

Study for the Month of February, 2014

The Papacy Series-Part XII

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“Watchman, what of the Night?”

The gospel prophet Isaiah, writing of our very time, declared these words of the Watcher of Israel, One who sees the end from the beginning, One who will weigh all, both shepherds, under shepherds and their followers in the balances of the sanctuary during the investigative judgment currently taking place in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and exclaimed:

“The burden of Dumah. He calleth me out of Seir, watchmen, what of the night? Watchmen, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.” Isa. 20: 11, 12.

By the same prophet God reveals what His professed “watchmen”---“spiritual guardians of the people and of the faith,” that is, the end-time equivalent of the scribes, Pharisees, Saducees, and Sanhedrin in Christ’s time, have been doing, especially during these closing hours of the churches’ and earth’s probationary time. This particularly applies to “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS,” the latter, “harlots,” her spiritual daughters,—the apostate once-Protestant churches. Fearfully and sadly, some among the very remnant church of prophecy are equally guilty of doing what are described hereunder for “fear to offend,” “fear of the consequences,” or are in themselves needing thorough reconversion, etc.

“His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, everyone for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will all fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.” Isaiah 56: 10-12.

NOTES: Dumah: [Heb. *Dumah*, “silence.”] 1. A son of Ishmael, and ancestor of a tribe in Arabia carrying his name (Gen. 25: 14; 1 Chron. 1: 30). 2. Probably a symbolic name for Edom (Isa. 21: 11). **Seir:** [Heb. *Seir*, “hairy”]. The name is attested in Egyptian as *S'r*, in Akkadian as *Sa'arri*, and in the Amarna Letters as *Sheri*. 1. A mountainous land (Gen 32: 2), also the name of its inhabitants (Eze. 25: 8, K.J.V.). The area, also known as Mt. Seir (ch. 35: 15), reached from near the southern end of the Dead Sea almost to the gulf of Aquaba, and lay east of the depression known as the *Wadi 'Arabah*. This land is mentioned also in extra-Biblical records, first in the Amarna letter written from Jerusalem . . . then by Ramses III as a land whose people he had destroyed, and then by Ashurbanipal of Assyria, in whose list it follows the Hauran and Moab. The inhabitants of this mountain range in the time of Abraham were Horites (Gen. 14: 6, i.e., Hurrians. Esau made this area his home (ch 32: 3), and his descendants dispossessed the Horites (Deut. 2: 12; Jos. 24: 4).

Thus in the spiritual application it quite readily appears that the antitypical “son of Ishmael”-- the spiritual “lost sheep of Israel” as well as the “Gentiles” --have been anxiously, yea, desperately inquiring in their hearts as well with their mouths for a clear explanation for the rapidly-deteriorating global conditions, hoping to hear from their religious leaders the truth that satisfies their longing hearts and souls—and are left even more deeper in the dark, as in the plaintive question “what of the night?” It is also the clarion call to warn the world of the rapid approach of the final test of mankind in the enactment and enforcement of Sunday laws (which then become “the mark of the beast,” the final persecution that follows globally after it starts in America), the close of probation, the “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation” in the seven last plagues poured upon all who “worship the beast and his image” and, finally, the glorious second coming of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, with His eternal reward!

Who, in a special sense, are the Watchmen of the night for this time?

“In a special sense *Seventh-day Adventists* have been set in the world as *watchmen* and *light bearers*. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import---the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great and importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.” –E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 19

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God’s people are to be true to the trust committed to them. They are not to engage in speculation, neither are they to enter into business enterprises with unbelievers; for this would hinder them in their God-given work. – Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 19.

The “Man of Sin”—who or what is he?

Thus, as quoted above, Ellen G. White, whom this compiler believes without a shadow of a doubt (after years of continuous research and study of her writings compared and tested by the Bible, since the late 1990s), to be God’s last-day *messenger—not merely prophet*-- to both the members of the remnant church of prophecy (Rev. 19: 10; 14; 12), and through them, in a special sense and trust to the world, made it exceptionally clear that Seventh-day Adventists are God’s watchmen after 1844—the end of the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8: 14 and the commencement of the investigative judgment in heaven. They have been called out of the darkness of error and sin and placed in the world to proclaim earth’s final merciful warning messages, which difficult work specifically includes exposing *who* “the man of sin” and *what* his wicked works are to save all who willingly desire to, from its masterful deceptions and unnumbered schemes.

First, as a quick summary at the outset: the “man of sin” is the same as “the Antichrist,” the “Papacy”, “the mystery of iniquity,” the “son of perdition,” first introduced in prophecy as the “little horn” of Daniel 7.

Note the following important quotes from E. G. White (emphasis mine):

Source: Testimonies to Ministers, p. 118 (Evangelism, p. 95)

“The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues, The churches represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their *spiritual* state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the *testimony* [or witness to the truth of both Old and New Testaments, and by their life witness] of Jesus Christ. To John this persecuting power is represented as having horns like a lamb, but as speaking like a dragon . . .

“As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves before the *cities* of the world; and this delineation has *already begun to be fulfilled*. By a *variety of images* the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished by their persecution of God’s people. All need wisdom to carefully search out *the mystery of iniquity* that figures so widely in the winding up of this earth’s history . . .

“In the very time in which we live, the Lord has called His people and has given them a message to bear. ***He has called them to expose the wickedness of the man of sin*** who has made the Sunday law a distinctive power, who has thought to change times and laws [Dan. 7: 25; cf. Mal. 3: 6], and to oppress the people of God who stand firmly to honor Him by keeping the only true Sabbath, the Sabbath of creation, as holy unto the Lord.

“The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed be left untouched. *If our people were half awake*, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a *reformation* would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls us to watch for souls as they that must give and account. Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. It will be as a sword cutting both ways. [See Heb. 4: 12. But be not too ready to take a controversial attitude. There will be times when we must stand still and see the salvation of God. Let [the book of] Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. *But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope*, ‘the Root and the Offspring of David, and bright and morning Star.’ [Rev. 5: 5; 22: 16].” - *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 118.

The Papacy is “the Man of Sin”

Even as “Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth” (Rev. 17: 5) is the “*mother church*” and the apostate Protestant churches and denominations who follow her example of persecuting those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, particularly the seventh-day Sabbath of creation, are her daughters, so is the pope-centered church hierarchy called “the *man of sin*.”

Sources: Acts of the Apostles, pp. 265-6; Vol. 7 E.G. White Bible Commentary, p. 911; Great Controversy, p. 446; Testimonies to Ministers, p. 140.

“But before the coming of Christ, important developments in the religious world, foretold in prophecy, were to take place. The apostle Paul declared: [1 Thess. 2: 1-4 quoted]. Paul’s words were not to be misinterpreted. It was not to be taught that he, by special revelation, had warned the Thessalonians of the immediate coming of Christ. Such a position would cause confusion of faith; for disappointment often leads to unbelief. The apostle therefore cautioned the brethren to receive no such message as coming from him; and he proceeded to emphasize the fact that **the papal power**, so clearly described by the prophet Daniel was yet to rise, and wage war against God’s people. Until this power shall have performed its deadly and blasphemous work, it would be in vain for the church to look for the coming of their Lord. ‘Remember ye not,’ Paul inquired, ‘that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?’ Terrible were the trials that were to beset the true church [see what Jesus warned His disciples in Matthew 24]. Even at that time that the apostle was writing, ‘the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work. The developments what were to take place in the future were to be ‘after the workings of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that *perish*.’ [see 2 Thess. 1: 1-10].

“Especially solemn is the apostle’s statement regarding those who should refuse to receive ‘the love of the truth,’ ‘For this cause,’ he declared of all who should deliberately reject the messages of truth, ‘God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all may be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.’ Men cannot with impunity reject the warnings that God in mercy sends them. From those who persist in turning from these warnings, God withdraws His Spirit, leaving them to the deceptions they love.” - *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 265-6.

NOTES: (1) “The apostle Paul first proclaimed the gospel at Thessalonica during the course of his 2nd Missionary Journey, probably late in A.D. 50 or early the following year.” -*SDA Bible Dictionary, Commentary Reference Series, Vol. 8, p. 1086.* (2) The meaning of “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie . . .” is “from those who persist in turning from these warnings, *God withdraws His Spirit*, leaving them to the deceptions they love.” Thus, it is quite clear that the papacy and those who love the doctrinal deceptions and impostures they have and continue to manufacture, have had the Holy Spirit withdrawn from them—by their knowing, willful, persistent refusal to accept the truth and to repent. Those who are yet truly deceived and ignorant of these deceptions these condemnation do not yet apply—until they see and understand the truth, particularly when the whole world will have enlightened by the truth during the final loud cry of the “fourth angel” of Revelation 18. This takes place when the latter rain is poured out on those who prepared for it, when the Sunday law is finally enacted. There are two views here: (1) the awakened church trumpets the warning messages empowered by the latter rain, which angers the churches and brings about the Sunday law (2) Sunday law is first enacted, which is immediately followed by the latter rain.

Papacy is the “Little Horn” of Daniel 7

“The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God’ commandment. Says Daniel, of *the little horn, the papacy*, ‘He shall think to change the times and the law.’ (Dan. 7: 25, R.V.). And Paul styled the same power the ‘man of sin,’ who was to exalt himself above God. One prophecy is a complement of the other. Only by changing God’s law could the papacy exalt itself above God; whoever should *understandingly* keep the law as thus changed would be giving supreme honor to that power by which the change was made. Such an act of obedience to papal laws would be a mark of allegiance to the pope in the place of God.

“The papacy has *attempted* to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh as the Sabbath. But papists urge, as a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood. This cannot be the change foretold by the prophet [Daniel]. An intentional, deliberate change is presented: ‘He shall *think* to change the times and the law.’ The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfills the prophecy. For this the only authority claimed is that of *the church [Roman Catholic, i.e.]*. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God.

“While the worshippers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment,---*since this is the sign of His creative power, and the witness to His claim upon man’s reverence and homage*, --- the worshippers of the beast will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome. It was in behalf of the Sunday that popery first asserted its arrogant claims; and its first resort to the power of the state was to compel the observance of Sunday as ‘the Lord’s day.’ But the Bible points to the seventh day, and not to the first, as the Lord’s day. Said Christ, ‘The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.’ The fourth commandment declares, ‘The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord.’ And by the prophet Isaiah the Lord designates it, ‘My holy day.’” Mark 2: 28; Isaiah 58: 13.” – *Great Controversy* (1911), pp. 446-7.

Papacy is Satan’s Representative

Source: E.G. White Bible Commentary, Vol. 7, pp, 910-11:

“The man of sin was to arise, and do his work of exaltation and blasphemy, before the brethren [of Paul’s time] could look for the coming of Christ. That great event would be preceded by a falling away. There would be revealed *a form of Antichrist*, and the leaven of apostasy was to work with increasing power to the end of time.’ (RH July 31, 1888).

“2 Thess 2: 3, 4 (Matt. 5: 17, 18; see EGW on 1 Tim. 2: 5; Rev. 13: 11-17; 14: 8, 9-12; 18: 1-5). **The Representative of Satan.** --- There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. *He is the representative of Satan*. Taking the suggestions of Satan concerning the law of God, which is as unchangeable as His throne, this man of sin comes in and represents to the world that he has changed that law, and that the first day of the week, instead of the seventh is now the Sabbath. Professing *infallibility*, he claims the right to change the law of God to suit his own purposes. By so doing he exalts himself above God, and *leaves the world to infer that God is fallible*. If it were indeed true that God has made a rule of government that needed to be changed, it would certainly show fallibility. But God declared that not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until heaven and earth should pass away. The very work that He came to do was to exalt the law, and show to the created worlds and to heaven that God is just, and that need not be changed. But here is *Satan’s right-hand man* ready to carry on the work that Satan commenced in heaven, that of trying to amend the law of God. *And the Christian world has sanctioned his efforts by adopting this child of the Papacy—the Sunday institution. They have nourished it, and will continue to nourish it until Protestantism shall give the hand of fellowship to the Roman power.*

“Then there will be a law against the Sabbath of God’s creation, and then it is that God will do His ‘strange work’ [and ‘strange act’] in the earth. [Isa. 28: 21; cf. Rev. 6: 16-“wrath of the Lamb”]. He has borne long with the perversity of the [human] race. He has tried to win them to Himself. But the time will come when they shall have filled their measure of iniquity: and then it is that God will work. [See Ps. 119: 126]. *This time is almost reached. God keeps a record of the nations; the figures are swelling against them in the books of heaven* [see Jer. 25: 31; Haggai 2: 7; Rev. 11: 18, etc]; and when it shall have become a law that the transgression of the first day of the week shall be met with punishment, then their cup will be full.” (RH March 9, 1886).

“The Man of Sin and the Rival Sabbath. – The man of sin has exalted himself against God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God. He has trampled under foot God’s great memorial of creation, established to commemorate His work; and in its stead *he has presented to the world a common, working day*. This day he has set up as a rival Sabbath, to be observed and honored. *Thus the world has been turned against God*, for the Lord declares that He has sanctified the day of His rest.

“But though every member of the human family should accept this child of the Papacy, in no case would this invalidate the holy Sabbath of Jehovah. Those who accept the false sabbath exalt the man of sin, and assail the government of God. But the man of sin cannot annul what God has declared shall stand fast forever. The work now to be done in our world is to exalt the law of the Lord, and call the attention of the people to it. *The time has come when the truth is to be proclaimed against falsehood and error.*” (RH July 26, 1898).

“God’s Estimate of the Papal Power. – By the treatment of His Word, the *popes* have exalted themselves above the God of heaven. *This is the reason that in prophecy the papal power is specified as the ‘man of sin.’ Satan is the originator of sin. The power that he causes to alter any one of God’s holy precepts, is the man of sin. Under Satan’s special direction the papal power has done this very work.*

“Although those standing at the head of the Papacy [the popes] claim to have great love for God, *He [God] looks upon them as haters of Him. They have turned the truth of God into a lie.* [see Rom. 1: 25; 1 John 2: 21; Rev. 21: 27; 22: 15]. Tampering with God’s commandments and placing in their stead human traditions, *is the work of Satan, and will divorce the religious world from God*; for He declares, ‘I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me’ [Exo. 20:5]. God will fulfill this word.” (MS 126, 1901).

“2 Thess 2: 7, 12 (See EGW on Matt. 7: 21-23; Rev. 14:9-12; 17:1-5). **‘Satanic Miracles ‘Right in your Sight.’** – The time is coming when Satan will work miracles right in your sight, claiming that he is Christ; and if your feet [and faith] are not firmly established upon the truth of God, then you will be led away from your foundation. *The only safety for you is to search for truth as for hid treasures. Dig for the truth as you would for treasures in the earth, and present the word of God, the Bible, before your heavenly Father and say, Enlighten me: teach me what is truth . . . You should store the mind with the word of God, for you may be separated, and placed where you will not have the privilege of meeting with the children of God.*” – (RH April 3, 1888)

1,260 Years of Supremacy

“Early Christian authors are unanimous in declaring that Paul died under Nero at Rome. His execution, then, which tradition says was by decapitation somewhere on the Ostian Way, must have taken place at least by A.D. 68, for Nero himself died that year. He was executed probably sometime between A.D. 66 and 68. The apostle’s own words in 2 Timothy 4: 7, 8 offer a fitting epitaph of his life and the purpose of his life: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”- *SDA Bible Dictionary*, Commentary Reference Series, Vol. 8, p. art. “Paul,” p. 83.

“The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of the Lord in his day. ‘That day shall not come,’ he says, ‘except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed.’ 2 Thess. 2: 3. Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the ‘man of sin,’ can we look for the advent of our Lord. The ‘man of sin’ which is also styled the ‘mystery of iniquity,’ ‘the son of perdition,’ and ‘that wicked,’ represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, **was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798** [beginning the “time of the end”]. The coming of Christ could not take place before that time. Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ’s second coming is to be proclaimed. No such message has ever been given in past ages. Paul, as we have seen, did not preach it; he pointed his brethren into the then far-distant future for the coming of the Lord. The Reformers did not proclaim it. Martin Luther placed the judgment about 300 years in the future from his day [born Nov. 10, 1483, died Feb. 18, 1546). *But since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near.*” – E.G. White, *Great Controversy* (1911), p. 356.

Torturing of faithful by the Papacy God takes note of, 7BC 913.

“In His intercession as our Advocate Christ needs not man’s virtue, no man’s intercession. Christ is the only bearer, the only sin-offering. Prayer and confession are to be offered only unto Him who has entered once for all into the holy place. Christ has declared, ‘If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.’ [1 John 2:1]. He will save to the *uttermost* all who come to Him in faith. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. [Heb. 7:25]. *This makes of no avail the offering of mass, one of the falsehoods of Romanism.*

“The so-called intercession of the saints is the greatest falsehood that can be invented. Priests and rulers have no right to interpose between Christ and the souls for whom He has died, as though invested with the Savior’s attributes, and able to pardon transgression and sin. *They themselves are sinners. They are only human. One day they will see that their deceptive doctrines have led to crimes of every stripe and type, to adultery, robbery, falsehood. They are responsible for many terrible wrongs which men have perpetrated upon their fellowmen.*

*“For all this the Judge of the earth will call them to account at His bar. The case of every soul that has been imprisoned, **every human being that has been tortured, has been noted.*** The recording angel has sustained the martyrs who would not worship idols, or allow their minds and consciences to become the instruments of men who were instigated by Satan to perform wicked deeds. These things are done under the rule of the man of sin, who has placed himself as God, sitting in the temple of God, and

taking upon himself the prerogatives of God, that he may carry out his own schemes. The mightiest human being, whatever may be his claim, is not infinite. He cannot understand infinity. Christ plainly stated, 'No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.' A teacher was once endeavoring to present the exaltation of God, when a voice was heard saying, 'We cannot as yet understand who He is.' The teacher nobly replied, 'Were I able fully to set forth God, I should either be a god myself, or God Himself would cease to be God.'

'It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me'---**not through confessionals or priests or popes**, but through Me your Savior. 'Not that many man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. . Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hath believeth on Me hath everlasting life.' *This is the absolute Godhead. The mightiest created intelligence cannot comprehend Him; words from the most eloquent tongue fail to describe Him. Silence is eloquence.*" - E. G. White Bible Commentary, Vol. 7, p. 913

Papacy Attempted to Change God's Signpost—the Sabbath

"One writer has likened the attempt to change the law of God to an ancient mischievous practice of turning in a wrong direction a *signpost* erected an important junction where two roads met. The perplexity and hardship which this practice often caused, was great.

"A signpost was erected by God for those journeying through this world. One arm of this *signpost* pointed out willing obedience to the Creator as the road to felicity [happiness; bliss] and life, while the other arm indicated obedience as the path to misery and death. *The way of happiness was as clearly defined as was the way to the city of refuge under the Jewish dispensation.* But in an evil hour of our race, the great enemy of all good turned the signpost around, and multitudes have mistaken the way.

"Through Moses the Lord instructed the Israelites: 'Verily *My Sabbaths* ye shall keep: for it is a *sign* between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth *sanctify* you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: *for whosoever doeth any work . . . in the Sabbath day*, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a *perpetual covenant*. It is a *sign* between Me and the children of Israel *forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.*' [Exo. 31: 13-17]. In these words the Lord clearly defined obedience as the way to the city of God; **but the man of sin has changed the signpost, making it point in the wrong direction.** *He has set up a false sabbath*, and has caused men and women to think that by resting on it they are obeying the command of the Creator."- E. G. White, *Prophets & Kings*, pp. 179-80, Pacific Press Publishing Association.

Will Cause Sunday Laws to be made in these last days

"Religious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have a heart of a dragon and that they are instigated and controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. Satan has caused the

change of the Sabbath in the hope of carrying out his purpose for the defeat of God's plans. He seeks to make the commands of God of less force in the world than human laws. *The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week.* But God's people are to stand firm for Him. And the Lord will work in their behalf, showing plainly that He is the God of gods." – Ibid, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, pp. 229-20.

CURRENT NEWS UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES OF THE PAPACY

France and the Papacy, Healing of the Wound

The 1260 years of papal supremacy and persecution of the Dark Ages began in 538 A.D. and closed in 1798. It was General Berthier, commander of the French Republican army under the directions of Napoleon Bonaparte who ordered that Pope Pius VI be arrested, the papal rings torn from his fingers, the Papal States abolished, his properties sold, and taken captive to Tuscany, France, where he died the next year. No wonder the rest of the world thought the papacy died and was to rise no more. But they were terribly wrong. Revelation says "his deadly wound would be healed." And it is almost completely healed with the "surprise" ascendancy to the papacy of the very first (1) Jesuit to be "elected" pope (2) the first Latin American pope (3) the first to change his name to "Francis," obviously referring to the venerated "St. Francis of Assisi."

Now we see a reversal taking place before our very eyes. The very unpopular current French president, Francois Hollande, seeking to shore up his sagging political position, sought audience with Pope Francis. On January 1 this year, the AFP reporting from Vatican City said the French President would meet with Pope Francis that month, quoting Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi, after failing to visit on four previous trips to Rome since being elected and with his popularity at a low ebb. The AFP report says:

"France's Socialist government and the Vatican have been at odds over a variety of issues including the recent *legalization of gay marriages and plans to legalize euthanasia, which goes against Catholic doctrine* [???]. There is common ground, however, on the desire for social justice and peace, particularly in conflict-torn parts of Africa, as well as the protection of Christian minorities in the Middle East and environmental issues. Hollande is a strong supporter of France's secular values but in a Christmas greeting he backed the pope's message of solidarity saying *he had 'touched the heart of our compatriots and not just of Catholics.'* The president faces tricky municipal and European elections this year and his ratings have fallen to only around a quarter of the population since he was elected in 2012, according to recent opinion polls.

"The Argentine pope on the other hand has a *popularity rating* of 85 percent among French people, including Catholics and non-Catholics, a survey by BVA-Le Parisien from last month found." See <http://news.yahoo.com/unpopular-hollande-meet-pope-francis-154129904.html>

On the 24th of last month, AFP reported that "President Francois Hollande spoke of 'convergence' on international issues after talks with Pope Francis Friday amid a swirling scandal over the French leader's love life and divisions in France over hot-button issues like abortion and euthanasia. An embattled Hollande shook hands with a

glum-looking Francis at the start of the private audience, after which the Vatican said the two has discussed ‘*constructive cooperation for the common good.*’

‘Family, bioethics and the respect of religious communities’ were among the issues addressed, the Vatican said in a statement. Hollande, who hailed the pope’s ‘radiant personality’ said that there had been ‘convergence on big international issues.’ The 59-year old said that he and Francis had the ‘same concern’ about the status of Christian minorities in the Middle East, and the risk of an interreligious conflict in the Central African Republic. The Vatican said that Hollande and Francis had also discussed international issues including poverty, development, immigration and the environment. Hollande said that he had asked the pope for the Vatican to receive Syria’s main opposition coalition, as the first talks between Syria’s warring sides in Switzerland on Friday got off to a rough start.

“‘The Geneva II conference should be aimed at transition. We need to do everything to stop the fighting and dispatch humanitarian aid,’ Hollande said. Hollande has previously said that the pope, ‘*a great moral authority,*’ could help ‘*find a political solution*’ to Syria’s devastating civil war. After the talks, an emotional pontiff warmly clasped hands with freed French priest Georges Vandenbeusch, who was held hostage in Cameroon in November and travelled to the Vatican with Hollande. Security measures for Hollande’s visit were stepped up following the explosion just hours before a small bomb packed with nails and lead pellets, which damaged cars and smashed windows near a French church in Rome. Police bomb disposal experts were called out again later on Friday after receiving an anonymous phone call about a device placed under the famous colonnade on St. Peter’s Square, which turned out to be a false alarm.” See <http://news.Yahoo.com/france-39-embattled-hollande-meet-pope-woo-angry-0041444589.html>

Historical/Prophetic Notes on the Bible and the French Revolution

“In the sixteenth century the Reformation, presenting an *open Bible to the people*, had sought admission to all the countries of Europe. Some nations welcomed it with gladness, as a messenger from heaven. *In other lands, the Papacy succeeded to a great extent in preventing its entrance; and the light of Bible knowledge, with its elevating influences, was almost wholly excluded.*

“In once country, though the light found entrance, it was not comprehended by the darkness. For centuries, truth and error struggled for the mastery. At last the evil triumphed, and the truth of Heaven was thrust out. [John 3: 19 quoted]. The nation was left to reap the results of the course which she had chosen. The restraint of God’s Spirit was removed from a people that had despised the gift of His grace. Evil was permitted to come to maturity. And all the world saw the fruit of willful rejection of the light.

“The war against the Bible, carried forward for so many centuries in France [by the hand of the Papacy], culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. That terrible outbreaking was but *the legitimate result of Rome’s suppression of the Scriptures* [see Appendix]. It presented the most striking illustration which the world has ever witnessed, of the working out of the papal policy,---an illustration of the results to which for more than a thousand years the teaching of the Roman Church had been tending.”- *Great Controversy* (1911) “The Bible and the French Revolution,” pp. 265-6.

To be continued next month

