

The Antichrist 666

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The Great Antichrist
An Exposition of Revelation 13:1-10 & 13:18.

The Plan of the Chapter:

Verses 1-4	A brief sketch of Antichrist's career. His rise, reign, ruin, resurrection and restoration. The principle of repetition and enlargement so prominent in scripture and especially in Daniel and Revelation is employed in this chapter.
Verses 5-8	The reign of Antichrist.
Verses 9-10	The ruin of Antichrist.
Verses 11-12	The resurrection and restoration of Antichrist and through whom it is accomplished.
Verses 13-15	The method by which it is accomplished.
Verses 16-17	The medium used to accomplish it.

Through much of the Christian era and particularly at the time of the great Protestant Reformation, the general view among the faithful was that the Antichrist was the Church of Rome. However, in reaction to the devastating influence of the Reformation upon the Church of Rome, a Counter Reformation was mounted, led by the Jesuits. One of the main efforts of the counter Reformation was to invent an interpretation of prophecy that would hide the true identity of Antichrist and remove the stigma from the Church of Rome. To do this they invented a school of prophetic interpretation called the Futuristic system. This school cleverly perverted the prophecies to make them teach that the Antichrist would be a Jew who would rise in the future, probably after the Second Advent, or the Rapture, and fulfill the predictions concerning Antichrist.

This clever school of thought was then insidiously infiltrated into the Protestant churches and as a result it gradually robbed them of their protest against the Church of Rome. One instrument in accomplishing this has been the Schofield Bible.

What is the truth of Revelation 13? This chapter is one of the main chapters in Daniel and Revelation dealing with the Antichrist. Other chapters are Daniel 7, 8, 11, and Revelation 17 and 18.

In Revelation 13 are presented at least fifteen specifications by which the sincere searcher may identify the earthly Antichrist; the fifteen points briefly stated are:

1. It is a political kingdom.
2. It rises amid numerous peoples.
3. It is one of seven political powers or empires opposed to God.
4. It is connected with Western Europe.
5. It reigns when the powers of Western Europe are reigning.
6. It is connected with the four kingdoms of Daniel 7, i.e. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.
7. Its seat or centre is given it by Imperial Rome.
8. It becomes a universal or catholic power.
9. It practices blasphemy.
10. It persecutes and destroys the saints.
11. Its number is 666.
12. Its political supremacy is for 1260 years.
13. It is then fatally wounded.

14. Its wound is healed.
15. It is restored to world pre-eminence.

THE RISE OF THE BEAST

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns and upon his heads, the name of blasphemy.” verse 1.

IT IS A POLITICAL ENTITY

In prophecy a beast represents a political power or kingdom. As Daniel’s divine instructor declared:

“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [kingdoms] which shall arise out of the earth.”

“The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth.” Daniel 7:17, 23.

This reveals that the Antichrist will not be an individual person but a political entity.

IT RISES AMID NUMEROUS PEOPLES

In prophecy, sea represents numerous peoples - a thickly populated region. Sea is comprised of water and the divine instruction is,

“The waters which thou saw are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.” Revelation 17:18.

IT IS ONE OF 7 POLITICAL POWERS THAT OPPOSE GOD

“Having seven heads.”

The seven heads are dealt with in detail in Revelation 17 where it is shown that they represent seven successive kingdoms used of Satan to oppose God and his people. (2) Revelation 13 applies to a period when one of the 7 heads is in power. “I saw one of his heads wounded to death.” Verse 3. These four beasts are introduced in Daniel 7 and represent the four universal kingdoms of history.

IT IS CONNECTED WITH WESTERN EUROPE

“Having ... ten horns.” Verse 1

In Daniel and Revelation these ten horns are mentioned ten times and every time they represent at least, initially, the ten divisions into which Western Rome divided in 476 AD.

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom (Imperial Rome) are ten kings.” [kingdoms] Daniel 7:24.

Western Europe was the territory peculiar to Rome. Her other territories which she conquered, were territories peculiar to Greece, Persia and Babylon, etc. The ten kingdoms were formed from the Western division of Rome.

ANTICHRIST REIGNS WHEN EUROPE RULES

“And upon his horns ten crowns” verse 1.

Crowns denote ruler ship and the crowns upon the horns denote that the beast is in power when the ten horns are ruling, i.e. when the Western European kingdoms have been formed and are in power. The ten kingdoms were established by 476 AD which means that Antichrist rises after that date.

IT IS CONNECTED WITH THE 4 KINGDOMS OF DANIEL 7

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority.” Verse 2.

The Lion	= Babylon
The Bear	= Medo-Persia
The Leopard	= Greece
The Non-descript or Dragon	= Imperial Rome

“Its mouth is as the mouth of a lion.”

Antichrist has Babylon’s mouth. It is Babylon’s mouthpiece. When Antichrist speaks, it is Babylon speaking.

IT RECEIVES ITS SEAT FROM IMPERIAL ROME

“The dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority.” Revelation 13.

The dragon is first mentioned in Revelation 12 and is shown there to represent Imperial Rome which was used by Satan to try and destroy the Christ-child. (3) Did Imperial Rome give its capital, its seat of government to any other power? The answer is yes. This transpired in 330 AD when Constantine the Great, removed the seat of government from Rome on the Tiber to the new Rome - Constantinople on The Bosphorus, (Istanbul). To whom did Imperial Rome bequeath her ancient seat? Let historians answer.

Francis P.C. Hays (Roman Catholic) says:

“When the Roman Empire became Christian, and the peace of the Church was guaranteed, the Emperor left Rome to the Pope, to be the seat of the authority of the Vicar of Christ, who should reign there independent of all human authority, to the consummation of ages, to the end of time.” (4)

Alexander C. Flick, Ph.D., Litt.D., says:

“The removal of the capital of the empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330, left the Western Church practically free from imperial power, to develop its own form of organization. The Bishop of Rome, in the seat of the Caesars, was now the greatest man in the West, and was soon forced to become the political as well as the spiritual head.” (5)

“And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages.” (6)

In the Room of Constantine in the Vatican palace, are four superb paintings. The fourth one is entitled, “The Donation of Constantine”. It depicts the Roman emperor about to depart from Rome for Constantinople. He is presenting to the Bishop of Rome a statue of a warrior which represents the transfer of the city of Rome to the bishop. This painting is claimed to be a forgery but it was used by the Papacy as authority for her political claims. Here is an acknowledgement from the Papacy that she derived her seat from Imperial Rome.

But Imperial Rome gave not only her seat, but “power and great authority”. This was fulfilled by emperor Justinian when he officially decreed the Bishop of Rome to be the “universal bishop of the world and the corrector of heretics” in 533 .AD. (7)

But such authority was useless without the political and military power to enforce it. This was provided in 538 AD when Justinian put down all resistance to the Papacy and enforced submission to Catholicism. This resulted in the flight and slaughter of thousands of non-Catholics as they attempted to leave the empire. (8)

IT IS A UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS POLITICAL POWER

“They worshipped the beast.” Verse 4.

“Power was given him over all kingdoms and tongues, and nations.” Verse 7.

The word universal also means catholic. Thus this power will be a catholic, religious, political power.

IT PRACTICES BLASPHEMY

“Upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” Verse 1.

“A mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.” Verse 5.

“He opened his mouth in blasphemy against God.” Verse 6.

What is the meaning of blasphemy? According to scripture, it is the practice of usurping the position, or of claiming the prerogatives of God.

“Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone.” Luke 5:21.

Does the Church of Rome claim to forgive sin? Let Catholic authorities answer.

“If anyone said that the sacramental absolution of the priest is not a judicial act ...let him be anathema.”

“If anyone said that priests. . .have not the power of binding and of loosing, or that not priests alone are ministers of absolution, let him be anathema!” [accursed] (9)

“To pardon a single sin requires all the omnipotence of God.” (10)

“The priest not only declares that the sinner is forgiven, but he really forgives him. So great is the power of the priest, that the judgments of heaven itself are subject to his decision.” (11)

“The poor sinner kneels at his confessor’s feet. He ‘Knows he is not speaking to an ordinary man, but to another Christ. He hears the words, ‘I absolve thy sins’ and the hidden load of sins drops from his soul forever.” (12)

“A priest in absolving a sinner, performs the very office of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of souls.” (13)

A form of blasphemy is also indicated in the gospel of John.

“For a good work we stone [kill] thee not, but for blasphemy and because that thou, being a man, makes thyself God.” John 10:33.

Does the Papacy deify man? Does the Papacy make claims that pertain only to God? Again, let Catholic authorities reply.

“We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff holds the primacy over the wide world and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of the blessed Peter ...the father and doctor of all Christians; and that to him ...was given ...full power to feed, rule and govern the universal church.” (14)

In a large, authentic work by F. Lucii Ferraris, called “Præmpta Bibliotheca Canonica Juridica Moralis Theologica” printed at Rome, 1800, and sanctioned by the Catholic Encyclopedia (Volume VI, page 48) we find the following statement regarding the power of the pope:

“The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.”

“Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions...

“The Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom.” (15)

The Catholic Encyclopedia says of the pope:

“The sentences which he gives are to be forthwith ratified in heaven.” (16)

Pope Leo XIII says:

“But the supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires, together with a perfect accord in the one faith, complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman. Pontiff, as to God Himself.”

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.” In this encyclical the pope has capitalized all pronouns referring to himself and to God, (17) St. Alphonsus de Liguori, a sainted doctor of the Roman church, claims the same power for the Roman priests. He says:

“The priest has the power of the keys, or the power of delivering sinners from hell, of making then worthy of paradise, and of changing then from the slaves of Satan into the children of God. And God himself is obliged to abide by the judgment of his priests... The Sovereign Master of the universe only follows the servant by confirming in heaven all that the latter decides upon earth.” (18)

Innocent III has written:

“Indeed, it is not too much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices, the priests are so many gods.” (18)

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ but HE IS JESUS MUST HIMSELF hidden under the veil of flesh.” (19)

“In 1335 Bishop Alvarez Pelayo laid down the doctrine that as Christ partook of the nature of God, so the Pope ...is not simply a man, but rather God an earth.” (20)

“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven.” Verse 6

The above claims of the Popes amount to blasphemy against God’s name. But how does the Papacy blaspheme God’s tabernacle? God’s tabernacle is the great temple or sanctuary, in heaven.

“We have such an high priest-in the heavens ...a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.” Hebrews 8:1, 2.

“The temple of the tabernacle in heaven was opened.” Revelation 15:5.

The Papacy has blasphemed God’s heavenly tabernacle by setting up an earthly counterfeit tabernacle, in which are offered counterfeit sacrifices by a counterfeit priesthood to a counterfeit god.

But how does the Papacy blaspheme “them that dwell in heaven”? Apart from the Godhead, the dwellers in heaven are the millions of angels, the messengers of God. The Papacy blasphemes against them by claiming that the priests are greater than the angels and that the Pope can even excommunicate angels,

“The sacerdotal [priestly] dignity also surpasses the dignity of the angels... All the angels in heaven cannot absolve from a single sin... the holy archangel can chase away devils, but he cannot free his client from their claims till a priest comes to absolve him... If I saw an angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and then to the angel.” (21)

“The Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions, so that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the Pope.” (22)

ANTICHRIST IS A PERSECUTING POWER

“It was given him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.” Verse 7.

Who are the saints? The word saint means a holy one, i.e. one who is free from sin. One who belongs to God. The only way anyone can be free from sin is by accepting the shed blood of Christ in payment for his sins.

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanses us from all sin.” I John 1:7.

This involves only true believers in Christ, i.e. true Christians. Has the Papacy made war on true Christians? Note the official attitude of the Papacy toward those who dissent.

“Much more can heretics [dissenters] after they are convicted of heresy, be not only forthwith excommunicated, but as surely put to death.” (23)

“When she thinks it good to use physical force, she will use it-But will the Catholic Church give bond that she will not persecute at all? ... The Catholic Church gives no bonds for her good behavior.” (24)

Has the Papacy employed physical force against dissenters? Let Professor Baudrillart, rector of the Catholic Institute of Paris and later a cardinal, reply.

“The Catholic Church proudly proclaims that she has, a ‘horror of blood.’ Nevertheless when confronted by heresy she-has recourse to force, to corporal punishment, to torture. She creates tribunals like those of the Inquisition and encourages a crusade, or a religious wars. Especially did she act thus in the sixteenth century with regard to Protestants she lit in Italy, In the Low Countries and above all in Spain the funeral piles of the Inquisition. In France and in England she tortured the heretics whilst both in France and Germany she encouraged and actively aided, the religious wars. No one will deny that we have here a great scandal to our contemporaries.”

“Indeed, even among our friends and our brothers we find those who dare not look this problem in the face. They ask permission from the Church to ignore or even deny all those acts and Institutions in the past which have made orthodoxy compulsory.” (25)

This book bears the sanction of the Roman Catholic authorities, and of their “censor”.

Dr. J. Dowling says:

“From the birth of Popery in 606, to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians, that more than fifty millions of the human family, have been slaughtered for the crime of heresy by popish persecutors, an average of more than forty thousand religious murders for every year of the existence of Popery.” (26)

W. E. H. Lecky says:

“That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood Um any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no power of Imagination can adequately realize their sufferings.” (27)

The Anglican Scholar, Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, says:

“It has been calculated that the Popes of Rome have directly or indirectly slain fifty millions of men, and women who refused to be parties to Roman idolatries, who held to the Bible as the Word of God.” (28)

These distasteful accounts of history abundantly confirm that the Papacy fulfills this tenth specification of the Antichrist.

ITS NUMBER IS 666

“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, three score and six.” Verse 18

In the Catholic Douay version of the Bible there is a footnote inserted by the translators which reads, “666. The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number.”

Whose name? It is the number of a man. What man is predominant in the Papal system? It is unquestionably the Pope. The title “Pope” means “father”. The word “Papacy” is also from the word father. This is in spite of Jesus command – “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” Matthew 23:9.

“The holy father” is THE man of the Papacy. If the numeral letters of his name make up the number 666, it is essential that his official name be confirmed in order to follow the instruction in the footnote of the official Catholic bible. Six Catholic authorities are unanimous that the official name or title of the Pope, is “Vicarius Filii Dei” i.e. “Vicar of the Son of God”. These Catholic authorities are:

1. The Decretum of Gratian. The founder of the science of Canon law. 1148-1582 AD.
2. The Revised edition of the above - 1582 until now.
3. The Roman Catholic Encyclopedia of Lucii Ferraris. Volume 6, page 48.
4. Cardinal Manning “The Temporal. Power of the Vicar of Christ,” pages 231,232.
5. Philippe Labbe, a distinguished Jesuit writer, “Sacrosanta concilia ad regiam editionem Exacta!” Volume 1, page 1534.
6. Cardinal Gibbons, Baltimore, USA 1904. In an official letter to an enquirer.

At the coronation of the Pope, the presiding cardinal, as he places the crown upon the head of the new pope declares, “Vicarius Filii Dei”.

Do the numeral letters of this name add up to 666? In the Latin language there are seven numerals; (originally there were six).

V= 5
 I=1
 C=100
 A = 0
 R = 0
 I = 1
 U = 5
 S = 0

F=0
 I=1
 L=50
 I=1
 I=1

D=500
 E=0
 I=1

= 666

Without any manipulation each numeral of the Pope’s title adds up exactly to 666.

It is also claimed that whenever the Pope signs an official document, the signature is “Dux Cleri”, meaning “Chief, or Head of the Clergy”.

Significantly, this official signature also adds up to exactly 666.

D=500
U=5
X=10

C - 100
L = 50
E = 0
R = 0
I = 1

= 666

This means that whenever the Pope signs an official document or letter, etc., he signs 666. It is interesting to note that when the identifying titles of Jesus Christ were nailed upon the cross at Calvary, they were written in three languages.

“And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEW’S and it was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin.” John 19:19, 20.

Likewise, with the identification of Antichrist. He also is identified in the same three languages because in these, his names add up to 666.

The Hebrew term for the Roman power was “Romith”. Unlike Latin, every letter serves as a numeral in the Hebrew language.

R = 200
0 = 6
M = 40
I = 1
I=1
TH = 400

= 666

The Greek term for “The Latin People” was “Lateinos”. In the Greek language every letter also serves as a number.

L= 30
A = 1
T = 300
E = 5
I = 10
N = 50
O = 70
S = 200

= 666

The number 666 was sacred to sun worship. It originated in Babylon and had great significance. (29)

ANTICHRIST IS POLITICALLY SUPREME FOR 1260 YEARS

“Power was given him to continue forty and two months.” Verse 5

The margin reads “to make war” for 42 months.

“He was allowed to exert authority for forty-two months.” Mofatt and Phillips translation.

Did the Papacy have political supremacy for 42 literal months? No! This is a symbolic prophecy, therefore any time mentioned in it must be taken as symbolic also. This is an important principle of prophetic interpretation. Symbols in prophecy only apply until the Second Advent. After the Second Advent symbols no longer apply. Therefore the time period of Revelation 13 being prior to the Second Advent, must have a symbolic application, i.e. a day for a year. (30) In a Bible month there are 30 days, therefore forty-two months equal 1260 days or 1260 years. This time period is mentioned seven times in Daniel and Revelation and it always refers to the same period. It is an important key in the prophetic interpretation of Daniel and Revelation.

Any attempt to give this period a literal application of three and a half literal years must always be rejected. The Jesuit futuristic system uses this method to try and destroy this vital key, in order to avoid the stigma of the Papacy being the Antichrist.

When did the Papacy achieve political supremacy? The date was indisputably 538 AD. Four events transpired in 538 AD which made the Papacy supreme -

1. In 538 the Arian [anti-Catholic] kingdom of the Ostrogoths, controlling Italy, was conquered and soon after disappeared. This was the last of the three kingdoms that had stood in the Papacy’s way to political power. (31)
2. Roman Catholicism was made the official religion of the state. In 533 AD Justinian had decreed the Pope to be “the Universal Bishop of the World and the Corrector of Heretics!” In 538 this decree was made effective. This commenced a new era in history. It marked the commencement of the Middle Ages. (32)
3. In 538 AD the Papacy itself underwent a great change. Until this year all the Bishops of Rome were counted as “saints”, but from 538 onwards they were considered as rulers of state. This was because they were now political rulers. (33)
4. In 538 AD the persecution of non-Catholics commenced. Justinian decreed that all must join the Catholic Church or leave the empire and have their goods confiscated. This resulted in flight and massacre as thousands endeavored to escape. (34) Thus 538 AD commenced the awful era of Papal persecution that produced so many millions of martyrs and which today is an embarrassment to so many Catholics. (35)

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship [obey] him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Verse 8

This was truly the situation in regard to the world of that day, over which the Papacy presided. All submitted except the faithful minority of saints who were hounded, persecuted and martyred. 538 AD marked the beginning of the Middle Ages. Once this period was called the Dark Ages, but because it was the period when the Papacy dominated Europe, the Catholic Church has undertaken to falsify the historical picture in order to improve her image. The Dark Ages have been glamorized as an age of chivalry, peace, unity and glory. Unfortunately, the opposite was the case. It was an age of oppression, superstition and fear. Of feudalism, of appalling ignorance and of prolonged persecution. It was the rule of the Papal Church. As the Anglican scholar declared,

“The noon of the Papacy was the midnight of the world.” (36)

Dr. N. Summerbell has written,

“The Dark Ages, introduced by the persecution of an enlightened church in the sanguinary wars of Justinian to exalt the Catholics, continued up to the fourteenth century. It was a long, dark night when ignorance, bigotry and cruelty reigned, and truth, purity and justice were crushed out.” (37)

Another author has also written,

“The noontide of the Papacy was the world’s moral midnight. The Holy scriptures were almost unknown not only to the people, but to the Priests, God’s law, the standard of righteousness, having been removed, they exercised power without limit and practiced vice without restraint. Fraud, avarice and profligacy prevailed. Men shrank from no crime by which they could gain wealth or position, for centuries there was no progress in learning, arts or civilization. A moral and intellectual paralysis had fallen upon Christendom.” (38)

The prediction stated that the beast was to continue or make war for 42 months or 1260 years. The Papacy is the only power in history that has reigned supreme for that period of time. It covers the majority of the Christian era. Many enquire as to the reason why heaven permitted such a vast period of oppression upon mankind especially upon the saints of God. We suggest two main reasons -

1. This world is an object lesson or theatre to the sinless universe. In permitting the Papacy full reign, God revealed to the universe the fruitage of the principles of Satan’s rule. The Papacy is the masterpiece of Satan’s deception and in the 1260 year period, all beheld what it was like when Satan’s principles held sway.
2. The extended period of persecution kept the true church pure. Had affluence and popularity been the lot of the true church, it would have been ruined by corruption and apostasy as was the early church. Persecution maintained the purity of the faith.

If 538 AD marked the beginning of the 1260 year period, what date marked its end? This brings us to the thirteenth point of identification.

ANTICHRIST RECEIVES A DEADLY WOUND

“I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death” verse 3

“Mortally wounded,” T.C.N.T. and Weymouth.

“A death blow,” N.E.B.

“A mortal wound,” R.S.V.

“Slain,” margin K.J.V.

“He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity: he that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” Verse 10

This is a repetition of the first part of verse 3. (39) The supremacy of the Papacy was to continue for 1260 years. Therefore the deadly wound would not be dealt, until the 1260 years were concluded. In what way did the political power of the Papacy end? The 1260 years ended in 1798 AD. It was in this year that the prediction was fulfilled concerning “the deadly wound and of going “into captivity” and of being “killed with the sword” verse 10. It is important to recognize that it was the head of the beast that received the deadly wound. It is not the Roman Catholic Church as such that was wounded or slain. The Catholic Church has continually functioned. The beast represents the political aspect of the Papacy. The Papacy is a union of church and state, of religious and civil power. In Revelation 17, which is an enlargement of chapter 13, the religious element is symbolized as the harlot, and the civil or political element, is symbolized by the 7-headed beast on which the harlot rides.

Some claim that the deadly wound was administered by the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century; but that event occurred before the close of the 1260 year period. The Reformation hurt the Catholic Church in certain countries of Europe, but it did not wound or slay the political element. The Papacy continued to war against the saints more strongly than ever. It organized the Counter Reformation which amounted to open

war against Protestantism. She established the terrible order of the Jesuits, whose sole purpose was to destroy Protestantism and elevate the Papacy. All this declared that the Papacy was alive and well after the Reformation.

The deadly wound of the Papacy occurred in 1798 at the behest of the Revolutionary government of France. It directed General Berthier to invade Italy and destroy the Papacy.

“There is one thing more essential to the attainment of the end desired and that is to destroy, if possible, the centre of unity of the Roman Church.” (40)

In response Berthier arrested Pope Pius VI and gave orders for the abolition of the Papacy. He carried the Pope prisoner to France where he died the following year. Italy was declared a republic. This momentous event was recognized by authorities as the death-knell of the Papacy.

“Berthier entered Rome on the 10th of February, 1798 and proclaimed a republic... Half Europe thought Napoleon’s veto would be obeyed and that with the Pope the Papacy was dead.” (41)

“Orators deliver its [the Papacy’s] funeral oration with a joyous and blasphemous irony. It has ceased to exist. It well seem as if everything were finished.” (42)

“Rarely during all its history has the church known a more critical situation. In short, Catholicism as a whole seem dying.” (43)

What was it that constituted the deadly wound? It was the stripping from the Papacy of its political power. The church continued as a religious body but the political element was destroyed.

“In 1798 Berthier made his entrance into Rome, abolished the Papal government and established a secular one.” (44)

It was the Papal government that was slain. While various attempts were made to recover her political power, it was not successful. After 70 years of lingering between life and death, the Papacy gave its last gasp when Victor Emmanuel annexed the Papal territories and became the political head of Italy. (For detailed historical data, see Appendix I.) The initial wound was administered in 1798.

ANTICHRIST IS RESURRECTED - THE WOUND IS HEALED

“And his deadly wound was healed.” Verse 3

If the reception of the wound was the loss of its political power, we suggest that the healing of the wound must be the restoration of its political power. At the turn of the century the world in general believed that the Papacy was finished. To all appearances the restoration of its former power appeared an impossibility. But the divine prediction 1900 years before had declared, “Its deadly wound was healed.”

Today the fulfillment of the prediction is indisputable. The Papacy has revived. An almost unbelievable change has occurred. The recovery began about the time of the Great War of 1914-1918 and climaxed in 1929. In that year Mussolini, dictator of Italy, officially restored to the Papacy her political power. The Pope was made king again. He had the right to rule. He was able to re-establish the Papal court, the Papacy was again recognized as a political kingdom.

To commemorate the treaty, Mussolini constructed a special street leading from Rome to the Vatican called, “The Avenue of Reconciliation”. This treaty was recognized and published as a HEALING.

“A crowd, tense with excitement, is here to witness the passage of these two men. [Mussolini and Cardinal Gasparil whose pens will HEAL A WOUND of fifty-nine years.” (45)

“In affixing their autographs to the memorable document, HEALING THE WOUND which festered since the 1700’s, extreme cordiality was displayed on both sides.” (46)

Over eighteen hundred years after the prediction by St. John, the identical term is unconsciously employed to describe the fulfillment of this remarkable prophecy.

THE RESTORATION OF ANTICHRIST’S POWER

“And all the world wondered after the beast.” Verse 3

“And they worshipped the beast saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” Verse 4

“And causes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast [Papacy] whose deadly wound was healed.” Verse 12

Since 1929 the Papacy’s revival and restoration has amazed the world. One hundred years ago, no Roman Catholic could hold public office in Great Britain or the United States. The Roman Catholic church was an unpopular, hated and despised church. It was considered by millions to be unchristian, pagan, idolatrous, degrading, oppressive and even a curse to the community.

Today, Roman Catholicism is looked upon in exactly the opposite light. It is an amazing reversal of public opinion. Today Catholic institutions in Great Britain are greater than before the Reformation. In the USA the position of the Papacy is even more impressive. She occupies a dominant position in regard to policies and control in that leading nation. As J. Rickab declared,

“Yet since then [1798], the Papacy has been lifted to a pinnacle of spiritual power, unreached maybe since earliest Christian history.” (47)

“The place of the Papacy in world affairs seems to stand out in bolder relief than at almost any other epoch of its long existence.” (48)

“As it reached the Atomic Age, the Catholic Church found itself in perhaps the most powerful condition in its history, in terms of numbers, influence and prestige.” (49)

THE EXTENT OF ANTICHRIST’S POWER

“All the world wondered after the beast.” Verse 3

Various translations concur that the extent of restoration will be worldwide.

“The whole earth went after the beast in wonder.” Moffatt.

“The whole earth went after the beast in amazement and wonder.” Amplified Bible.

“The whole earth followed the beast with wonder.” RSV.

“The whole world went after the beast in wondering admiration.” NEB.

“The whole earth followed the animal with wonder.” Phillips.

“The whole earth was amazed and followed the beast.” GNB.

Verses 11-17 reveal how the Papacy reaches world preeminence. A particular power enforces Papal acceptance and special methods will be employed to bring about universal acceptance of Papal worship. (50)

This is a tremendous prediction. It reveals how world events will finally work out. The ultimate power to wield world control is not Communism, not Russia, not China, but the Papacy.

In the final conflict that is soon to envelope the world there will be only two sides, two groups. Those who worship and obey the Beast and those who worship and obey the Lamb. It will be between truth and tradition, the law of God and laws of men. It will be between Jesus Christ and Antichrist.

(This chapter is continued as: "When Religious Persecution Returns!")

THE DEADLY WOUND TO THE PAPACY

The Historical Record as Given in "Historians History of the World" Volume 9, [1908 ed.]

In 1798 General Berthier, at the order of the French Government "In February, 1798, occupied its capital [Rome]. Their General demanded that the Pope should resign his temporal sovereignty, retaining his universal bishopric, and receiving a large pension. Pius obstinately refusing, was carried into Tuscany and thence into France, where he died. On the 20th March, 1798 the constitution of the Roman or Tiberine Republic was formally proclaimed." Page 556.

In 1799 the French armies were forced to withdraw from Italy.

In 1800 a new Pope was elected, who was restored to ruler ship of Tiberine or Roman Republic.

"Meanwhile the old Pope having died the preceding year, a conclave which opened at Venice in March, 1800, had raised to the papal chair, Cardinal Chiaramonti. He was allowed by all parties to return to Rome and assume the government of the provinces which had formed the Tiberine Republic." Page 564.

In 1809 the Papal throne was again overturned. "The Papal state was openly claimed as a fiefhold under Napoleon."

"In May, 1809, Napoleon dated ...a decree which annexed to the French Empire those provinces of the papal state which had not already been seized. The pope. . .was transported into France ... where he was kept a close prisoner till 1811." Page 571.

"After the fall of the popedom, an attempt was made to give unity and a show of independence to the - Italian provinces of the empire..." page 573.

After the fall of Bonaparte in 1815, most of the territories of the church in Italy were restored to the Pope. An attempt was made to restore the pre-Napoleonic conditions, but a new spirit of national independence was astir in Italy.

In the papal states, insurrections broke out, due to the administrations of Popes Leo XII and Pius VIII.

"The subjects of the papal provinces declared openly against the temporal sovereignty of the pope, and on 26th February, deputies from all the revolted states united in proclaiming a new republic." Page 586.

However, the political heads of the allied nations put down by arms the insurrections. The Holy See had all its possessions restored and "the leading powers of Europe interposed to recommend concessions by the Pope to his subjects."

1848 - Insurrection in Rome. The Minister of Pius IX was assassinated. The Pope flees to Gaeta.

1849 - A Republic was declared in Rome under Mazzini. However France sent an army to Italy, which restored the Pope, page 597.

1870 - The French leave Rome. Victor Emmanuel enters Rome and annexes the Papal Territories to Italy. The Pope appeals to the King of Prussia, but in vain. The Pope retires to the Vatican and styles himself in protest, "The Prisoner of the Vatican" and refused to leave. Pages 622-623.

It is clear that 1798 marked the initial wounding of the Papacy. The election of another Pope did not necessarily restore Papal power. It was an attempt to do so, but the above facts show that while the Papacy

endeavored to regain control over the people of Italy, the people themselves rejected Papal authority. The Pope was kept in office by foreign powers, not by the support of his own people. Finally the support of all foreign powers was withdrawn and the Pope in styling himself as “prisoner of the Vatican” in effect admitted that his political power had vanished.

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