John 15:4). If we do not continue to see **our very life wrapped up in Christ**, then we will **not** be compelled by His Spirit to keep His Commandments. "LORD, Thou wilt ordain peace for us: for Thou also hast wrought **all** our works in us" (Isaiah 26:12). The wisdom of Solomon understood the importance of trusting God to work in the Saints that inclination to obey, i.e., as can be seen from his dedicatory prayer of the First Temple. "That **He may incline** our hearts unto Him, to walk in **all** His Ways, and to keep His Commandments, and His Statutes, and His Judgments, which He commanded our fathers" (1Kings 8:58). This facility or inclination to obey God is just what the prophet Ezekiel predicted. "26 A new heart also will **I give** you, and a new Spirit will **I put** within you: and **I will take away** the stony heart out of your flesh, and **I will give** you an heart of flesh. 27 And **I will put** My Spirit within you, and **cause you to walk** in My Statutes, and ye shall **keep** My Judgments, and **do** them" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). [Concerning abiding in Christ, our article, "[He Will Subdue Our Iniquities](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquities.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquities.html> --, deals with that subject, and is based upon the promise of Micah 7:19 that the Mighty Jehovah **will do exactly that** in us-- while still on Earth!]

The Inclination to Obey God. Jeremiah also wrote concerning the same inclination to obey God. "31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a New Covenant [New Testament] with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah... 33 But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, **I will put** My Law in their inward parts, **and write** It in their hearts; **and will be** their God, and they **shall be** My people" (Jeremiah 31:31,33). And, strange as it may seem to the New Testament Church, we have **already** been provided the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit since the Pentecost of Acts 2. "38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive The Gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the **Promise** is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39).

Forgetting Our First Love. Wherein lies the difficulty? Why does the New Testament Church seem to have as much **problem** with disobedience as did Old Testament Israel? Like the Israelites of old, we have forgotten what "God **hath wrought**" (Daniel 4:2) for us. "13 They soon forgat **His works**; they waited not for **His Counsel**... 21 They forgat God their Saviour, **which had done** great things in Egypt" (Psalm 106:13,21). Like the Church of Ephesus, we have spiritually forgotten the "great Love wherewith [Christ] loved us" (Ephesians 2:4), we have left our Original Love. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy First Love" (Revelation 2:4). The solution is obvious. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and **repent, and do the first works**; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and *will remove thy candlestick out of his place*, except thou repent" (2:5).

Repentance Restores Obedience. So then, **the immediate act of obedience required by God is our repentance**-- for we did sinfully withhold our obedience to His clear commands. "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee **to repentance**?" (Romans 2:4). Repentance restores the blessing and power of the promised Spirit of the New Covenant. "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that **obey Him**" (Acts 5:32). And again, we would find ourselves disposed to obey Him. "Thy people **shall be willing** in the Day of Thy power" (Psalm 110:3). Restored obedience causes the Saints to "**Love His appearing**" (2Timothy 4:8). "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His Coming" (1John 2:28).

Separation: Christ's Example for Our Holiness

To Be Separate From Sinners Describes Christ's Holiness. The One Mediator "between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1Timothy 2:5) prayed His high priestly prayer for us in Gethsemane, "Keep them **from** the Evil... **Sanctify** them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:15,17). Not only did He pray for our separation from sin while in the world, by our sanctification through the Word of God, but He set the example of separating from sin and sinners-- in the only way that could reach us. "For such an High Priest became us, **Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners**, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 7:26). The reference to "separate from sinners" (7:26) speaks of the holiness of Christ our High Priest, Who is the "Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:14), "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1Peter 2:22).

The Son of Man Chose to Be Holy. While on Earth, Jesus the Son of Man was holy, **not** because of His divinity, i.e., "God is holy" (Psalm 99:9), **but because of His own free choice**, i.e., "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with **strong crying and tears** unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (Hebrews 5:7). The "strong crying and tears" (5:7) of our LORD demonstrated that His holiness while on Earth was a demonstration of His own free choice, i.e., being a **moral attribute** such as justice, mercy, truth, and wisdom; and, that holiness was not necessitated and forced upon Him by His existence due to His being truly God, i.e., not a **natural attribute** such as eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, spirituality, and immutability. "For ye know the grace [help] of our LORD Jesus Christ, that, though He **was** rich [with the Heavenly Glory of His natural Divine attributes], yet for your sakes **He became poor** [while continuing to be God, He **temporarily set aside** the Heavenly Glory of those natural Divine attributes while upon Earth], that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2Corinthians 8:9).

All Honor to the Son of Man for the Magnificent Work He Displayed in His Earthly Ministry! Much greater respect, appreciation, and admiration **ought** to be accorded to the LORD Jesus Christ for His Earthly accomplishments:

- (1) He was manifested as a genuine human being, in the flesh, while still being very God, i.e., "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1Timothy 3:16), and
- (2) He demonstrated that God created man to "**be perfect with the LORD**" (Deuteronomy 18:13) **or sinless**, i.e., "justified in the Spirit" (1Timothy 3:16). What else can be said of Christ's sinless earthly life, but that He was "justified in the Spirit" (3:16), or justified **in the conduct** of His spiritual life?

Our LORD Jesus Christ Lived His Earthly Life by Faith. We sometimes forget that **our LORD experienced the same limitations** that we face:

- (1) grief and sorrows, i.e., "3 He is **despised** and **rejected** of men; a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. 4 Surely He hath **borne our griefs**, and **carried our sorrows**: yet we did esteem Him **stricken, smitten** of God, and **afflicted**" (Isaiah 53:3-4),

- (2) sufferings and temptation, i.e., "For in that He Himself hath **suffered being tempted**, He is able to succour [help] them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18), and
- (3) circumstances requiring additional Wisdom from the Heavenly Father, i.e., "And Jesus **increased in Wisdom** and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Was not the Father "well pleased" (Matthew 17:5) with His Only Begotten Son; and, **what else but faith** can "please Him" (Hebrews 11:6)? So, the LORD Jesus had to overcome His circumstances the **same** way we ought-- **by faith alone**. Christ the Just (Acts 3:14) lived His earthly life by faith, for the "just shall live by His faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

Separation According to the Spirit and Not the Letter of the Law. Some also forget the example of the LORD Jesus, and begin to draw lines of separation according to the letter of the Law, and not the Spirit of the Law. "And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" (Matthew 9:11). Our LORD demonstrated the simplicity of faith when He pointed out that His wise association with sinners was **only** for the purpose of seeking their repentance. "When Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17). The Pharisees, of which Christ spoke, were separatists, for their very name is taken from the Hebrew word *parash*, which means "to separate". These were those characterized by Scripture as saying, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou" (Isaiah 65:5).

The Religion of the Pharisees Was a Hypocritical Contradiction.

- (1) They stood for the Ceremonial Law's separation from uncleanness, i.e., "To make a difference between the unclean and the clean" (Leviticus 11:47)-- which was good for the Old Covenant, but not the New-- yet used it to cover the filth of their hearts, i.e., "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess" (Matthew 23:25).
- (2) They stood for the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, i.e., "And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it" (Habakkuk 2:2)-- which is still good-- but allowed tradition to relieve them of **true** obedience to God's commands, i.e., "9 And He said unto them, **Full well ye reject the Commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition... 13 Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition**" (Mark 7:9,13), and
- (3) They taught the Scriptural concept of the "hope and resurrection of the dead" (Acts 23:6), but were instrumental in **crucifying** Jesus Christ-- the "LORD of Glory" (1Corinthians 2:8)-- **the very Hope of the Resurrection Himself** (John 11:25)!

Our LORD rebuked the Pharisees for their sanctimonious hypocrisy, **not for their adherence** to the Ceremonial Law, literal interpretation of the Scriptures, or hope of the resurrection; for the LORD Jesus Christ Himself was minutely fastidious about fulfilling the Law. "For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till **all** be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18).

True Scriptural Separation is Simply the Practice of Holiness. God's New Testament command for separation is a **separation from sin and sinning**, which is **the same as the practice of holiness**. "15 But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1Peter 1:15-16). If we should find ourselves in the compromising situation of abiding in the enemy's camp-- Church Discipline certainly not possible-- then we **must** leave, as Martin Luther did! "**Come out** from among them, and **be ye separate**, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2Corinthians 6:17). But, when sin appears in the camp of the Believers, then True Scriptural Separation demands the Church Discipline of Matthew 18. "15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matthew 18:15-17). Scriptural Separation is first and last a matter of **personal** holiness, **not** simply a checklist provided to us by a human religious organization as to who is or is not considered to be in good standing. For in the end, it is **personal** "holiness, without which **no** man shall see the LORD" (Hebrews 12:14).

If We Refuse to Separate From Sin, Then God Must Separate From Us. "But your iniquities **have separated** between you and your God, and your sins have **hid** His face from you, that **He will not hear**" (Isaiah 59:2). If we persist in refusing to

separate from sin, then thoughtful, Godly Christians must withdraw Spiritual fellowship from us. "Now we **command** you, brethren, in the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from **every** brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition [of the Word of God] which he received of us" (2Thessalonians 3:6). In fact, the Apostle Paul **commanded** the Corinthians to deal with a disorderly brother by delivering him to Satan for dealing which would bring him to repentance. "1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be **taken away** from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have **judged already**, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our LORD Jesus Christ, 5 To **deliver such an one unto Satan** for the destruction of the flesh, **that the spirit may be saved** in the Day of the LORD Jesus" (1Corinthians 5:1-5).

Our Separation From Babylon the Great Will Place Us Outside the Camp Bearing the Reproach-- With Jesus. "12 Wherefore Jesus also, **that He might sanctify the people** with His own blood, suffered without the gate. 13 Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Hebrews 13:12-13). Sometimes, **our obedience may require us to stand alone.** "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation" (Jeremiah 15:17). If the company of the Godly cannot be found, then the company of the LORD Jesus outside the camp will **more** than suffice. "I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will **not** sit with the wicked" (Psalm 26:5). As we rapidly approach the Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ, we should not think it strange that we must separate from professed brethren-- for "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" (2Timothy 3:13)-- not simply to attempt to restore them, but to **preserve** our own holiness. "22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, **pulling them out of the fire**; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).

Judgment: Christ's Example for Our Righteousness

The Righteous Judge Demonstrated How We Ought to Righteously Judge. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the LORD, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that Love His Appearing" (2Timothy 4:8). The Enemy has attempted to blunt the Pilgrim's Two Edged Sword by perverting our LORD's Words and teaching the Church the false doctrine that Christian Love is contrary to judging a Brother, saying, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). However, Jesus, our Example for Living the Christian Life (1Peter 2:21), not only demonstrated by His earthly example of Righteous Judgment in casting the money changers out of the Temple-- "45 And He went into the Temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; 46 Saying unto them, It is written, My House is the House of Prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Luke 19:45-46)-- but He positively taught us to judge **righteous** judgment. "Judge not according to the appearance, but **judge righteous judgment**" (John 7:24).

Hypocritical Judgment is the Unrighteous Judgment That is Forbidden. It is clearly an example of **not** "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (2Timothy 2:15) to say that our LORD taught that it is forbidden to judge our brethren. Consider just what the LORD Jesus said.

- (1) "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). This condemnation of judging **hypocritically** is another way of saying what the Apostle Paul said to the Romans, i.e., "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest **doest the same things**" (Romans 2:1).
- (2) "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:2). It is a Scriptural certainty that the Righteous Judge will reward the Righteous and the Wicked according to our works. "For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head" (Obadiah 1:15).
- (3) "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Matthew 7:3). The Almighty rejoices to find an Abraham who will "do justice and judgment" (Genesis 18:19), but He hates the unmerciful, self-justifying, self-righteous, **beam-in-the-eye judges** who would condemn a woman "taken in adultery" (John 8:4)-- not because of their hatred of sin and sinning-- but only to express their opposition to God, i.e., "that they might have to accuse Him" (8:6).
- (4) "Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?" (Matthew 7:4). Righteous judgment is **impossible** while we "regard iniquity in [our] heart" (Psalm 66:18); therefore, it begins with the personal confession of our own sins-- for **if** we confess our sins, He is Faithful and Just

to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9).

- (5) "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and **then shalt thou see clearly to cast out** the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5). Only **after** we have our fellowship restored with the Saviour, can we be useful in restoring a brother "overtaken in a fault" (Galatians 6:1); and then, we will be able to **clearly judge and righteously see** the mote that needs to be cast out of our brother's eye. And,
- (6) "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matthew 7:6). Righteous judgment obviously necessitates telling the difference between "holy" and "dogs", "pearls" and "swine" (7:6).

*If Satan can persuade us through false doctrine to avoid Righteous Judgment, **then the Professed Church will be transformed into the cursed Babylon the Great, i.e., "that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"** (Isaiah 5:20).*

Ye Shall Do No Unrighteousness in Judgment. Not surprisingly, the Old Testament speaks of judging our neighbor in the same breath as judging in righteousness. "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour" (Leviticus 19:15). This is the unchanging Moral Law, and **not** a statement from the Ceremonial Law-- which was the "shadow of good things to come, and not the very image" (Hebrews 10:1). After the New Covenant was instituted by the "blood of Christ" (Hebrews 9:14) at Calvary and sealed by the outpouring of "The Gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38) at Pentecost, the Ceremonial Law was set aside. And, it is still correct to say that we ought to keep the Royal Law, i.e. "If ye fulfil the Royal Law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt Love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (James 2:8).

Meekly Restoring a Fallen Brother is Judging Righteous Judgment. It is blessedness for two to "walk together" (Amos 3:3) in agreement. Further, as "iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). If that friend falls into sin, would it not be an act of Love and friendship to judge our brother's sin and attempt to restore him? "1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are Spiritual, restore such an one in the Spirit Of Meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1-2). We fulfill the requirements of the Unchanging Moral Law when we bear "one another's burdens" (6:2) by righteously judging their sin and attempting to "restore such an one in the Spirit Of Meekness" (6:1). This is the finest application of the Royal Law (James 2:8) to a Backslidden Brother. "For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word, even in this; Thou shalt Love thy neighbour as thyself" (Galatians 5:14). We ought to be careful about committing the same sin-- or worse-- "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (6:1). And, by **active** faith in the Promises of God, we need not live in fear of being subdued by our iniquities, because we have the Great Jehovah's Word that He will not allow sin to dominate us, i.e., "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace" (Romans 6:14). [Both our articles, "[Exceeding Great and Precious Promises](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Exceeding.Promises.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Promises/Exceeding.Promises.html> -- and "[He Will Subdue Our Iniquities](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquit.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquit.html> -- based on 2Peter 1:4 and Micah 7:19, respectively-- give Promise and hope to those who walk by the Royal Law of Love.]

Standing in Faith is Judging Righteous Judgment. Whenever the Righteous take a **stand in faith**, it condemns the unbelief of those who refuse the Word of God. "**By faith** Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; **by the which he condemned the world**, and became heir of the righteousness which is **by faith**" (Hebrews 11:7). Just as Noah's faith was his justification, as well as the condemnation of the Unbelieving Antediluvian World, the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's golden image "in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon" (Daniel 3:1), was **justification** of their faithfulness and **condemnation** of all those that did worship before Nebuchadnezzar's idol of gold. "When thou passest through the waters, **I will be with thee**; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2). The LORD Jesus **abides** with those who righteously judge because of Him. "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and **the form of the fourth is like the Son of God**" (Daniel 3:25).

Opposing the Antichrist During the Tribulation Week is Judging Righteous Judgment. The Tribulation Saints are those who **will** face the Antichrist during the Tribulation Week (Daniel 9:27). Though God's people will "**do exploits**" and "**instruct many**", they will face "sword", "flame", "captivity", and "spoil" in order to "try", "purge", and "make them white". "32 And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but **the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits**. 33 And **they that understand among the people shall instruct many**: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. 34 Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little

help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. 35 And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed" (Daniel 11:32-35). [See our article, "[Why Must There Be a Pre-Tribulational Rapture?](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Must.Pre.Trib.Rapture.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Must.Pre.Trib.Rapture.html> --, for a discussion of that subject. Also, "[A Tale of Ten Virgins](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/A.Tale.of.Ten.Virgins.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/A.Tale.of.Ten.Virgins.html> -- is a warning for those who look forward to a Pre-Tribulational Rapture.]

Refusing the Mark of the Beast During Daniel's 70th Week is Judging Righteous Judgment. The Tribulation Saints will be faced with the necessity of worshipping the Antichrist-- which they will refuse. "And he [the False Prophet of Babylon the Great] exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:12). Death for the Saints during the Tribulation Week will be twofold:

- (1) Refusal for anyone to worship the Antichrist will mean death, i.e., "And he [the False Prophet of Babylon the Great] had power to give life unto the image of the beast [image of the Antichrist], that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (13:15). And,
- (2) The worship of the Antichrist will be tied to everyone's ability to buy and sell; hence, to survive, i.e., "16 And he [the False Prophet of Babylon the Great] causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (13:16-17). "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

For the Tribulation Saints, Blessing Will Come Upon Those Who Judged Righteous Judgment. Those who receive the Mark of the Beast are assured of receiving the Wrath of God, i.e., "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the Mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image" (16:2). But, blessing is assured to the martyrs who **righteously judged, separated** from the Antichrist, and **refused** his Mark. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and **judgment was given unto them**: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his Mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years**" (20:4). "22 **Blessed** are ye, when men shall **hate you**, and when they shall **separate you** from their company, and shall **reproach you**, and **cast out your name** as evil, **for the Son of Man's sake**. 23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your Reward is great in Heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets" (Luke 6:22-23).

Separating From Babylon the Great is to Stand With Christ in the Judgment. King Jehoshaphat of Judah instructed his judges with the following words, that as righteous judges, we would do well to heed. "**Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, Who is with you in the judgment**" (2Chronicles 19:6). **To judge that Babylon the Great is worthy of our separating from her, means that our LORD will accompany us in our separation and stand with us.** "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1). It is impossible to estimate the total worth of righteously judging our relationship to Babylon the Great-- and separating from her. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2Corinthians 4:17). Instead of counting the cost of our separation from Babylon the Great too dear, we ought to **rejoice in the Eminently Worthy Company of our LORD, the Righteous Judge** (2Timothy 4:8)-- **outside** of Babylon. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

Conclusion

Doctrine without application is spiritual death, for "faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). The study of Bible Prophecy without a corresponding growth "in grace" (2Peter 3:18) is a demonstration of **not** being taught of the Spirit about **the character** of our LORD Jesus Christ. "13 Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. 14 **He shall glorify Me**: for **He shall receive of Mine**, and **shall shew it unto you**. 15 All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:13-15).

Discussions of End Time Events, i.e., the Pre-Tribulational Rapture, and Chronologies, i.e., an expectation of being Raptured before the Year 2000 ("Y2K"), are intensely interesting, but **our conduct** in the meantime is of the utmost importance. "14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time,

and then vanisheth away. 15 For that ye ought to say, **If the LORD will**, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:14-15). Thus, when the Word of God gives the **command** to separate from Babylon the Great, it remains only for the instructed Believer to make the personal application required for their situation-- and **depart** from Babylon. "And I heard another Voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). Love will **always** obey, for "**if ye love me, keep My Commandments**" (John 14:15) is the **cry and command** of our LORD and Saviour.

If we were to "speak with the tongues of men and of angels" (1Corinthians 13:1) without **the obedience of Love**, then we would be as empty and worthless "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (13:1). If we possessed the "gift of prophecy", understood "all mysteries, and all knowledge", and had "all faith" to "remove mountains", **but did not have loving obedience to the command to come out of Babylon the Great**, then we would be as "**nothing**" in the sight of God (13:2). If we bestowed all our "goods to feed the poor" and gave our bodies "to be burned", it "profiteth" us "**nothing**" (13:3). Whatever we say, if we will not come out of Babylon the Great, we **do not** love God. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him **it is sin**" (James 4:17).

⋮

Part 5: **Billy Graham: Christianity's Modern Balaam**

"Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD"

(2Chronicles 19:2).

Preface

A CNN/USA Today/Gallup survey was taken of the American public on December 28th-29th 1998, sampling 1,055 adult Americans' opinions of whom they "admire the most". "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of Me" (Isaiah 30:1). Despite the House of Representatives' vote to impeach him, President Bill Clinton was voted the most admired man-- "living in any part of the world"-- for the second consecutive year. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD" (55:8). It came as no surprise that NBA sports star Michael Jordan was included near the top of that list-- 4th most admired. However, the 2nd most admired was the only one of the top four that is not an American-- Pope John Paul II. "Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon" (Jeremiah 20:5). The individual that ranked as the 3rd most admired man-- by this "evil and adulterous generation" (Matthew 12:39)-- in 1998's year end poll, was Billy Graham, the Southern Baptist evangelist known throughout the world. But, "11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (5:11-12).

How Could This Happen?

Jesus Christ, the Judge, "standeth before the door" (James 5:9), and the Apostasy preceding His Second Coming is already in progress. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find Faith on the Earth?" (Luke 18:8). Though it may seem that the entire world has capitulated to Babylon the Great, the God of All Comfort assures His people, "I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal" (Romans 11:4). The transformation of Professed Christianity into Babylon the Great must accelerate as the Man of Sin must shortly be revealed. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13). Though Christ's free gift of salvation is offered to the world-- and "few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14)-- apparently even fewer have an "understanding of the times, to know what Israel [i.e., the Godly] ought to do" (1Chronicles 12:32). [See our articles, "[An Earnest Appeal to Roman Catholics, Or, Roman Catholicism Examined in Light of the Scriptures](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html> --and "[Babylon the Great \(Part 2\), The Reformation and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html> --, for an exposition of Rome's doctrine and history.]

How could this degeneration take place for the Professed Church, if the Godly continue to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2Peter 3:18)? Obviously, the Professed Church has ceased to grow, but has become "as a backsliding heifer" (Hosea 4:16). The command of the Holy One-- "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1Peter 1:16)-- has been minimized or sinfully ignored, i.e., "Christians aren't perfect-- just forgiven". As the Saints became "weary in well doing" (Galatians 6:9), instead of reproving the "unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11), they opened their arms of fellowship to Babylon the Great in the name of Unity and Christian Love. But, "what saith the Scripture?" (Romans 4:3). "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD" (2Chronicles 19:2).

Billy Graham: His Early Life and Ministry

Outside of the Pope, one of the best known names of the modern Christian culture is that of Billy Graham-- William Franklin Graham, Jr.-- born in 1918. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). At the age of 16, Billy Graham made a public profession of faith in the LORD Jesus Christ, under the preaching of Baptist evangelist, Mordechai Ham (1877-1961). "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11). In 1936, Graham briefly attended Bob Jones College (now Bob Jones University of Greenville, South Carolina [USA])-- founded by Bob Jones, Sr. (1883-1968), Fundamentalist evangelist-- citing an inability to adjust to Bob Jones campus life as his reason for leaving. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). He then transferred to Florida Bible Institute (now Trinity College). At this time, he began his life-long membership in the Southern Baptist Convention. Graduating in 1940, he then entered Wheaton College, where he also graduated; and, in 1943, he married Ruth Bell (b. 1920), daughter of missionaries to China and Korea. "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh" (Matthew 19:5).

During his early ministry, Billy Graham became a well known evangelistic figure among the Fundamentalist, Bible preaching churches of America, but still not a byword to America's religious mainstream. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1). From 1945 to 1948, Graham assisted Torrey Johnson, organizing rallies and speaking for the Youth for Christ organization. "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed" (John 8:31). In 1947, William B. Riley (1861-1947)-- ardent Fundamentalist, who fought the drift of the Northern Baptist Convention into Modernism's Social Gospel-- persuaded Graham to accept the leadership of Northwestern Schools in Minneapolis, Minnesota [USA]. "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint" (Proverbs 25:19).

After all, in 1948, at the annual convention of the fundamentalist 'Conservative Baptist Association', Billy Graham was asked: "What do you expect the World Council of Churches to do this August when you visit Copenhagen?" Graham replied, "I believe they are going to nominate the Anti-Christ" (from Ian R. K. Paisley's "Billy Graham and the Church of Rome" [1970], p. 46). Contrast that to Graham's 1974 statement at the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland: "I have nothing but the warmest of relations with the World Council of Churches" (from Dr. Bert Oatley-Willis' "Billy Graham: The Facts" [Toronto Free Presbyterian Church]). "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

1949-- A Year of Decision for Billy Graham

Let an excerpt from a biography of Billy Graham, "Billy Graham and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association - Historical Background", prepared by the staff of the Billy Graham Center Archives at Wheaton College-- since 1980, the designated repository for the papers of Graham and the records of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA)-- inform us of the **sudden** transformation of Billy Graham at the close of 1949. "Within evangelical and fundamentalist communities in America, Graham was quite well known. At the end of 1949, he suddenly came into national prominence. An evangelistic campaign Graham was leading in Los Angeles resulted in the dramatic conversion of a local underworld figure and a prominent disc jockey, among others. The newspaper magnate, William Randolph Hearst, for reasons unknown, ordered his publications to 'puff Graham' and other newspapers around the country followed suit. The campaign, planned for three weeks, lasted seven. Next, Graham went to Boston for a scheduled series of campaigns and again the results were spectacular. He then went on to Columbia, South Carolina, where he met publisher Henry Luce, who was impressed with the evangelist and had articles about him written for his publications, Time and Life magazines." "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26).

The Way of Balaam

But, why identify the name of the wicked prophet, Balaam, with that of Billy Graham, a Bible preaching evangelist?

- (1) Billy Graham, like Balaam, gives credence to the Word of God. Balaam said, "I cannot go beyond the Word of the LORD my God, to do less or more" (Numbers 22:18). Billy Graham affirms, "The Bible says".
- (2) Billy Graham, like Balaam, encourages unscriptural compromise. Balaam encouraged Israel to "commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab" (Numbers 25:1), while Graham encouraged a Roman Catholic couple, disillusioned with their Catholic church-- as reported in the "Sun Telegram" (January 6th 1973)-- "Don't pull out of the [Catholic] church. Stay in it ... help your church". And,
- (3) Billy Graham, like Balaam, ostensibly refuses riches to pursue his ministry. Balaam replied to Balak's messengers, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the Word of the LORD my God, to do less or more" (Numbers 22:18). Though the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) took in over \$102 million in 1991, Billy Graham's salary was just a little over \$100,000. Money seems to be less of a motivator for Graham than the praise and adulation of man, i.e., the satisfaction that presidents and world leaders would give audience to his counsel. "5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the spirit of error" (1John 4:5-6).

A thoughtful evaluation of the ministry of Billy Graham will reveal that **Billy Graham has been mightily used of Satan to break down the walls of separation between the Godly and the ungodly**. "And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine" (Leviticus 20:26). It will also reveal that Billy Graham's most effective work for Babylon the Great has been that of masquerading as a Bible believing evangelist-- doing "the work of the LORD deceitfully" (Jeremiah 48:10)-- seducing unwary Pilgrims into laying aside the "Sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) in the name of Christian Love and Unity. If the Pope had approached the Bible-Believing-Evangelical-Community with the need for Ecumenical Unity in previous generations, he would have been viewed with suspicion-- on account of the corruptions of the Medieval Catholic Church, the terrors of the Inquisition, the wicked absurdity of Papal infallibility, etc. "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

But, when Billy Graham, who is supposed to be a respected leader of the Bible-Believing-Evangelical-Community, calls for Love and Christian Unity with **the Church of Rome**, i.e., **Babylon the Great**, it becomes palatable to the rank and file. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20). Though **Billy Graham** is only one of "many antichrists" (1John 2:18)-- for he **opposes** the necessity to "come out of" Babylon the Great (Revelation 18:4), which is the antichristian Church of Rome-- he does **prepare the way for the False Prophet and the Antichrist**. "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2John 11). [See our article, "[Babylon the Great \(Part 3\), The Ecumenical Movement and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html> --, to trace the prophetic significance of the False Love and Unity of Ecumenism.]

A Chronology of the Compromise of Billy Graham With Babylon the Great.

1966, December 6th. A National Council of Churches-- or, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Inc., which is "the largest ecumenical body in the United States, with a membership of about 40 million" (Britannica CD 99)-- committee invited Billy Graham to speak at a December 6th luncheon. Dr. Graham said, "We need to remind ourselves of such scriptures as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, 'Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.' [2Corinthians 6:17] Now some people have interpreted that verse to mean the National Council-- that you're to come out and touch not the unclean thing. (Laughter) That's not the meaning there, the meaning is paganism-- the evils of the world. Indeed we're to go into the world, and mingle with the publicans and sinners but we're not to participate in the moral and social evils" (from Ian R. K. Paisley's "Billy Graham and the Church of Rome", pp. 27-28). Concerning Graham's mocking of spiritual separation, "Fools make a mock at sin" (Proverbs 14:9). Ian Paisley wisely assessed that the purpose of the Ecumenical Movement is the final union of all churches with Babylon the Great. "Without a doubt the aim of both the National Council of Churches in America, and the World Council of Churches on the international level is the final unity of all churches with the Roman Catholic Church" (Paisley, "Billy Graham and the Church of Rome", p. 25). Concerning Babylon the Great, "a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit" (23:27).

1967, November 21st. Belmont Abbey College, a Roman Catholic school in Belmont, North Carolina (USA), climaxed the

week long program of its Institute for Ecumenic Dialogue-- "designed to promote understanding among Catholic and Protestant clergymen"-- with the presentation of an honorary degree of doctor of humane letters (D.H.L.) to Southern Baptist evangelist, Billy Graham. "The gospel that built this school and the gospel that brings me here tonight is still the way of salvation," Graham assured his audience of 1,700 Protestants and Catholics (from an article, "Belmont Abbey Confers Honorary Degree" by Paul Smith, taken from the "The Gastonia Gazette" [North Carolina] November 22, 1967). "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Galatians 1:6).

1968, July 5th. In the magazine "Christianity Today"-- founded in 1955 by Graham, his father-in-law L. Nelson Bell, and others "to present the evangelical viewpoint to theologically liberal Protestant pastors" (from "Billy Graham and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association - Historical Background" of the Billy Graham Center Archives at Wheaton College)-- Graham spoke of cooperation with the Church of Rome, saying, "I don't think we have all to unite and be one big church to do the work of God, but there are areas where we can cooperate" (from Dr. Bert Oatley-Willis' "Billy Graham: The Facts" [Toronto Free Presbyterian Church]). Billy Graham was speaking of willingness to cooperate with Babylon the Great, i.e., to have "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11). This step in Graham's disobedience formed part of a gradual slide away from any kind of Scriptural separation. "But the Word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken" (Isaiah 28:13).

1977, June 3rd. "Would Billy Graham conduct a crusade at the Vatican? If a place were made available and Christian leaders in Rome wanted him to, he might. No campaign in Catholicism's capital is on the evangelist's calendar now, but his five-day crusade last month [May 1977] on the Notre Dame University Campus proved he is not afraid to go deep into Roman Catholic territory. It also showed that many elements in the once hostile Catholic community are now receptive to Graham's type of ministry. Graham's sermons were of the type that audiences around the world have heard, with only a few more references to such Catholics as Bishop Fulton Sheen and Mother Teresa of Calcutta" (from "Christianity Today" June 3, 1977). Even King David would have to disagree with Billy Graham's unscriptural evangelism. "4 I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers [pretenders]. 5 I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked" (Psalm 26:4-5). When Billy Graham began to refuse to keep his evangelistic crusades from being sponsored by the enemies of the Gospel of Christ, then he openly surrendered his ministry to the Devil. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Proverbs 4:14). Billy Graham forgot that only the methods of the LORD could properly promote his ministry. "6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. 7 But God is the Judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:6-7).

1978, January. In an interview given to "McCall's Magazine" Graham said, "I used to believe that pagans in far off countries were lost going to hell if they did not have the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached to them. I no longer believe that. I believe that there are **other ways** of recognizing God through nature for instance and plenty of other ways of saying 'yes' to God". But, Dr. Graham, what happened to the Gospel necessity of turning **solely** to Jesus Christ in faith? "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association later issued a statement citing Graham as saying, "On the whole I am pleased with the accuracy of the article (McCall's)... a few statements unfortunately convey meanings which I never intended. This may be due to my own failure to make myself as plain as I should have". However, in the same McCall's article, Graham said, "I've found that my beliefs are essentially the same as those of orthodox Roman Catholics... we differ on some matters of later church tradition". Notice how the difference between Graham and the universal Church of Rome is admittedly nonexistent. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The Scripture telling of the degeneration of evil men, i.e., Billy Graham's departure from salvation by faith alone in Christ Jesus, must also be true. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13).

1979, September. "The Christian Courier" of Milwaukee, Wisconsin published the following report on their recent Milwaukee Crusade: "Sister Maureen Hopkins, Director of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission of the Milwaukee Roman Catholic Archdiocese, and a liaison member of the Crusade committee, reported that 120 people have volunteered within the Catholic community to help her with the task of contacting each of the 3,500 inquiries. Sr. Maureen received the names and telephone numbers from the Crusade Committee, based upon the inquirers indication of leaving a Catholic background on his inquiry card... All 3,500 were immediately invited to a Eucharistic celebration which was held on August 16 at St. Theresa's Church in Milwaukee. The mass was attended by more than 400 people. The primary purpose for the mass was to remind the inquirers that their commitments to Christ should be nurtured within the sacramental framework of the [Catholic] church." "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:1).

"Christianity Today" for September 7, 1979 pointed out that "Graham had sent a team member almost a year before the Crusade to conduct a seminar on the working of the Crusade for Milwaukee [Catholic] priests and lay workers". Pastor John

Ashbrook writes, "It is a tragedy that 3,500 decision cards were turned over to the Roman Catholic Church, but, it is a worse tragedy when you realize that it did not 'happen,' It was planned by the world's best-known evangelist" (from John Ashbrook's "Billy Graham's Catholic Connection"). "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness" (Jeremiah 22:13).

1979, September 27th. On the eve of the Papal visit to the United States in 1979, The Religious News Service produced a September 27, 1979 dispatch which quoted Billy Graham as follows: "The visit of Pope Paul II to the United States is an event of great significance not only for Roman Catholics, but for all Americans-- as well as the world... In the short time he has been Pope, John Paul II has become the moral leader of the world. My prayers and the prayer of countless other Protestants will be with him as he makes his journey" (from John Ashbrook's "Billy Graham's Catholic Connection"). "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers" (Psalm 50:18). And, "They that forsake the Law praise the wicked: but such as keep the Law contend with them" (Proverbs 28:4).

1980, January/February. Alan Cairns recorded that, "DR. GRAHAM HAILS THE POPE AS 'THE GREATEST RELIGIOUS LEADER OF THE MODERN WORLD.'" Billy Graham wrote this in a lengthy article in the "Saturday Evening Post" of January/February 1980, referring to John Paul II as "one of the greatest moral and spiritual leaders of this century" and "an evangelist" who "sought to speak to the spiritual hunger of our age in the same way Christians throughout the centuries have spoken to the spiritual yearning of every age-- by pointing people to Christ" (from Alan Cairns' "Billy Graham and His Bible" [Greenville, South Carolina-- in association with the Toronto Free Presbyterian Church]). When the Professed Church begins to believe such lies as Graham wrote for the "Saturday Evening Post", then the Scripture is rejected. "Let not an evil speaker be established in the Earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him" (Psalm 140:11). Also, the Scripture is spurned that declares, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy Precepts" (119:63).

1981. Billy Graham "met the pope for the first time, and was the first Protestant to speak at the North American College, a seminary for students from North America at the Vatican" (reported from "Roman Catholic- Evangelical Cooperation" at ReligiousTolerance.org-- an unscriptural website, i.e., "tolerant of all religious beliefs, accurate in our writing, and **inclusive**", run by two "Unitarian Universalists", one "Wiccan" [witch], and one "liberal but unaffiliated Christian"). "Come [quickly], LORD Jesus" (Revelation 22:20). Billy Graham's toleration of wickedness is the essence of his sin, i.e., hypocritical love. "Let love be without dissimulation [literally, hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). Any tolerance of that which is known to be evil, in the name of being balanced, fair, inclusive, etc. is a **devious** means of stripping the Saint of his holiness. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2Corinthians 6:17). When the very word "tolerance" can be used as a weapon against the Godly, then the enemy has come in like a flood. But, "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). Amen, and Amen!

1984, February 9th. John Ashbrook, pastor of Bible Community Church in Mentor, Ohio, reported that the Lake County (Ohio) "News Herald" of February 9, 1984 printed a headline stating: "Graham's Help on Vatican Ties". The article was an Associated Press release: "A spokesman for Billy Graham confirms that the evangelist played a behind-the-scenes role in President Reagan's decision to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican, a newspaper reported yesterday. Early in 1983, Graham was asked by the president and adviser William Clark to make informal, private inquiries among evangelical Protestant leaders about likely response to such an action, said Donald Bialy, media director for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Minneapolis. A copy of the seven-page letter that the Baptist evangelist sent to Clark was obtained by the Chicago Sun-Times, which quoted Graham as saying, 'If anyone can do it and get away with it, it is Mr. Reagan.'" Concerning the sinful overture of the United States to the Vatican, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). And concerning America's departure to Rome, "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13).

1989, June 8th. Commenting on a highlight of his life, Billy Graham offered this anecdote about a 1989 meeting with Pope John Paul II: "There was a pause in the conversation; suddenly the Pope's arm shot out and he grabbed the lapels of my coat, he pulled me forward within inches of his own face. He fixed his eyes on me and said, 'Listen Graham, we are brothers'" (from "Today" June 8, 1989). "Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go" (Proverbs 22:24). And, "Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders" (Jeremiah 9:4).

1995, June 2-8. "The European" reported, "DR. GRAHAM SENDS HIS ENQUIRERS INTO ROMAN CATHOLICISM, EASTERN ORTHODOXY, LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM, ETC." This has been a consistent policy since Billy Graham's early evangelistic days. "His name and address and a lot of information about him is taken and within 24 hours that is sent to a minister of the church of his choice regardless of denomination" (from an interview with Graham in the "U.S. News and World Report" of August 27, 1954). "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Why has

Billy Graham done this? Like Balaam, Billy Graham "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2Peter 2:15), i.e., the acceptance of man, the success of man, the materialism of man, etc. But, the "deceivableness of unrighteousness" (2Thessalonians 2:10) caused Billy Graham to believe the lie that he has done all of this for Jesus Christ. In the end, Billy Graham has no one to blame but Billy Graham. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13).

1997. In Billy Graham's autobiography, he made clear that his goal was not to lead people out of Roman Catholicism: "My goal, I always made clear, was not to preach against Catholic beliefs or to proselytize people who were already committed to Christ within the Catholic Church. Rather, it was to proclaim the Gospel to all those who had never truly committed their lives to Christ" (from Billy Graham's autobiography, "Just As I Am", p. 357). "3 If **any** man teach otherwise, and consent not to Wholesome Words, even the Words of our LORD Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth, supposing that gain is Godliness: **from such withdraw thyself**" (1Timothy 6:3-5).

1997, January. Larry King interviewed Billy Graham, and he easily induced Graham to make statements applauding the Pope and the Church of Rome.

KING: What do you think of the other [churches]... like Mormonism? Catholicism? Other faiths within the Christian concept?

GRAHAM: Oh, I think I have a wonderful fellowship with all of them. For example...

KING: You're comfortable with Salt Lake City? You're comfortable with the Vatican?

GRAHAM: I am very comfortable with the Vatican. I have been to see the Pope several times. In fact, preaching in his cathedral in Krakow. I was his guest... [and] when he was over here... in Columbia, South Carolina... he invited me on the platform to speak with him. I would give one talk, and he would give the other...

KING: You like this Pope?

GRAHAM: I like him very much.... He and I agree on almost everything.

Billy Graham's self-admitted "fellowship" with Mormonism and Catholicism makes him a "partaker of [their] evil deeds" (2John 11). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). However, no amount of historical proofs or Scriptural texts will convince you of the blackness of Billy Graham's compromise or the present nakedness of the Professed Church, if you are unwilling to receive it. "If any man **will do His will**, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John 7:17). In fact, that so few of the Professed Church can understand Billy Graham's compromise and oppose it, demonstrates that the "coming of the LORD draweth nigh" (James 5:8). For, "when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find Faith on the Earth?" (Luke 18:8).

1997. David Frost interviewed his long time friend, Billy Graham. Frost noted the change that took place in Graham from the early days of his evangelistic ministry to the present.

FROST: When you began, people said you were the apostle of certitude-- an impossible certitude. You have, over the years, developed the ability to say, **I don't know**. In the sense that you have found it easier to say, **I don't know**, with the passing over the years.

GRAHAM: Exactly. It's not easier, but it's the truth...

It has become more humanistically expedient and acceptable for Billy Graham to now say, "I don't know" than in his early Fundamentalist days-- and later-- when his oft used expression was, "The Bible says". "Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake Thy Law" (Psalm 119:53). The certainty of a "plain path" (27:11) from the LORD directed by a "more sure Word of prophecy" (2Peter 1:19) has now been replaced by the same uncertainty possessed by those who perish. "17 This I say therefore, and testify in the LORD, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:17-18). True Christians have the Infallible Scriptures-- "16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly [thoroughly] furnished unto all good works" (2Timothy 3:16-17)-- while

Babylon the Great has only an "infallible" Pope. "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (Deuteronomy 32:31).

1999. With Parkinson's disease, Billy Graham is now more of a university chancellor, watching over the vast expanse of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA)-- with his son, William Franklin Graham III (b. 1952), already positioned as his father's successor at the BGEA. "26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:26-27). Sadly, Billy Graham still presents himself as the affable senior statesman of Evangelical Christianity, admired by the world religious community, but he has yet to repent of his adultery with Babylon the Great. "Behold, I will cast her [Jezebel, i.e., Babylon the Great] into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds" (Revelation 2:22). **Perhaps** the Amazingly Merciful God would allow Billy Graham to be cast into the Tribulation Week (Daniel 9:27) to gain his repentance. "When He slew them, then they sought Him: and they returned and enquired early after God" (Psalm 78:34).

On Separating Obedience From Love, And Truth From Unity

True Christian love responds to the Father that sent His "Only Begotten Son" (John 3:16), to the "Greater Love" (15:13) of the LORD Jesus Christ that laid "down His life for His friends" (15:13), and to the "Love of the Spirit" (Romans 15:30) that pursued us with the "Great Love wherewith He loved us" (Ephesians 2:4). The only right response of the Saints to the Love of God is loving obedience. "For this is the Love of God, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are not grievous" (1John 5:3). The Body of Christ must be taught that obedience to the Word of God is the demonstration of a heart of love from a True Saint. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).

If the Body can be somehow persuaded that Christian Love can be separated from Obedience, then the way of the Antichrist can be prepared so that no heed need be given to the warning that damnation will come to all those who receive the Mark of the Beast. "9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast [the Antichrist] and his image, and receive his Mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (Revelation 14:9-10).

Further, if Christian Unity can be separated from Truth, then the lack of obedience to the "Word of Truth" (Ephesians 1:13) will breed a False Christian Unity-- in the name of "that they may be one" (John 17:11)-- free of the restrictions of the Word of God. But, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (17:17) was the high priestly prayer of the LORD Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, understanding that True Christian Unity only comes from submission to the Truth of the Word of God. "13 Till we all come in the **Unity of the Faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the **Truth in Love**, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:13-15).

Once Truth has been divorced from Christian Unity, then it is unnecessary to discriminate if the one who enters Jerusalem to seat himself in the "temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2Thessalonians 2:4) is really Jesus Christ or simply the Antichrist. The stage has been set for the advent of that Antichrist, for the predicted Apostasy-- falling away from Obedience to the Truth of the Word of God-- that precedes the Man of Sin is well under way (and, speeding to completion). "2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that Day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition" (2Thessalonians 2:2-3).

Conclusion

The LORD Jesus Christ had His John the Baptist. "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make His paths straight" (Matthew 3:3). The False Prophet and the Antichrist also have their Balaam to prepare their way into the Tribulation Week (Daniel 9:27)-- but, for their inevitable judgment at the conclusion of that Week. "And the Beast [the Antichrist] was taken, and with him the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the Mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a Lake of Fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20). May God grant that Modern Balaam-- Billy Graham-- "repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth" (2Timothy 2:25). But,

whether or not the Sovereign God should bestow mercy-- "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Romans 9:18)-- upon Billy Graham, may the True People of God "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24) by separating from Babylon the Great. "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).

⋮

Part 6: **The Final Judgment of the Great Whore**

"1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in Heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our God: 2 For true and righteous are His judgments: for He hath judged the Great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand"

(Revelation 19:1-2).

Preface

Grace bestows what we have not earned. "For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Justice exacts the measure of our deeds. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). And, mercy withholds the punishment we so richly deserve. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). So, when we consider the final judgment of Babylon the Great, is it not right that we would rejoice in the justice of God's judgment upon her, for one who has so soundly rejected both the grace and mercy of God? "O our God, wilt Thou not judge [her]?" (2Chronicles 20:12).

God's justice is unappreciated by sinful men because justice will give unwanted punishment. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). When the Apocalyptic Week of Tribulation Judgment (Daniel 9:27) is completed, Babylon the Great-- the epitome of man's rebellion against God-- will be finally, completely, and thoroughly judged. "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether" (Psalm 19:9). And, he who is "on the LORD'S side" (Exodus 32:26) "shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance" (Psalm 58:10) of God against Babylon the Great. "O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us" (137:8).

Babylon the Great: The Mother of Harlots

Children often spitefully taunt one another by making accusations against one another's mother; however, when God makes the accusation, it is the Truth. "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5). In light of the soon to come destruction of Babylon the Great, the Revelation reveals that:

- (1) God's judgments upon Babylon are fair and equitable, i.e., "true and righteous are His judgments" (19:2),
- (2) God's judgments upon her are certain, i.e., prophetically "He hath judged the Great Whore" (19:2),
- (3) Babylon is judged because she corrupted the people of the Earth, i.e., "which did corrupt the Earth with her fornication" (19:2),
- (4) Babylon's identity has been shrouded in mystery to many in the present age, i.e., "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT" (17:5), and
- (5) Babylon the Great is the mother or source of all the corrupt offspring of the Earth-- produced in cohabitation with their "father the Devil" (John 8:44)-- "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"

(Revelation 17:5).

Because of the scope and difficulty of tracing all the corrupt offshoots of the original Babylon of Nimrod the "mighty hunter before the LORD" (Genesis 10:9)-- as Alexander Hislop attempted in "The Two Babylons: Or, The Papal Worship Proved to be the Worship of Nimrod and His Wife" (1853)-- we have only focused on the most pervasive and conspicuous manifestation of the Great Whore in this present Church Age-- the institution of Roman Catholicism. "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains [i.e., the ancient city of Rome, the City of Seven Hills, was built on a group of seven hills: Palatine, Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, and Aventine (from "Britannica CD 99")], on which the woman sitteth" (Revelation 17:9). Rather than viewing Catholicism as merely one of many manifestations of the LORD Jesus Christ's Church, the Church of Rome's history demonstrates it to be entirely transformed from the Primitive Church of the Apostles into the abominable Babylon the Great. "28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves [i.e., elders of the Church of Ephesus], and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my [the Apostle Paul's] departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30).

The Papacy, or the office and institution of the Pope, continues to be the defining characteristic of Roman Catholicism. In 1869, at the Vatican Council, the dogma of Papal Infallibility found its way into the doctrines that must be believed by those who aspire to Heaven through the gates of the Church of Rome. Even today, the Catholic faithful-- unhappily, now comprised of even former Protestants (as documented in the pro-Catholic book, "Surprised by Truth: 11 Converts Give the Biblical and Historical Reasons for Becoming Catholic")-- gladly accept the teaching "Magisterium" of the Church of Rome, i.e., tell us what to believe, so that we may accept it without question. As Catholic convert from Protestantism, Marcus Grodi-- graduate of Gordon-Conwell Seminary and director of the Coming Home Network International, a support group for Protestant clergy and their families moving towards the Catholic Church-- writes in "Surprised by Truth" : "Eventually I realized that the single most important issue was authority. All of this wrangling [over] how to interpret Scripture [as in Protestantism] gets one nowhere if there is no way to know with infallible certitude that one's interpretation is the right one. The teaching authority of the Church in the magisterium [is] centered around the seat of Peter [the Papacy]. If I could accept this doctrine, I knew I could trust the Church on everything else" (excerpted from Thomas Aloysius McMahon's "Home to Rome?" article, exposing Romanism, in "The Berean Call" January, 1999). Here is the True Christian's authority: "20 But ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things... 27 But the Anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1John 2:20,27).

The Harlotry of Rome Spreads: "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium" (1994) and "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Gift of Salvation" (1997)

On March 24th 1994, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium", the **original** ECT (1994) document-- which was an ecumenical declaration of cooperation between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics-- was signed in New York by notables from both camps. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (Proverbs 11:21). The document represented an **unofficial** first step in the process of reconciliation between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. "**Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful**" (Psalm 1:1). True Saints would have no cause to mention this ECT accord, except that it is crucial to mark and avoid obstacles such as this to our Christian walk-- "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17)-- to preserve our own holiness. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD" (Hebrews 12:14).

[Please read our articles:

- (1) "[An Earnest Appeal to Roman Catholics, Or, Roman Catholicism Examined in Light of the Scriptures](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/An.Earnest.Appeal.html> -- for a discussion of the Church of Rome's failed doctrine,
- (2) "[Babylon the Great \(Part 2\) The Reformation and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.2.html> -- for a look at Rome's malignant history, and

- (3) "[Babylon the Great \(Part 3\) The Ecumenical Movement and the Church of Rome](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Babylon.The.Great.Part.3.html> -- to see Protestant culpability in renewing the road to Babylon.]

A **second** ECT (1997) declaration-- "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Gift of Salvation" was signed in November of 1997-- and, was published in Billy Graham's "Christianity Today" (December 8,1997). It declared: "We must not allow our witness as Christians to be compromised by half-hearted discipleship or needlessly divisive disputes." These "needlessly divisive disputes" include the foundational necessity for Christian Holiness and Separation from those who knowingly do not walk in the Truth. "5 This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and **walk in darkness**, we lie, and do not the Truth: 7 But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1John 1:5-7).

Also, no matter how much the signers of the ECT accords confess the importance of doctrinal Truth, it is without meaning, when they pursue an Ecumenical Christian Unity-- purportedly based upon the LORD Jesus Christ's prayer, "that they all may be one" (John 17:21)-- that grossly overlooks Truth for the sake of Unity. (Actually, the Truth of the Word of God **is** the Divine means to achieve a Sanctified Unity.) "Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (17:17). "On these and other questions, we recognize that there are also some differences within both the Evangelical and Catholic communities. We are committed to examining these questions further in our continuing conversations. All who truly believe in Jesus Christ are brothers and sisters in the Lord and must not allow their differences, however important, to undermine this great truth, or to deflect them from bearing witness together to God's gift of salvation in Christ" (from "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Gift of Salvation" [1997]). Concerning disobedience and the necessity of separation, "If any man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that man, and have **no** company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2Thessalonians 3:14). And, concerning hypocrisy and the rejection of Truth, "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:4).

The ECT accord (1997) immerses the error of its foundational premise-- that Light can cooperate and dwell with darkness-- with evangelical statements. All would do well to heed the Scripture, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye Light in the LORD: walk as children of Light" (Ephesians 5:8). The ECT (1997) is also documented with Scriptural texts-- acceptable and appealing, especially to Evangelicals. "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (5:6). But, the very title of both declarations-- "Evangelicals and Catholics Together"-- is its own condemnation, i.e., Evangelicals and Catholics **Together**. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall **not cleave** to me" (Psalm 101:3). To the Evangelicals of these declarations, it should be said: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2Corinthians 6:14). And, to the Catholic signers of these declarations-- if you honestly believe the evangelical language of salvation solely by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8) enunciated especially in the ECT (1997), it must be said-- "Wherefore come out from among them [the Church of Rome], and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2Corinthians 6:17).

Christian holiness **demands** separation from sin in our personal life and fellowship. "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1Peter 1:16). It is unnecessary and impossible for Christians to cut off necessary dealings with the world for day to day living, i.e., lawful forms of employment, obtaining the necessities of life, etc.; but, it is **absolutely necessary** to sever the **ties of fellowship** with those who walk in disobedience, i.e., who are backslidden. "9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1Corinthians 5:9-13). [See our article, "[How to Deal With Backsliders](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/How.to.Deal.with.Backslide.html)"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/How.to.Deal.with.Backslide.html> -- , to see the Scriptural practicality of restoring Backsliders.]

If we are in the minority and cannot exercise the Church Discipline mandated in Matthew 18-- "15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matthew 18:15-17)-- then we must **cease** our association and fellowship with that ecclesiastical organization or church body in order **to maintain** our fellowship with the LORD Jesus Christ. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11).

Either we will separate the impenitent Backslider from our fellowship through Church Discipline, **or** we must separate from that ecclesiastical organization or church body ourselves; if we would maintain our walk of holiness with the LORD. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Hebrews 13:13). Instead of viewing the Doctrine of Separation as only separation from sin, we need-- as importantly-- to see ourselves as "separated unto the Gospel" (Romans 1:1) of the LORD Jesus. Our separation is not merely from sin, but unto the LORD. "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be **holiness unto the LORD of Hosts**" (Zechariah 14:21). The Old Testament understood the idea of sanctifying or setting one apart unto the LORD. "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel" (Exodus 13:2). Even now, under the New Covenant, we are called unto holiness. "14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1Peter 1:14-15).

When the Scriptural Doctrine of Separation is disassociated from the Doctrine of Holiness, then the result is an unloving, "holier than thou" (Isaiah 65:5) Pharisaism. Instead of understanding separation as the Divinely appointed means for the loving restoration of a Backslider-- "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the LORD Jesus" (1Corinthians 5:5)-- it often becomes an emblem of prideful exaltation, i.e., "I don't associate with sinners". "9 And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14).

Sadly, many who are esteemed well in the Evangelical Community, not only signed the ECT accords (1994 and 1997), but have adamantly refused to unsign the declarations after much discussion and disagreement with differing Brethren. "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10). For example, Chuck Colson (Prison Fellowship), Bill Bright (Campus Crusade for Christ), and J. I. Packer are some of the Evangelicals that stood by their signing of the original ECT-- and, affirmed it again by signing the newer "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Gift of Salvation" in November of 1997. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). A "Letter Opposing the Ecumenical Accord: Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium"-- by Bernie Koerselman-- is an example of a letter (dated May 15, 1995) to Chuck Colson admonishing Chuck Colson to withdraw his support for the original ECT (1994). "I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26:26). As we approach the Tribulation Week (Daniel 9:27), the pace is quickening as "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2Timothy 3:13). We need to remember that the Church of Rome has been "Satan's seat" (Revelation 2:13) for more than a millennium, and is still most appropriately called Babylon the Great. "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (17:5). May God be merciful to Chuck Colson, Bill Bright, and J. I. Packer-- who have forsaken the LORD, "having [unrighteously] loved this present world" (2Timothy 4:10) like backslidden Demas.

Back to Rome-- The Papal Challenge for Christian Unity: "Ut Unum Sint-- On Commitment to Ecumenism" (1995)

May 25th 1995 marked Pope John Paul II's signing and offering for publication his twelfth Encyclical Letter, "Ut Unum Sint-- On Commitment to Ecumenism". "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them" (1John 4:5). John Paul II-- born on May 18, 1920 in Wadowice, Poland with the original name of Karol Wojtyla [pronounced Voy-tee-wah]-- assumed the official title of Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church in 1978. "Thus saith the LORD GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require My flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them" (Ezekiel 34:10).

His age and suspected Parkinson's disease-- as noticed during his January 26th to 27th 1999 visit to St. Louis, Missouri (USA) where President Bill Clinton met the physically frail Roman Pontiff, whose hands could be seen to visibly shake-- may make his neurological deterioration a factor in whether or not he will personally be the False Prophet partner of the Antichrist-- unless the Pre-Tribulational Rapture (Revelation 3:10) and the onset of Daniel's 70th Week (Daniel 9:24-27) occur soon. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matthew 24:44). Pope John Paul II was seriously wounded on May 13th 1981, when he was shot in an assassination attempt during an appearance in St. Peter's Square, leaving him hospitalized for nearly two months. "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For

what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14).

As we have previously written in Part 3 of this Babylon the Great series-- "The Ecumenical Movement and the Church of Rome"-- the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) under Pope Paul VI began its modern, ecumenical drive to the finish line of a truly One World Religion with its call for the "restoration of unity among all Christians" (from the Second Vatican Council, "Decree on Ecumenism- Unitatis Redintegratio", paragraph 1). "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves" (Isaiah 28:15). The **reintegration of Protestantism into the Church of Rome** is the step that necessarily must follow-- "when the obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion have been gradually overcome, all Christians will at last, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, be gathered into the one and only Church" (from the Second Vatican Council, "Decree on Ecumenism- Unitatis Redintegratio", paragraph 4). "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (28:18).

Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, gave a talk sponsored by the Institute on Religion and Public Life that was presented in New York City on September 16, 1996. This talk, entitled "That They May All Be One: The Imperatives and Prospects of Christian Unity", outlines the Church of Rome's attempt to find "common ground with 'Evangelical' Christianity". "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand **against** the wiles of the Devil" (Ephesians 6:11). Cassidy reiterated "The Call for Christian Unity" of the "encyclical letter Ut Unum Sint- the first ever issued by a Pope on the question of ecumenism- Pope John Paul II stresses the urgency of taking initiatives and making new efforts to overcome the divisions of the past among Christians. It is not the Pope who is calling Christians to this task: 'Christ calls all his disciples to unity.'" Beware of those who "have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14).

Cassidy's talk recounted the significance of John Paul II's words in the Papal Encyclical "Ut Unum Sint": "Pope John Paul II renews this call and proposes it once more 'with determination,' stressing that 'believers in Christ cannot remain divided if they wish truly and effectively to oppose the world's tendency to reduce to powerlessness the Mystery of Redemption.' This call, which comes from Christ, is an imperative for all Christians. We are living in a time of particular grace, as evidenced by the fact that the aspiration for Christian unity 'is finding an ever greater echo in the hearts of believers, **especially as the year 2000 approaches** [WStS emphasis added].'" "But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (1Corinthians 7:29). "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the LORD draweth nigh" (James 5:8).

"At the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church committed herself irrevocably to following the path of the ecumenical venture," said the Bishop of Rome, John Paul II, in his "Ut Unum Sint"-- "that they may all be one"-- encyclical (1995). An irrevocable commitment to the "ecumenical venture" is another way of saying that Rome will not desist until it has the entire world in its teeth. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1Peter 5:8). Rome's "patience" in achieving the universal domination that describes her name, i.e., catholic, ought to be observed by even the Godly. "And the LORD commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8).

Pope John Paul II tenaciously stated his commitment to the global union awaiting the Church at the New Millennium, "I myself intend to promote every suitable initiative aimed at making the witness of the entire Catholic community understood in its full purity and consistency, **especially considering the engagement which awaits the Church at the threshold of the new Millennium** [WStS emphasis added]. That will be an exceptional occasion, in view of which she asks the Lord to increase the unity of all Christians until they reach full communion" (from "Ut Unum Sint"). "And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12). Approximately 12 times, the Pope made reference to the "Year 2000", the "new Millennium" or the "threshold of the Third Millennium" in his "Ut Unum Sint" (1995) encyclical; which means he is hoping for the Year 2000 (Y2K) to "be an exceptional occasion". "O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee" (2Chronicles 20:12).

Babylon the Great Manifests Itself As The Global Religion: United Religions (2000)

It has been common for students of Bible Prophecy to refer to the final manifestation of religion in the End Times as the One World Church; however, it appears more appropriate that this entity will encompass more than an Ecumenical Church after the Christian tradition, but will be comprised of **all religions** throughout the world. The Holy Spirit described a Global Religion of this sort in the Revelation. "11 And I beheld another beast [the False Prophet] coming up out of the Earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and **causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship** the first beast [the Antichrist], whose deadly

wound was healed" (Revelation 13:11-12). Though promoters of this sort of Global Religion may prefer to think of it more as the totality of all religions united, i.e., a United Religions (UR); still, the intermingling of all religions results in a Global Religion. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Galatians 5:9).

To refresh our minds, **why** does our LORD reveal to us the nature of prophetic events such as the final advent of Babylon the Great as the Global Religion?

- (1) Because He has given us His Spirit... Our LORD has covenanted to us the reception of the Holy "Spirit of Prophecy", which is the "testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 19:10) to "shew [us] things to come" (John 16:13), and
- (2) Because He has given us His friendship... Since we are His friends-- "Ye are My friends, if ye do **whatsoever** I command you" (15:14)-- He shares with us the secrets of what He will do in the future, i.e., "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (15:15).

The Treaty of Versailles was signed by the Allies and Germany on June 28th 1919 to end WW1; but, the same Treaty also established the League of Nations (1920-1946), which was presented to the world as an international organization to peacefully resolve conflicts and avert another devastating war. "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22). Though President Woodrow Wilson (USA) was an architect of the League of Nations, the United States Senate refused to ratify it; and then, with WW2, its existence ceased. But, the "principalities", "powers", the "rulers of the darkness of this world", and "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12) were allowed by the Sovereign God to plant the evil seed of World Government, as at the Tower of Babel, to finally beget the present United Nations (UN) at the close of WW2. "The [UN] Organization came into being on 24 October 1945, when its Charter was ratified by the majority of the 50 nations who signed the Charter in San Francisco on 26 June 1945" (from "The United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Document"). "But God is the Judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:7). For "surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain" (76:10).

In 1920, the "International Congress of Religious Liberals (known now as the IARF) called for a League of Religions: 'Let us lay the foundation at least of a League of Religions which shall be the counterpart and ally of the political League of Nations'" (excerpted from the United Religions website). "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole Earth" (Genesis 11:4). In June 1996, another of a series of annual June meetings took place-- this time in San Francisco, California (USA)-- convened for the purpose of "pursuing peace among religions for the sake of wholeness for the entire order of life" under the auspices of the "United Religions Initiative (URI) Global Summit" (from the United Religions website). The pattern of first a world government, then a global religion can also be seen in Revelation 13. The Antichrist, who is the beast "out of the sea" (Revelation 13:1) is described first, before the False Prophet, who is the "beast out of the Earth" (13:11).

The United Religions Initiative (URI) has a target date of June 26th 2000 for its charter signing to establish the United Religions (UR), which is also the **anniversary for the signing of the charter** of the United Nations. "And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed My voice: why have ye done this?" (Judges 2:2). Episcopal Bishop William Swing has been the catalyst behind the United Religions since the United Nations invited him to host a San Francisco, California (USA) interfaith gathering. "In 1993, the United Nations told me they were coming to San Francisco and they would bring 183 ambassadors from 183 nations. They wanted me to bring the religions of the world to Grace Cathedral for an interfaith service," said Swing in response to Don Lattin's question of what is the "genesis of the United Religions Initiative?" (from "Bishop's Idea for a Leap of Faiths" in the "San Francisco Chronicle" of June 22nd 1997). But, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1Corinthians 3:11).

How credible is this "little-heard-of" United Religions as an End Time entity? **The United Nations advanced the idea** to Bishop Swing to host an interfaith assembly that would propose the United Religions Initiative at a worship service (June 25th 1995) of Grace Cathedral (from an official "Calendar of Events for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations"). "They have taken crafty counsel against Thy people, and consulted against Thy hidden ones" (Psalm 83:3). Accordingly, the United Religions' website points out that Sir Francis Younghusband, who founded the World Congress of Faiths (in the 1930s), wrote that "a religious basis is essential for the **new world order** [WStS emphasis]." Of course, any order apart from the LORD Jesus Christ is against Christ, i.e., antichrist. "He that is not with Me is **against Me**; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30).

From the 1950s on, starting with UN Secretary General U Thant in the 1940s, "every decade has heard a UN proposal for something like the United Religions." In the "1970s and 1980s, [UN Assistant Secretary General] Robert Muller promoted it" (from the United Religions' website). "9 And **the LORD said** unto me, **A conspiracy is found** among the men of Judah, and

among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear My Words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers" (Jeremiah 11:9-10).

Just as many in the Professed Church had been oblivious to the rise of Global Government in the form of the UN; even so, much of the Professed Church is also presently oblivious to the significance of the soon rise of a global One World Religion in the form of the UR. "Therefore My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge" (Isaiah 5:13). Though some had been familiar with the League of Nations, how many were ready for the 1945 advent of the United Nations? And, who but a confirmed Bible Prophecy student could have been certain that the UN of the Cold War days was anything but another powerless debating society-- instead of the Global Government forecast 1,900 years earlier in the Apostle John's Revelation? "6 And he [the Antichrist] opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them: and **power was given him** [the Antichrist] **over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.** 8 And all that dwell upon the Earth shall worship him [the Antichrist], whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:6-8).

But, does the Roman Catholic Church-- Babylon the Great-- endorse or promote the United Religions Initiative (URI)? If "in her [Babylon the Great] was found the blood of prophets, and of Saints, and of **all that were slain** upon the Earth" (Revelation 18:24), then **the UR must eventually become attached to the Pope and the Church of Rome for the UR to be identified as Babylon the Great.** "A corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matthew 7:17). Presently, Catholicism takes no official position for or against the URI-- just as Rome has not joined the World Council of Churches, but still promotes the common goal of ecumenism. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (1Corinthians 3:19). Possibly, the Mother Church of Rome does not want to be confused with **mere offspring.** "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, **THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**" (Revelation 17:5).

Irving Baxter of "Endtime Magazine" asked former UN Assistant Secretary General Robert Muller, "I know the Pope is going to be speaking at the United Nations in October [1995]. What role do [you] see the Pope playing to bring about religious unity?" Muller responded: "The Pope has one privilege among all the religions. He is the head of a little state called the Vatican State. The Vatican State is an observer nation in the United Nations. He is the only religious leader who can speak in the United Nations because he is there as an observer for the Vatican State. This is why my boss U Thant, the Burmese Secretary General, invited the Pope to speak at the UN. U Thant was deeply spiritual. I've written so much about him. He always said, 'Robert, I hear the economists, I hear politicians. I hear all kinds of people in General Assembly Hall. But I never hear a spiritual person; so couldn't we invite the Pope?' I invited the Pope to speak at the UN for the first time [1979]. I was in charge of his first visit. He will be speaking for the second time at the fiftieth anniversary of the UN [October 5th 1995]. His speech can play a great role. I have recommended to his representative in New York that the main tenet of his speech should be 'The Renaissance— A Revival Of World Spirituality.' I hope he speaks on this, and I hope he will get together with other religions and put an end to the religious conflicts. That is really the main task of the religious leaders. Maybe I'm dreaming, but at least one should always put forth one's views." But, peace comes **exclusively** from Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: **not as the world giveth,** give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Another view of the Church of Rome's relationship to the UR was given to William Swing by Roman Catholic Cardinal Arinze: "[Arinze] emphatically said that he did not want my words to reflect that he was excited about the United Religions. He said that a United Religions would give the appearance of syncretism and it would water down our need to evangelize. It would force authentic religions to be on equal footing with spurious religions. He pointed out that in the last 30 years the Roman Catholic church has been deeply involved in interfaith dialogues with priests learning other languages and other religions. They are doing enough now. When they work outside official channels, then they utilize the World Conference on Religion and Peace. He said he would take the Gamaliel approach to the United Religions (Acts 5:38-39). Leave these people alone. If it comes from man, it will fail. If it comes from God, it can't be stopped" (from Episcopal Bishop William Swing's "Reactions From Religious Leaders: United Religions International Tour"). Again, God is against any religious union that is not based **exclusively** upon His Son, Who is "**the Way, the Truth, and the Life**" (John 14:6). "And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6).

This writer is persuaded that **Babylon the Great, which is essentially Roman Catholicism, must soon incorporate with the United Religions,** if the Pope still desires the headship of the world's religions, i.e., to be the False Prophet. "11 And I beheld another beast [the False Prophet] coming up out of the Earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon [Satan]. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:11-12). Accordingly,

the Papal celebration of the "Jubilee of the Year 2000" includes:

- (1) "An Interreligious Encounter": "As one millennium draws to a close and the next looms near, it has been thought appropriate to invite a certain number of people belonging to different religious traditions to come together for a few days reflection. This interreligious encounter, which is being organized by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, will take place in Rome 24-29 October 1999" (from the Vatican website), and
- (2) a "Day of Reflection on Interreligious Dialogue": "An invitation to prayer and reflection addressed particularly to Catholics... fixed for Pentecost Sunday in the year 2000... Pentecost is a sign that Babel can be overcome, that harmony can be achieved, and this finally is the goal of interreligious dialogue... for Christians to remember that they are not Christians just for themselves alone, but that they are called to relate to other believers and indeed to all members of humanity" (from the Vatican website). But for those who look for their LORD and a soon Pre-Tribulational Rapture, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our LORD Jesus Christ" (1Thessalonians 5:9).

Future of Babylon the Great: She Shall Be Utterly Burned With Fire

In this Age of False Love, i.e., to "love them that hate the LORD" (2Chronicles 19:2) and False Judgment, i.e., to judge only "according to the appearance" (John 7:24), we are assured that the LORD Jesus Christ is still "over all, God blessed for ever" (Romans 9:5). Though our LORD came the First Time as a "Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1Peter 1:19), He will appear the Second Time to "judge and make war" (Revelation 19:11)-- "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable" (Luke 3:17).

In the Book of Revelation, we find a description of Babylon the Great (17:1-18), her final destruction (18:1-24), and the rejoicing in Heaven at the judgment of the Great Whore (19:1-4). Though some prefer to interpret Revelation 17 as the destruction of religious Babylon and Revelation 18 as the destruction of a separate economic Babylon, I believe that both describe the destruction of Babylon the Great from the religious, then the economic point of view. It will be quite revealing to see the economic connection that the Great Whore has developed over the years. "And the woman [Babylon the Great] was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (Revelation 17:4).

Are the Renaissance frescoes by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel-- of the present day-- all that points the finger at Rome for her opulence? In 1510, Martin Luther the Reformer had a look at the then abundant wealth of the Church of Rome, shortly after his own conversion. "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the Earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the Earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies" (Revelation 18:3). Her wealth can only have increased into the present day, as witnessed by the simple compounding of interest. "Wherefore then gavest not thou My money into the bank, that at My Coming I might have required Mine own with usury?" (Luke 19:23). Luther had yet to separate from the institution of Roman Catholicism, when he discovered the institutional impiety, pride, avarice, luxury, and abominable vices that greeted him-- the closer he journeyed to Rome. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1Peter 5:2).

"Weary with his journey, he entered a monastery situated on the banks of the Po [River], to refresh himself a few days. The splendor of the establishment struck him with wonder. Its yearly revenue, amounting to the enormous sum of thirty-six thousand ducats, was all expended in feeding, clothing, and lodging the monks. The apartments were sumptuous in the extreme. They were lined with marble, adorned with paintings, and filled with rich furniture. Equally luxurious and delicate was the clothing of the monks. Silks and velvet mostly formed their attire; and every day they sat down at a table loaded with exquisite and skillfully cooked dishes. The monk who, in his native Germany, had inhabited a bare cell, and whose day's provision was at times only a herring and a small piece of bread, was astonished, but said nothing.

"Friday came, and on Friday the Church has forbidden the faithful to taste flesh. The table of the monks groaned under the same abundance as before. As on other days, so on this there were dishes of meat. Luther could no longer refrain. 'On this day,' said Luther, 'such things may not be eaten. The Pope has forbidden them.' The monks opened their eyes in astonishment on the rude German. Verily, thought they, his boldness is great. It did not spoil their appetite, but they began to be apprehensive that the German might report their manner of life at headquarters, and they consulted together how this danger might be obviated. The porter, a humane man, dropped a hint to Luther of the risk he would incur should he make a longer stay. Profiting by the friendly counsel to depart hence while health served him, he took leave, with as little delay as possible, of the monastery and all in it" (from James A. Wylie's ["The History of Protestantism", Volume 1, Book 5](#))--

<http://whatsaiththescrpture.com/Voice/History.Protestant.v1.b5.html> -- . "And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite" (Proverbs 23:2).

"1 And there came one of the Seven Angels which had the Seven Vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the Great Whore that sitteth upon many waters [that controls the nations]: 2 With whom the kings of the Earth have committed fornication [rulers of nations pay homage to the Pope, as did Castro in Havana and Clinton in St. Louis in 1999], and the inhabitants of the Earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication [over 1 billion Catholics at present-- out of 6 billion Earth inhabitants]. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast [suggestive of the red of the Cardinals' regalia], full of names of blasphemy [Vicar of Christ speaks of a vicarious, substitute for Christ], having seven heads [describes Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Imperial Rome, and Revived Rome] and ten horns [indicates 10 divisions of Revived Rome]" (Revelation 17:1-3).

"4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus [as John Foxe recounted Rome's martyrdom of Christians outside of her communion in his "The Book of Martyrs" (1563)]: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration [literally, with great wonder]. 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. 8 The beast [Satan] that thou sawest was [a created being with a past], and is not [who is not presently empowered as he will be]; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit [when he is released by God to terrorize the Post-Millennial Earth], and go into perdition [Eternal Destruction, which is the destiny of the Devil]: and they that dwell on the Earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is [the unelect are deceived and damned]" (Revelation 17:4-8).

"9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is [the 6th king was the Imperial Rome of the Apostle John's day], and the other [Revived Rome] is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth [the Antichrist], and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour [the last several days of the Tribulation Week] with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast" (Revelation 17:9-13).

"14 These shall make war with the Lamb [Jesus], and the Lamb shall overcome them [Armageddon]: for He is LORD of Lords, and KING of Kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful [the Saints returning with the LORD Jesus Christ at His Second Coming]. 15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the Whore [the Antichrist turns against Babylon the Great], and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire [8-9 days prior to the End of the Tribulation Week]. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast [the Satan indwelt Antichrist], until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city [Rome], which reigneth over the kings of the Earth" (Revelation 17:14-18).

"1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from Heaven, having great power; and the Earth was lightened with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the Earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the Earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies [describing and amplifying the destruction of Babylon the Great from Chapter 17]. 4 And I heard another voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues [This most important message of God to those who would be preserved from Divine Destruction is to COME OUT OF BABYLON NOW]" (Revelation 18:1-4).

"5 For her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. 7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her [Divine retribution and vengeance for which the Saints pray and only God can give]: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow [unreasonably confident]. 8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day [Gen. Colin L. Powell, former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (1989-1993) said, "You know we have been looking at the Middle East [Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991], but let's not forget that there is only one nation in the world that can destroy us in 30 minutes: the Soviet Union."], death, and mourning, and famine; and **she shall be utterly burned with fire** [a literal, physical destruction by fire

will occur]: for strong is the LORD God who judgeth her" (Revelation 18:5-8).

"9 And the kings of the Earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon [Rome], that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11 And the merchants of the Earth shall weep and mourn over her [both multinational corporations and fearfully surviving individuals will mourn over their lost market and opportunities]; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: 12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyne wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men [Satan's kingdom views men as mere chattel]" (Revelation 18:9-13).

"14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city [Rome], that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off [the boot shaped peninsula of Italy juts into the Mediterranean Sea], 18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate" (Revelation 18:14-19).

"20 Rejoice over her, Thou Heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her [as God said, "Vengeance is mine"]. 21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the Earth; for by thy sorceries [Babylon the Great is the repository of not only false doctrine and superstition but the occult] were all nations deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were slain upon the Earth [Babylon the Great is the sum of man's rebellion against God-- worthy of judgment]" (Revelation 18:1-24).

"1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in Heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our God [the Hallelujah Chorus rejoices over Babylon's demise]: 2 For true and righteous are His judgments [True Saints always rejoice in God's judgments]: for He hath judged the Great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her fornication [Babylon the Great has been the source as well as the magnet for the corruptions of mankind], and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. 3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever [doctrine of the justice of eternal punishment]. 4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen [we agree]; Alleluia [Praise ye the LORD]" (Revelation 19:1-4).

Conclusion

How can we profit from the study of Babylon the Great? If we constrain ourselves to be "simple concerning evil" (Romans 16:19), then:

- (1) it can encourage the ignorant, vacillating, or backslidden to "come out of her" (Revelation 18:4) **now** and not in the prophetic future,
- (2) it can motivate those with understanding to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and **be not entangled again** with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1), and
- (3) it can burden the intercessor to deliver Babylon's slaves through prayer-- as "a brand plucked out of the fire" (Zechariah 3:2).

But, most importantly, we learn to stand with the Judge of All the Earth (Genesis 18:25) in His judgment of the Earth-- approving, praising, petitioning, and laboring with His judgments. "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for

the LORD, who is with you in the judgment" (2Chronicles 19:6). As Satan has planted the tares (weeds) to encumber the harvest of the LORD, we must patiently wait with the LORD for the appropriate time to gather the wheat (the Elect). "He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" (Matthew 13:28). It is an honor for the LORD to number us with those that have "understanding of the times, to know what Israel [God's Saints] ought to do" (1Chronicles 12:32); but also, that we may intelligibly witness, understand, and praise God for His judgments upon Babylon the Great. "1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in Heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our God: 2 For true and righteous are His judgments: for He hath judged the Great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand" (Revelation 19:1-2).

Maranatha!

End of Series