

The Pope, Papacy and Prophecy

The death of Pope John Paul II and the funeral of this much honored Pope electrified the world. Millions journeyed to Rome to be a part of the historical event. But what lies ahead for the Catholic Church? How many more popes will there be? What does the future hold? Here is a new look at the Vatican, the papacy, and cryptic ancient prophecies for the End Time!

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Authorities estimated that more than 5,000,000 people came to witness the funeral of Pope John Paul II. People walked around his coffin at the rate of about 300 per minute, a rather rapid pace. The line stretched for miles. An estimated two billion or more people viewed the proceedings on worldwide television!

The massive and elaborate funeral had the masses spell-bound. Potentates, priests, and common people all paid their grave respects and sought to be a part of one of the profound moments of history.

No one of this generation has seen anything like it!

Surely, the Roman Catholic Church has been reborn as a force to be reckoned with in human society and around the globe.

What kind of pope will replace John Paul II? How many more popes will there be till the "End" of the age?

Pope John Paul II

Jewish people looked upon Pope John Paul II with great favor, as he seemed to show great sympathy toward them, and even called upon the church to show repentance for causing centuries of persecution and antagonism toward the Jews.

John Paul II, in his 26 years of reign as the supreme pontiff of Catholicism, did much to reestablish the papacy as the foremost leader and figure in the Christian world. As pope, he expressed pained regret at the way Jews had been held in contempt and had been persecuted by generations of Christians, including many Catholics and priests.

Cementing a new relationship between the papacy and the Jews, Pope John Paul II visited Jerusalem in the year 2000, and prayed at the Wailing Wall, Judaism's holiest religious site. He left a prayer-note in the Wall, expressing regret for those who had caused Jewish children to suffer.

At his funeral, political leaders and the heads of all faiths joined in honoring the memory of this highly esteemed world figure. Pope John Paul II's many trips abroad helped to foster a growing sense of worldwide ecumenism and church reconciliation and unity among the many branches of Christendom. Many Christians have come to think that there are no major differences between Catholicism and Protestant beliefs. Even evangelical Christians have been wooed back into the fold, and have joined forces with the Catholic Church to combat abortion, euthanasia, and related evils in the world, forgetting or ignoring major doctrinal differences between them – papering over the theological issues, as it were, and relegating them to the dustbin of history.

Noted Protestant leaders lauded and eulogized the pope. James Dobson of Focus on the Family, declared, "Today's passing of Pope John Paul II is an immeasurable loss – not only to our friends in the Catholic church, but to the entire world."

Evangelist Billy Graham referred to the death of the pope as losing one of his own family. He asserted, "I have a very strange feeling of loss. I almost feel as though one of my family members has gone." He remarked on the Larry King television show on CNN, "I loved him very much, and had the opportunity of discussing so many things with him." Graham has called the pope the "greatest religious leader of the modern world, and one of the greatest moral and spiritual leaders of this century," says Kathy Burns, author of *Billy Graham and His Friends* (page 416).

Pagan Rites and Paganism

It is very interesting that the pope was buried in a wooden sarcophagus, in the shape of a trapezoidal shaped coffin. To most people, this may have seemed but of little importance, but most people are buried in rectangular shaped coffins. Whence comes the trapezoidal shaped coffin?

Interestingly, in the religion of Satanism, or the worship of the devil, the "Order of the Trapezoid" is a very secret ancient society which worshipped the Egyptian god Set. This secret society is dedicated to the "Left Hand Path," the way that follows the occult path of evil, as opposed to the "right hand path." Every knight of the trapezoid embraces self-direction, self-deification, through the process of "antinomianism" – rejection of the laws of God.

Michal A. Aquino, founder of the Church of Set, a Satanic sect, explains the origin of the Order of the Trapezoid and its insignia. The background of the medallion was black, with the outline of a trapezoid upon it, a trident piercing it from the bottom, an upside down pentagram within it, and three sixes – 666 – lying within three triangles

formed at the top and two sides of the trapezoid. At the base of the trident is a flaming fire. Thus the trapezoid is an ancient symbol of the occult and witchcraft!

A Pagan Church

Of course, many of the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church can be traced back to ancient paganism! Alexander Hislop traces the Catholic religious festivals of the mass, Christmas, Easter, Lent, Whitsunday, and others, back to the ancient Babylonians, and the arch-conspirators this side of the great Flood of Noah's time – Nimrod and his consort wife, Semiramis.

Hislop, in his remarkable book *The Two Babylons*, shows with great exactitude the sources of much Roman Catholic doctrine and beliefs, tracing them to ancient Egypt, Rome, Greece, Asia Minor, and most of all, Babylon.

In fact, Ariel and Will Durant, in their epochal work *The Story of Civilization*, wrote of the growing, gentitized Christian church, dominated by Rome: "Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it. The Greek mind, dying, came to a transmigrated life in the theology and liturgy of the Church . . . the Greek mysteries passed down into the impressive mystery of the Mass. Other pagan cultures contributed to the syncretist result. From Egypt came the ideas of a divine trinity . . . from Egypt the adoration of the Mother and Child, and the mystic theosophy that made Neoplatonism and Gnosticism, and obscured the Christian creed . . . From Phrygia came the worship of the Great Mother [Mary, in Catholic theology!]; from Syria the resurrection drama of Adonis [a pagan messiah]" (vol.3, page 595).

In fact, Will and Ariel Durant hurl the charge, "Christianity [as we commonly know it, today] was the *last great creation of the ancient pagan world*" (*ibid.*).

In 324 A.D., this revised, paganized "Christianity" became "recognized as the official religion of the Roman Empire, and a Christian emperor held supreme authority, with a court of professed Christians around him," writes Jesse Lyman Hurlbut in *Story of the Christian Church* (page 73). He adds, "It seemed but a single step from facing lions in the amphitheatre to a place beside the throne of the world!" This was the age of Constantine.

Says Hurlbut, "It was two generations after Constantine when *images* began to appear in the churches; the early Christians having a horror of all that might lead to idolatry" (p.75).

The changes in the church began to flow thick and fast. "The ministers of the church soon became a privileged class, above the law of the land" (p.76). "The first day of the week was proclaimed as a day of rest and of worship, and its observance soon became general throughout the empire" (p.77).

Paganism crept into the church, and by stealth, subverted and overcame it! The teachings of Christ and the apostles became buried under an avalanche of pagan doctrine, holidays, rituals, and observances!

Says Hurlbut, “Everybody sought membership in the church, and nearly everybody was received. Both good and bad, sincere seekers after God and hypocritical seekers after gain, rushed into the communion. Ambitious, worldly, unscrupulous men sought office in the church for social and political influence” (p.79).

In a stunning expose, he says: “The forms and ceremonies of PAGANISM gradually crept into the worship. *Some of the old heathen feasts became church festivals with change of name and of worship.* About 405 A.D. images of saints and martyrs began to appear in the churches, at first as memorials, then in succession revered, adored, and worshiped. The adoration of the Virgin Mary was substituted for the worship of Venus and Diana; the Lord’s Supper became a sacrifice in place of a memorial; and the elder evolved from a preacher into a priest” (p.79).

The Growing Papal Power

Thus the widespread professing church did not transform the world; the world transformed the CHURCH into its own image and likeness! Administrative regions of the Church were modeled after the administrative regions of the Empire. Thus the church evolved into the “image” of the “Beast”!

Hurlbut concludes, “In the west . . . the church gradually usurped power over the state, and the result was not *Christianity* but a more or less corrupt *hierarchy* controlling the nations of Europe, making the church mainly a political machine” (p.80).

At the same time the pagan church was growing in scope and power, the Jewish Christians and those faithful to the laws of God became increasingly persecuted, scorned, and objects of animosity, hatred, and contempt.

After Constantine’s “conversion,” which was politically motivated, “the Jews were oppressed with new restrictions and exactions, and Christians were forbidden to associate with them. Constantine banished the rabbis (337), and made the marriage of a Jew with a Christian woman a capital crime” (*The Story of Civilization*, vol.4, p.347).

Up until the time of Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117-138), the Jerusalem headquarters church, “composed primarily of Judaeo-Christians, had been loyal to the basic Jewish religious institutions, such as Passover and the Sabbath,” writes Samuele Bacchiocchi, in *From Sabbath to Sunday* (p.163). By the time of Polycrates, division was rending the church, as western churches, following Victor, the Bishop at Rome, observed an Easter Sunday, instead of the Biblical (Jewish) Passover. This controversy, known as the “Quartodeciman controversy,” threatened to wreak havoc in the church, as many church bishops in Asia and the East observed the Jewish Passover, with the Jews (see page 199).

Hadrian hated the Jews and everything connected with them. He crushed their rebellion under Simon Bar Kochba in 135. He “adopted a policy of radical repression of Jewish rites and customs” (*From Sabbath to Sunday*, p.200).

A Church Free from Jewish Influence

Writes Bacchiocchi, “The conflict and tension between Judaism and the Empire, which became particularly acute under Hadrian, may well have induced Bishop Sixtus to take steps to *substitute* those distinctive Jewish festivities as the Passover and the Sabbath with *new dates* and theological motivations, *in order to avoid any semblance of Judaism*” (*ibid.*, p.203).

By A.D. 196, Victor of Rome went so far as to excommunicate all the churches in Asia who followed the apostolic custom of celebrating Passover on the same day as the Jews. “When notified of the Asian bishops’ refusal to accept Easter-Sunday, Victor drastically ‘declared all the brethren there wholly excommunicated.’” Says Bacchiocchi, “This is perhaps the most explicit evidence of the authority of the Roman Bishop to enforce a new custom, and even to cut off from the communion of the Church an entire dissident community” (p.210).

The controversy was not “settled” in favor of the growing pagan western church, until the Council of Nicea, in 325 A.D. Emperor Constantine desired “to establish a religion completely free from any Jewish influences” (p.206). To this end, he issued a decree which revealed his true anti-Semitic nature and ill will:

“It appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. . . *Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd:* for we have received from our Saviour a different way. . . Strive and pray continually that the purity of your souls may not seem in anything to be sullied by fellowship with the customs of these most wicked men. . . All should unite in desiring that which sound reason appears to demand, and in *avoiding all participation in the perjured conduct at the Jews*” (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, quoted in *From Sabbath To Sunday*, p.206).

Writes Bacchiocchi, “Specific anti-Sabbath measures were taken by the Church of Rome. The Sabbath was made a day of fasting to show, among other things, contempt for the Jews. Similarly, to avoid appearing to observe the day with the Jews, the eucharistic celebration and religious assemblies were forbidden on the Sabbath” (p.207).

The Bishop of Rome (not yet called a “pope”) was asserting his superiority and primacy over the far-flung Christian church. The Church at Rome was becoming more and more assertive, powerful, influential, and authoritarian.

Notice how far the western church strayed from the original teachings and doctrines of the early New Testament Church of God!

Politics and Catholic Power

Down through the corridors of history, the Catholic Church has sought to wield temporal, worldly religious and political power. Its power over the nations of Europe was eclipsed due to the Protestant Reformation, and the rise of the Anglo-Saxon powers in Europe and the United States. It was overshadowed by the growing influence of the Reformation, the Age of Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, and major political revolutions.

But today, with the immensely successful papal reign of John Paul II, the respect, influence, and power of the Roman Catholic papacy is once again gaining ground and creating impact on world governments. It is powerfully forging ahead to unite all religions under its banner and flag, as the religious leader of a worldwide pluralistic spiritual community. It seeks to implant its authority over every branch of Christendom. And the love and respect the world has given to Pope John Paul II paves the way for this dramatic change and transformation on the world religious map.

Now that Pope John Paul II is gone, what does the future hold? What does Biblical prophecy say about the world ahead of us, and the Roman Catholic Church?

Biblical Prophecy Speaks Out

The Bible is straightforward in its dramatic prophecies for the end times, and the arising of a great worldwide “church” empire which will dominate over all global faiths and religions.

We read in the book of Revelation of a great worldwide political empire which will rise up in the “end of days.” It is called “the beast,” and is a union of nations with “ten horns and seven heads” (Rev.13:1). See our article in the January-February 2005 issue of Prophecy Flash on the “Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns.” This “beast” will rule the world for a period of “forty two months” or 3 ½ years (Rev.13:5).

After seeing this great beast rise up, John says, “Then I saw another beast rising up out of the land [itself]; he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke (roared) like a dragon. He exerts all the power and right of control of the former beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell upon it to exalt and deify the first beast [the coming world dictator!], whose deadly wound was healed, and to worship him” (Rev.13:11-12).

The second “beast” is a world religious leader. He looks on the surface like a “lamb” – that is, a Christian – but talks like the devil himself!

This religious leader “performs great signs (startling miracles), even making fire fall from the sky to the earth in men’s sight. And because of the signs (miracles) which he is allowed to perform in the presence of the [first] beast, he deceives those who inhabit the earth, commanding them to erect a statue (an image) in the likeness of the beast who was wounded by the [small] sword and still lived” (verses 13-14).

This aggrandized papal power, according to the revelation of John, “compels all [alike], both small and great, both the rich and the poor, both free and slave, to be marked with an inscription [stamped] on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that no one will have power to buy or sell unless he bears the stamp (mark, inscription), [that is] the name of the beast or the number of his name” (verses 16-17).

This final end-time religious figure will be a powerful pope – at the head of a united world religion, all under the sway and rule of the papacy of Rome.

John says, “Here is [room for] discernment [a call for the wisdom of interpretation]. Let anyone who has intelligence (penetration and insight enough) calculate the number of the beast, for it is the human number [the number of a certain man]; his number is 666” (verse 18).

The number “6” is the number of man, or human perfection, created on the sixth day of Creation. The triple “6” of “666” is the number of emphatic, concentrated “human” power or perfection – the “trinity” of human perfection, or the “perfection” of imperfection! It symbolizes the acme and culmination of human pride and arrogance, dignity and aplomb, apart from and independent of God.

Says Bullinger in *Number in Scripture*, “But 666 was the *secret symbol* of the ancient pagan mysteries connected with the worship of the Devil. It is today the secret connecting link between those ancient mysteries and their modern revival in Spiritualism, Theosophy, etc. The efforts of the great enemy are now directed towards uniting all into one great whole. . . The societies for the re-union of Christendom, and the conferences for the re-union of the Churches, are alike parts of the same great movement, and are all making for and are signs of the coming Apostasy” (p.283).

The number 6 was stamped on the old mystery religions. The great secret symbol was SSS, because the letter S in the Greek alphabet was the symbol for the figure 6. When it came to 6, the Greek alphabet had another letter – a peculiar form of S, called “stigma.” The word “stigma” means “a mark.” Says Bullinger, “especially a mark made by *a brand* as burnt upon slaves, cattle, or soldiers, by their owners or masters; or on devotees who thus branded themselves as belonging to their gods” (*ibid.*). “Stigmata” or such “marks” are noted among Roman Catholic worshipers and devotees, even in modern times, as a badge or mark of holiness and devotion.

The number 666 is connected with Rome. Irenaus, a student of Polycarp, who learned under the apostle John, understood the number 666 to be the Greek word LATEINOS:

L	=	30
A	=	1
T	=	300
E	=	5
I	=	10
N	=	50
O	=	70
S	=	<u>200</u>
<i>Total</i>		666

“Lateinos” also means “Latin Kingdom.” Papal Rome made Latin the official language of the Empire. It is still the official language of Rome. The Roman Catholic Church’s official canons, missals, prayers, decrees, bulls, blessings, cursings, are all in LATIN. Thus the name of “Lateinos” is branded on this church, as well as the number “666”!

In Aramaic, the name of the first century anti-Christian Roman Emperor who was a violent persecutor of the church, Nero Caesar, is *Nron Ksr*. Nero was the first century “Antichrist,” a very type of the end-time beast of Revelation who will also persecute true followers of Christ! The numerical value of these letters are as follows:

N	=	50
R	=	200
O	=	6
N	=	50
K	=	100
S	=	60
R	=	<u>200</u>
<i>Total</i>		666

His name, “NERO CAESAR” in Aramaic, the common language of the Jews in the first century, adds up to “666,” the number of the Beast of Revelation (Rev.13:18). One of the titles of the Pope in Latin is “Vicariivs Fillii Dei.” In this title, used of the Pope, V = 5, I = 1, C = 100, I = 1, V = 5, I = 1, L = 50, I = 1, I = 1, D = 500, I = 1. Add them together: 5+1+100+1+5+1+50+1+1+500+1 = 666!!!

Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome, from which it derived its name, is spelled in the Hebrew language, *Romiith*. Let’s notice this name:

R	=	200
O	=	6
M	=	40
I	=	10
I	=	10
TH	=	<u>400</u>
<i>Total</i>		666

Furthermore, the original name of Rome was Saturnia, named for Saturn, “the hidden one,” an ancient name for Nimrod, who rebelled against the Lord. He was the arch-apostate who began this world’s Babylonian civilization (Gen.10:8-10). “Saturn” was his secret name revealed to the initiates of the Chaldean mystery religion. It was spelled with four letters – STUR. In the language of Chaldee, it adds up as follows:

S	=	60
T	=	400
U	=	6
R	=	<u>200</u>
Total:		<u>666</u>

Thus the Roman Catholic Church has the name and number of the “Beast” all over its “lamb-like” HEAD! It is Roman, through and through – pagan to the deepest inner core! It is the religion of “666” – the number of the “Beast”!

What could be plainer? What could be clearer? What could be more astonishing and astounding! The identity of the great Apostasy and the Apostate “Mysteries” has been revealed in stunning clarity!

The Popes of Rome

Let’s take a brief look at some of the more dubious popes down through history.

From 870 to 1050 was the darkest age of the Roman church. “The 200 years between Nicolas I and Gregory VII is called by historians the MIDNIGHT OF THE DARK AGES. Bribery, Corruption, Immorality and Bloodshed, make it just about the Blackest Chapter in the Whole History of the Church,” wrote Henry H. Halley in *Halley’s Bible Handbook* (page 774).

In 896, Pope Stephen VII began the trial of the late Pope Formosus, who had been a rival and had been dead for nine months. He had the corpse of Formosus dragged from its tomb, sat upon a throne in the council chamber, and began accusing the dead pope of crimes and misdeeds, screaming and raving at it. Pope Stephen himself was strangled to death a few years later.

Pope Sergius III (A.D. 904-911) is said to have had a mistress, Marozia, who, with her mother and sister, filled the papal chair with their paramours and bastard sons and made the papal palace into a “den of iniquity” and robberies. This began a period known in history as “The Rule of the Harlots” (from 904-963). Later, Marozia had her own illegitimate son appointed pope (Pope John XI, 931-936).

John XII (955-963), a grandson of Marozia, was guilty of almost every crime – violated virgins and widows, high and low, lived with his own father’s mistress, and turned the papal palace into a brothel.

Pope Benedict V (964-967) was another scoundrel. He raped a young girl and ran off to Constantinople with the papal treasury. When the money ran out and he was destitute, he returned to the Vatican. Church historian Gerbert called him “the most iniquitous of all the monsters of ungodliness.” He was finally killed by a jealous husband. His corpse, with one hundred dagger wounds, was dragged through the streets and hurled into a cesspit, a fitting end to a papal miscreant.

Pope Boniface VII (984-985) murdered Pope John XIV and maintained on the “blood stained papal throne by a lavish distribution of stolen money” (*Halley’s Bible Handbook*, p.774). The Bishop of Orleans called him and John XII and Leo VIII “monsters of guilt, reeking in blood and filth; Antichrist sitting in the Temple of God” (*ibid.*).

In October 1032, the papal throne was purchased by powerful families that ruled Rome, for an 11-year old boy, who became Benedict IX (1033-1045). He surpassed all before him “in wickedness; committed murders and adulteries in broad daylight; robbed pilgrims on the graves of martyrs; a hideous criminal, the people drove him out of Rome” (*ibid*, p.775).

Gregory VII (1073-1085) was a great forger of documents and had a whole school of forgers working for him, creating documents bearing the papal seal of approval. In his time the two prevailing sins of the church were immorality and simony – the purchase of church offices with money, a la Simon Magus who tried the same stunt with the apostle Peter (Acts 8:9-24). Gregory is the pope who formalized the celibacy doctrine of the Catholic Church. His purpose was to curb the need to provide gifts of church lands and resources to all the illegitimate children being sired by Catholic priests, prelates and bishops.

How wanton were many of the popes? Catholic historian Peter de Rosa in his book *Vicars of Christ* wrote, “Popes had mistresses as young as fifteen years of age, were guilty of incest and sexual perversions of every sort, had innumerable children, were murdered in the very act of adultery.”

The most powerful of the popes was Innocent III (1198-1216) who claimed to be “Vicar of Christ,” “Vicar of God,” “Supreme Sovereign over the Church and the World,” and who claimed the right to depose kings. He boasted, “All things on earth and in heaven and in hell are subject to the Vicar of Christ.” All European monarchs obeyed his will. He ordered two crusades, decreed the doctrine of transubstantiation, decreed that the Popes “can never in any way depart from the Catholic faith.” He condemned the Magna Carta, forbade the reading of the Bible in the vernacular, and launched exterminations of all “heretics” – he began the Inquisition, massacred the Albigenses, and shed more blood than any other predecessor or successor until the 16th and 17th centuries.

Says Halley, “One would think Nero, the Beast, had come to life in the Name of the Lamb” (p.776).

The following Pope, Gregory IX, perfected the Inquisition, or ‘Holy Office,’ as it was known, for detection and punishment of heretics. All people were required to become informants against supposed “heretics.” The proceedings were secret, sentence was pronounced, and the victim was given to the state authorities for imprisonment for life or for burning. The victim’s property was confiscated and divided between the church and the state.

Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) in his famous Bull, said, “We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary for Salvation that every creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” He himself was so corrupt that the poet Dante called the Vatican during his reign a “sewer of corruption” and assigned him, together with Nicholas III and Clement V, to the lowest parts of hell.

Pope Innocent VIII (1484-1492) had 16 children by various married women. He multiplied church offices and sold them for vast sums of money. He decreed the extermination of the Waldenses. He appointed the brutal Thomas of Torquemada Inquisitor General of Spain, and ordered all rulers to deliver up heretics to him.

Pope Alexander VI (previously known as Rodrigo Borgia), reigned from 1492-1503. He committed his first murder at the tender age of 12. When crowned pope, he exclaimed, “I am Pope, Vicar of Christ!” Historian Edward Gibbon referred to him as the “Tiberias of Rome.” He was licentious, avaricious and depraved. He bought the papacy and made many cardinals for money. Alexander fathered many children, and had ten illegitimate children by his favorite mistress, Vannozza Catanei. When she lost her bloom, he took a 15-year old as his lover and made her brother a Cardinal in the Church (he later became Pope Paul III).

Leo X who reigned from 1513-21, during the time of Martin Luther, was famous for his widespread usage of “indulgences” – the payment of money to have sin blotted out, to escape purgatory and insure one’s entrance into the pearly gates. He was appointed to 27 different church offices before he was 13 years of age. He bargained for the papal chair, sold church honors, and church offices were for sale. He appointed one cardinal at the age of 7! He maintained the most luxuriant and licentious court in all Europe. A deacon accused of murder could have the crime pardoned for a mere 20 crowns. Two hundred years earlier his predecessor John XXII had similarly granted indulgences for such crimes as incest and sodomy. The evil lurking in the Catholic hierarchy seemed to know no boundaries.

Leo X commissioned the sale of indulgences which released one’s soul from purgatory. Dominican friar Tezel used to exclaim, “As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs!”

Not to be lacking in wantonness, Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484) sanctioned the Spanish Inquisition and decreed that monetary pay-offs would deliver souls from Purgatory. He made eight of his nephews cardinals and used the papacy to enrich himself. He imposed a tax on Roman brothels and whorehouses. (In 1490, there were 6,800 registered prostitutes in Rome.) He rivaled the old Caesars in wealth and pomp.

And on and on the wanton story continues, filling books and volumes with the distasteful facts and figures.

The Inquisition

Of course, the most iniquitous episode in all church history is the sad tale of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages, when the papacy caused the deaths of millions of innocent people whom it regarded as heretics. Canon Llorente, the Secretary of the Inquisition in Madrid, Spain, from 1790-92, estimated the total number of people condemned to death in Spain alone to have been greater than 3 million souls. Some 300,000 were burned alive at the stake.

Says Henry Halley, "It is stated that in the 30 years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 Protestants were put to death in the Pope's war for the extermination of the Waldenses. Think of Monks and Priests, in holy garments, directing, with Heartless Cruelty and Inhuman Brutality, the work of Torturing and Burning alive Innocent Men and Women, and doing it in the Name of Christ, by the direct order of the 'Vicar of Christ.' The Inquisition was the Most Infamous and Devilish Thing in Human History. It was devised by Popes and used by them for 500 years to Maintain their Power" (p.777).

After Martin Luther led the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Church countered by instituting the order of the JESUITS, founded by Ignatius Loyola, a Spaniard, on the principle of absolute and unconditional obedience to the Pope. Its purpose was to counter the Protestant Reformation and reconquer territory lost to the Protestants and Mohammedans, and the conquest of the entire heathen world for the Roman Catholic Church. Their supreme aim was the utter destruction of all heresy, and to accomplish this any act, deception, untruth, immorality, vice – even murder – was deemed "justifiable."

There is an interesting historical footnote to the Napoleonic Wars. When Napoleon conquered Spain in 1808, the Dominicans who were in charge of the Inquisition blockaded themselves in the monastery in Madrid. When his troops forced their way into the monastery, the inquisitors denied the existence of any torture chambers. The soldiers made a thorough search, and found them hidden beneath the floors. The torture chambers were filled with prisoners – all of them naked, and many of them having gone insane. Napoleon's men, repulsed by the scene, emptied the chambers and blew the monastery to kingdom come.

Is this all just ancient history? Or does history often repeat itself?

Demonic “Superforce”

A Catholic priest, Msgr. Luigi Marinelli, wrote a book, *Gone with the Wind*, which sold briskly throughout bookstores in Italy. It revealed horrible stories of money-laundering prelates, sexual abuse, and Satanic rituals being performed inside the walls of the Vatican itself!

The late former priest Malachi Martin, in his book *The Keys of This Blood*, mentions that Pope John Paul discovered the presence of a malign strength in the Vatican he supposedly controlled. Knowledgeable churchmen called it the “superforce.” Various rumors say it began during the reign of Paul VI in 1963. The pope himself alluded to the “smoke of Satan which has entered the Sanctuary.” This was a rather oblique reference to an “enthronement ceremony” at the Vatican performed by Satanist priests. Satanic pedophilia rites and practices at that time were also documented among bishops and priests from Turin in Italy to South Carolina in the United States. Wrote Malachi Martin, “The cultic acts of Satanic pedophilia are considered by professionals to be the culmination of the Fallen Archangel’s rites.”

Interestingly enough, as if to corroborate the Satanic mischief in the Roman Catholic Church, during the 1990s alone the Church paid out more than \$1 billion dollars in claims to victims of sexual abuse by Catholic clergymen. One such offender was Father Jay Mullin, accused of molesting a boy 20 years ago in Boston. He was sent by Cardinal Bernard Law to be evaluated at a place called St. Luke’s Institute, in 1992. This church-run clinic had a massive collection of child pornography including hard-core sadism and masochism featuring pre-teen boys and girls, reported the *Boston Globe* (February 24, 2002).

Apparently the treatment of choice was “aversion therapy” – immerse the pedophile in massive pornography! Such a treatment seems ludicrous – like giving an alcoholic unlimited access to all the booze he wants, or heroin addicts all the heroin they desire, free of charge!

Says writer Mark Owen, “Notwithstanding the scandal and shock of the aforementioned, Rome carries on quietly with her program of *WORLD DOMINION* [emphasis mine]. They lead the competition to establish the first ONE-WORLD SYSTEM that has ever existed. Their ultimate goal is *global religious syncretism*, and to eventually wield control and authority over *every individual on earth*. The human solidarity goals of the Roman Church are *identical to the goals and objectives of the United Nations*. This is why they are such a perfect fit. Rome only gives the appearance of objecting to the U.N. agenda” (Mark Owen, “What You Didn’t Know About The Popes of Rome,” www.rense.com/general63/pope.htm, April 6, 2005).

The Roman Catholic Church even has designs to control the city of Jerusalem, especially the holy sites. Says Owen, “In a 1993 letter to the Pope, Shimon Peres promised to internationalize Jerusalem, granting the UN political control of the Old City and the Vatican hegemony over the holy sites within. This was confirmed by the Italian

newspaper La Stampa. In March 1995 the Israeli radio station Arutz Sheva was leaked a cable from the Israeli Embassy in Rome, confirming the hand over of Jerusalem to the Vatican” (*ibid.*).

Peering into the Future

What does the future actually hold? Will the Pope one day soon once again control Jerusalem? Will he establish his throne in the Old City of Jerusalem, perhaps upon the Temple Mount itself?

Interestingly, Gershon Salomon of the Temple Mount Faithful sent a letter to Pope John Paul II in January 2004, demanding that the pope and the Vatican return to the Jews the Temple Menorah of the 2nd Temple, as well as other Temple vessels, utensils and treasures, which were seized by the Roman general Titus in 70 A.D., when the Temple was sacked and burned to the ground.

As if to corroborate this idea, the prophetic book of Daniel states, “At the time of the END,” there will be a great war in the Middle East. The “king of the south” – Egypt and the Muslim world – “shall attack him” [the king of the north – Europe and the Western World, including the United States – the “Western Alliance”] (Dan.11:40, NRSV).

Daniel continues: “But the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. He shall advance against countries and pass through like a flood. He shall come into the beautiful land [the land of Israel!], and tens of thousands shall fall victim, but Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites [perhaps Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and modern Jordan, whose capital city is Ammon], shall escape from his power” (Dan.11:40-41).

Evidently, these three nations won’t be attacked, because they are seemingly in alliance with the “king of the north.” It is a fact that Iraq is currently brought into the western camp, after the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. Jordan has long been a friend of the West. And Saudi Arabia with its tremendous oil resources, has been a protégé of the United States for scores of years. This is the region where ancient Edom dwelt!

The prophecy continues: “He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and silver, and all the riches of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train” (verses 42-43). Muammar Kaddafi of Libya has already renounced his former attempts to perpetrate terrorism and to obtain nuclear weapons and has moved quietly into the Western camp. Ethiopia also is currently a friend of the West.

The prophecy then becomes very interesting. Daniel records: “But reports from the *east and the north* shall alarm him [Russia and China/Asia!], and he shall go out with great fury to bring ruin and complete destruction [nuclear holocaust!] to many [nations].

“He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with no one to help him” (Dan.11:44-45).

This world figure, known as the “Beast” of Revelation, will rule the western world, conquer the Middle East and North Africa, and bring the oil wealth of the Middle East into his own complete control. But the Russians and Chinese and Asians will not stand idly aside while the West conquers the Middle East. When they observe this strike and conquest, they will retaliate (see Rev.9:13-18). In the meantime, the “Beast” and his sidekick, the “False Prophet,” or future “Pope,” will establish themselves in the “beautiful holy mountain”, the land of Israel!

The Pope will indeed get his hands on Jerusalem! He will cause the whole world under his control to worship the “Beast.” The Beast is also revealed in the Scriptures to be the “lawless one” (II Thess.2:3). Paul says of him, “He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, *so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God*” (verse 4).

At the present time, this person is being “restrained,” Paul declares, “so that he may be revealed when his time comes. *For the mystery of iniquity is ALREADY at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed. And THEN the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming*” (II Thess.2:6-8).

This time is rapidly approaching us. The world will stand aghast when it sees these things begin to happen! You will know that I have spoken the TRUTH when you see with your own eyes, a future Western world leader and the Pope of Rome establish themselves in Jerusalem, as their new headquarters!

The apostle Paul warns, “The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders, and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false, so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned” (II Thess.2:9-12).

The Prophecy of St. Malachi

How will it all play out? Perhaps a clue is revealed in a unique series of prophecies given by a twelfth century Irish Catholic saint. Saint Malachy, whose former name was O’Morgair, lived from 1094 to 1148. He was archbishop of Armagh, Ireland, and was a reformer of the church in Ireland before the Anglo-Saxon and Norman invasion.

Malachy went to Rome in 1139 to present a report on the state of the Irish church to Pope Innocent II. While he was in Rome, he reportedly received a strange vision of

the future in which there were 112 successive popes until the end of time. He wrote down a brief description of each one of them, with two to four Latin words, culminating in a vivid statement about the last one. His prophecies were first published in 1590 A.D. by the Benedictine historian, Arnold Wyon. They have survived the ages and occasioned much comment.

The short prophetic description of each pope begins with Pope Celestine II, elected to the papacy in 1143. Let's take a look at some of the later ones.

Pope #96 he called "*Peregrinus Apostolicus*" – that is, the "Wandering Apostle" or "Traveling Apostle." This would denote Pius VI (1775-1799). In a medallion made in 1782, Pius VI described himself as "*Peregrinus Apostolicus*." It commemorates a trip he made to Vienna to convince Emperor Joseph II to respect papal power and lands. He was also forcibly removed from Rome at the end of his pontificate, when in 1798 the army of the French General Berthier took him prisoner to France. He died in exile, August 22, 1799. Thus he fulfilled the description, to a "T."

Pope #104 – "*Religio Depopulata*" -- that is, "religion depopulated," or "laid waste." This fittingly describes Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), and the devastation to the Roman Catholic Church in Europe during World War I, and from the rise of Communism in Russia, in 1918, after the Bolshevik Revolution. During this period, millions of Christians, particularly Catholics, were slain. Also, during this time, much of Europe renounced Christianity, and agnosticism and atheism grew by leaps and bounds.

Pope #107 – "*Pastor et Nauta*" – "pastor and mariner." This refers to Pope John XXIII (1958-1963). He was much loved by Catholics as a pastor, and by non-Catholics as well. He served as Patriarch in the nautical city of Venice before being elected as pope.

Pope #108 – "*Flos Florum*" – "flower of flowers." This was Pope Paul VI (1963-1978). He had a coat-of-arms which had three fleurs-de-lis on it. The description may have been a reference to the Irish irises on his coat-of-arms.

Pope #109 – "*De Medietate Lunae*" – "from the half moon," or "from the middle of the moon." This pope was John Paul I (1978). His papal reign only lasted 33 days. He was elected pope on August 26, 1978, when the moon was in its last quarter (half the moon was visible in the sky). He died on September 28, when once again the moon was in its last quarter. Samuele Bacchiocchi points out that the phrase "from the half moon" could also refer to the brevity of his pontificate, as he only reigned for one lunar cycle. He was also born in a town named "Belluno," meaning "beautiful moon."

Pope #110 – "*De Labore Solis*" – "From the Labor of the Sun," or "Of the Solar Eclipse." The next pope was John-Paul II, who recently died and was buried on April 8, the very day of a solar eclipse! Not only that, but he was also born on May 8, 1920, during another solar eclipse – the largest one of the 20th century, no less!

Also like the sun, John Paul II came out of the East (Poland in Eastern Europe). He was a man of great “labor,” as he strove against Communism, poverty, and injustice in the world. He labored more than all his predecessors as he traveled around the world numerous times, preaching to millions, in every inhabited continent.

What about the next pope?

Pope #111 – “*Gloria Olivae*” – “the glory of the olive.” This motto *could* imply that the next pope will be Jewish by birth, as the olive tree is used in Scripture to refer to the people of Israel (Romans 11:17-24). Or, since the olive branch is recognized as a “symbol of peace,” this pope could be one who extends the ecumenical work of John Paul II, furthering the work of reconciliation between the branches of modern Christendom, and extending the olive branch to Islam and other religions, in the effort to bring about a new world religious paradigm. He may become a “peace maker.”

The new Pope Benedict XVI, former cardinal Ratzinger of Germany, has taken the name “Benedict,” and seeks to emulate the last Pope Benedict XV and be a “man of peace.” The original Saint Benedict was the first to establish monasticism in Europe to protect Catholicism from Islam and Protestant heretics. Ratzinger is the first German pope in almost 1,000 years.

Ratzinger has served as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith – the Vatican department once called the “Office of Inquisition.” He maintained strict discipline over church doctrine and excommunicated and silenced dissenters. He was the driving force behind the Vatican’s crackdown on liberation theology, religious pluralism, and challenges to traditional Catholic teachings.

Opinion about him is deeply divided. He is blamed for decrees from Rome barring German Catholics from sharing communion with Lutherans in 2003. He has sparred in articles urging centralized church government. His election to the papacy is a full-scale attack on the reformist wing of the Catholic Church, and his selection is a polarizing influence with some seeing a coming civil war within Catholicism. With his election, the space for dissidence has been obliterated, and the attack on person freedom is just beginning, according to Catholic reformers.

Ratzinger chose the name Benedict because he admired Benedict XV who led the church during World War I, when Catholic countries were pitted against one another, and who sought to bring peace – although his attempts failed to prevent the Great War. He angered both sides by not taking sides and declaring neutrality.

Said Ratzinger, ‘I, too, hope in this *short reign* to be a man of peace.’ He is 78 years of age, and has had multiple health problems, so very likely his term in office will be relatively brief. The Italian version of Benedict is “Benedetto,” meaning one who is blessed. Ratzinger indeed appears to fulfill the prophecy of Malachy as the “Olivetian” patriarch.

A correspondent wrote me the following email about Ratzinger:

“1) He is the 265th pope to be elected and $2+6+5=13$ in occult numerology.

“2) Voting for the new pope began on April 18th, which is three 6's.

“3) That the true and original spelling for Ratzinger is not the letter ‘Z’ but with the letter ‘S.’ Thus the true way to spell his name is Ratsinger.

“4) When we apply the alpha-numeric code of A=6, B=12, C=18 and so on, we find that the name Ratsinger adds up as follows: R=108, A=6, T=120, S=114, I=54, N=84, G=42, E=30, R=108 for a total of 666.

“Just some food for thought.”

Yes, it is certainly more “food for thought”! It would seem very likely that this new Pope will be a “forerunner” of the coming “False Prophet” – that is, one who will “prepare the way” for his arrival!

“Peter the Roman”

But the most interesting prophecy of all, is Pope #112. Of him, Malachy states: “*Petros Romanus*” – “Peter the Roman”!

After this short phrase, Malachy simply declares, “In the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church there shall reign Peter the Roman who will feed his flock amid many tribulations, after which the seven-hilled city will be destroyed and the terrible judge will judge the people. The End.”

Unlike the previous popes, who are given mottos, this one is only given a NAME – “Peter the Roman.” The name “Peter” takes us back to the supposed first bishop of Rome, the apostle Peter, who was martyred at Rome. He was not a “pope,” although Catholics often think of him as the first pope. He was merely one of the original *twelve apostles*, all called of Christ, and all equal in authority, being chosen as “apostles” – the highest office in the church (Eph.4:11-12; I Cor.12:28).

This final pope is designated as “the Roman.” The Romans were noted for their tightly knit administrative prowess, as well as their cruelty and bestial character.

Will this pope be the cohort of the “Beast” – and hold the office of the “second beast” of Revelation, during the end of this age?

Calling him “Peter the Roman” may imply that he will be like a Roman Caesar, reaffirming the city of Rome and the Vatican as the SUPREME AUTHORITY in the religious world community! He may require ALL to acknowledge the pontiff of Rome and the Vatican as the supreme religious authority. As the council of Vatican I states, he may require all to acknowledge “the holy, Catholic, and apostolic Roman Church as the mother and teacher of all churches.”

If so, then watch out! The fur will fly furiously, and the Next Inquisition will be right around the corner!

As the apostle John wrote of it: “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony which they had given; they cried out with a loud voice, ‘Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?’ They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, *who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed*” (Rev.6:9-11, NRSV).

The Great Whore

This diabolical persecuting power of the end time is described vividly in Revelation, chapter 17. This chapter describes the great persecuting Church of the end of days, led by the supreme apostate Church of Rome.

The apostle John declares: “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the GREAT WHORE who is seated on many waters [many nations], with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become [spiritually] drunk.’

“So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a WOMAN [symbol of a church] sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery: ‘BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF WHORES and of earth’s abominations.’ And I saw that *the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus*” (Rev.17:1-6).

John was very amazed when he saw this vision and the power of the great whore. The angel told him, “Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.” He goes on to describe the “Beast,” and then says, “This calls for a mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are *seven mountains* on which the woman is seated” (Rev.17:9).

Seven mountains? Rome is the city of “seven hills”! Alexander Hislop writes, “No other city in the world has been celebrated as the city of Rome has, for its situation on seven hills. Pagan poets and orators, who had no thought of elucidating prophecy, have alike characterized it as ‘the seven hilled city.’ Thus Virgil refers to it: ‘Rome has both become the most beautiful (city) in the world, and alone has surrounded for herself seven heights with a wall.’ Propertius, in the same strain, speaks of it (only adding another trait, which complete the Apocalyptic picture) as ‘The lofty city on seven hills,

which governs the whole world.’ Its ‘governing the whole world’ is just the counterpart of the Divine statement – ‘which reigneth over the kings of the earth’ (Rev.17:18)” (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p.2).

Hislop continues, explaining, “Now, while this characteristic of Rome has ever been well marked and defined, it has always been easy to show, that the Church which has its seat and headquarters on the seven hills of Rome might most appropriately be called ‘Babylon,’ inasmuch as it is the chief seat of idolatry under the New Testament, as the ancient Babylon was the chief seat of idolatry under the Old.”

In fact, says Hislop, “It has been known all along that Popery was baptized Paganism; but God is now making it manifest, that the Paganism which Rome has baptized is, in all its essential elements, *the very paganism* which prevailed in the ancient literal Babylon” (*ibid.*).

God Is Fed Up!

Almighty God is fed up with this idolatrous system of worship. He holds it in contempt as an abomination. Even the world itself will get fed up with the witchcraft, sexual abuse, idolatry, and wickedness of this apostate organization.

The angel tells John, “The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. And the ten horns that you saw, and they and the beast *will hate the whore*; they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh [her treasures] and burn her up with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. The woman that you saw *is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 17:15-18).

Why would the nation-states of the end-time beast power turn on the whore, and ravage and destroy her? The horrendous stench of her wickedness and wantonness makes even their hearts twinge and ache. Could it be the failed prophecies of this great whore, promising them victory and triumph in their march to greatness, only to lead to a massive invasion by the armies of the East and North – China, Russia, and their numerous allies – will cause them to see the whore as she really is?

Whatever the case, they will turn on the great whore, and destroy her churches, seize the wealth of the Vatican, and burn the Vatican with the fury of fire.

God says, “Come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon! Sit on the ground without a throne, daughter Chaldea! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal, remove your veil, strip off your robe, uncover your legs, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your shame shall be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will spare no one. . .

“Sit in silence, and go into darkness, daughter Chaldea! For you shall no more be called the mistress of kingdoms. . . Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one beside me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children’ – both these things shall come upon you in a moment, in one day: the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments” (Isaiah 47:1-9, NRSV).

God’s Warning and Call

Almighty God abhors this wicked, evil, serpentine system of idolatry and false worship, claiming to be the “only true church” and “true religion.” It is an utterly corrupt and filthy abomination in His sight.

God thunders to His people, around the world, “Come out of her, my people, so that you do not partake in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues; for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed. As she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, so give her a like measure of torment and grief. Since in her heart she says, ‘I rule as a queen; I am no widow, and I will never see grief,’ therefore her plagues will come in a single day – pestilence and mourning and famine – and she will be burned with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who judges her” (Rev.18:4-8).

God thunders to us of this present generation, which will see these things happen, “Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar [a term for Satan the Devil]? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, ‘I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. *Therefore COME OUT from them, and be SEPARATE from them,* says the Lord, and touch nothing *unclean*; and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (II Cor.6:14-18, NRSV).

Terrible days lie ahead. Great changes are soon to occur to the nations and governments on planet earth. A great dark religious apostasy will rise up like a dark, shadowy monster, enslaving the minds and lives of billions. What path will you take? The Messiah warned: “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live upon the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

It is high time to seek the Lord, and return to Him, before all these things come to pass. Pray fervently, imploring God to lead you safely and securely in the coming days!

