

About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the prophecies of the Bible, and insist on their literal interpretation in the midst of much clamour and opposition.

Sir Isaac Newton

Introduction	07
The Increase of Wars	22
Earthquakes, Famines and Plagues	26
Freak Weather Changes	34
The Increase of Wickedness	43
The Appearance of False Prophets	54
The Great End-Time Apostasy	114
The Revival of Imperial Rome	122
A Likely Candidate	134
Back to Babel	139
The New Economic Order	153
Calls to Further Empower the UN	163
UN's Giant Venture with NATO	168
The New Global Faith Community	173
Know Their Methods	180
The Great Tribulation	194

The Rapture	198
The Coming Antichrist	205
The False Prophet, the Image and the Mark	229
Who Is Babylon the Great?	243
What Should We Do?	263

INTRODUCTION

Today our world is going through the greatest crisis in human history. The serious global problems that mankind is facing – an unstable world economy, environmental degradation, political corruption, moral decline, global weather pattern changes, superstrains of old diseases, the increase in wars and the growing threat of military weapons of mass destruction – appear almost unprecedented in their intensity and size.

Most people have absolutely no idea of what this is all about. Consequently, individuals everywhere around the globe are beginning to live in a state of fear and anxiety and are looking for information to help them see what is on the horizon for the future.

Friend, while countless agencies and corporations exist to predict future trends, and what the next decades will bring, there is only one reliable source of information about the future that has an astounding accuracy of 100%. It is the Bible; the living Word of the living God!

The Bible's very unique claims, internal unity, recorded miracles, miraculous preservation over hundreds of centuries in the face of intense persecution, and its incredible foreknowledge and accuracy concerning science, history and prophecy set it apart from all other ancient and modern literature and requires an explanation for its origin beyond the natural.

Concerning the incredible scientific previsions contained in Scripture we can only say that it is something very unique in the history of ancient literature. In their work, *The Creator Beyond Time and Space*, Mark Eastman, M.D., and Chuck Missler, a computer specialist, provide many examples which show how the Bible – scientifically speaking – was thousands of years ahead of its time. They concluded: “In the twentieth century more than any time in history, it can be demonstrated that the Bible is a skilfully

designed, integrated message system that evidences supernatural engineering in every detail.

Another primary example is given by scientist Dr Henry Morris, author of numerous books on the Bible and science. In his work, *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science*, he offers a text of five-hundred pages that supplies a large number of examples of scientific foreknowledge or allusions in the Word of God. These examples are provided from physics, astronomy, oceanography, the Earth's hydrologic cycle, meteorology, medicine, geology and biology.

In his work entitled *The Reliability of the Bible*, the renowned scientist A.E. Wilder Smith, who held three earned doctorates in science and was the author of numerous popular technical books and scientific papers, discussed the historic and prophetic accuracy of Scripture.

Commenting on those with initial doubts about the scientific accuracy of the Bible he said: "Many leading scientists and philosophers, past and present, accepted the entire Bible because they actually researched these matters." In other words, once these men really examined what the Bible had to say on certain subjects, their doubts faded and they became convinced of its scientific accuracy.

On the subject of archaeology, it is a striking fact that for over a century archaeological excavations have failed to prove one single biblical statement incorrect, while it has confirmed as accurate thousands of historical, geographical and other biblical details which were considered myths and legends until quite recently.

The English scholar Sir William Ramsay is regarded as one of the greatest archaeologists ever to have lived. He was Professor of Classical Art and Architecture at Oxford University, founder member of the British Academy, holder of nine honorary doctorates from universities in Great Britain, Europe and America,

and knighted in 1906 for his distinguished service to the world of scholarship.

Ramsay began his career as a student in the German historical school in the middle of the nineteenth century and was a complete sceptic regarding the historical evidence about Jesus and other personalities recorded in the New Testament.

He admitted that in his student years he was a great admirer of Julius Wellhausen, the leading German critic, and that his early training led him to believe that the New Testament narratives were complete myths rather than accurate contemporary historical records.

More than a century ago he embarked on a scholarly trip, being just a young man, to Asia Minor for the sole purpose of disproving the historical accounts mentioned by Luke in his Gospel and the Book of Acts. But as a result of the fantastic evidence he uncovered in his study, Ramsay was forced to do a complete reversal of his religious beliefs and became a firm Christian for the rest of his life. His books became classics in the study of New Testament history. He described Luke as, "The very greatest of historians."

The renowned archaeologist Sir Austen Henry Layard was a higher critic at first and was among those who believed the story of Jonah to be just a myth with a moral attached. Then Layard set out on an expedition to ancient Nineveh to excavate its ruins. Very soon his archaeological finds started to correct all the criticism and corrupted concepts that he himself had accepted without question. The public was amazed when he released his famous book, *Nineveh and its Remains*, where he admitted that Nineveh was all that the Bible said it was.

Also, probably three of the greatest American archaeologists of the twentieth century, William Albright, Nelson Glueck and George E. Wright, each had their beginnings as sceptics, but later became firm Christians through their many fantastic archaeological

discoveries that convinced them of the total historical accuracy of the Bible.

Only the Bible Dares Predict Future Events

The next, and probably most important, area of particular interest is the Bible's amazing accuracy in predicting future events and trends. When we examine the numerous biblical prophecies found in Scripture, and the mathematical probabilities involved, we find even more indisputable evidence for the Bible's integrity and supernatural origin.

The Holy Scriptures, from Genesis right through to the Book of Revelation, contain an overwhelming number of precise and detailed predictions that were prophesied hundreds and even thousands of years before the events occurred, and have been fulfilled over the centuries of human history with such amazing accuracy that can only be explained if we accept God inspired its authors.

Indeed, the central purpose of biblical prophecy is just that; to reveal the One True God. God teaches that His knowledge of the future is proof that He alone is Lord:

So that all may see and know, all may consider and understand that the hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.

(Isaiah 41:20)

I am the Lord, that is my name, my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

(Isaiah 42:8-10)

Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other, I am God and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done.

(Isaiah 46:9-10b)

No one else has consistently told of things to come and had them come true exactly as forecasted. God even uses fulfilled prophecy to challenge men to put Him to the test so that even the sceptics and stubborn-hearted will have no excuse for rejecting Him:

The former things I declared long ago, they went out from my mouth and I made them known; then suddenly I did them and they came to pass. Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass, I declared them to you from long ago, before they came to pass I announced them to you, so that you would not say, “My idol did them, my carved image and my cast image commanded them.”

(Isaiah 48:3-6)

Despite the fact that the world is full of spiritual texts written by a variety of religious leaders, and the fact that some of them claim divine inspiration – such as the Qur’an, the Book of Mormon and parts of the Hindu Veda – a close examination of this literature reveals that not one of these texts contains future predictions. This is quite obvious. Since no one but God can know the course of future events, other religious writers and philosophers were wise enough not to use material that could later be used to prove they were mistaken. In contrast, the Bible contains hundreds of individual predictions concerning numerous separate subjects. These numerous predictions comprise 27 per-cent of the 31,124 verses in the whole of Scripture.

Futile Attempts to Discredit Biblical Prophecy

Perhaps the most familiar example of fulfilled prophecy is the fulfilment of more than three-hundred prophecies relating to the First Coming of Jesus Christ to Earth. The Old Testament Prophets precisely predicted numerous detailed prophecies concerning the life, death and resurrection of the Messiah, whom God was to send into the human race hundreds of years before He was even born.

All these prophecies, written over a thousand year period, describe in specific detail that Jesus would be born of a virgin, that He would live in Nazareth of Galilee, that He would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver by a friend, die a humiliating death by crucifixion alongside thieves, be given vinegar to drink for His thirst, that He would pray for His enemies, rise from the dead on the third day, and ascend into heaven and sit at God's right hand.

The precise fulfilment of these prophecies can only logically be explained by divine foreknowledge and no other reason. Yet because of their incredible accuracy, critics alleged that the Hebrew prophecies were altered by Christians to make them refer to Jesus. Such an objection is virtually impossible. The Jewish people had and still have their Hebrew Old Testament intact and unaltered, and completely separate from the New Testament.

Besides this fact, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, which include every Book of the Old Testament except Ester, totally disproves these claims. These scrolls were copied from the original manuscripts two-hundred years before Christ came to Earth and are exactly the same as the Bible in our possession today.

But that is not all! In addition to the incredible predictions and fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies, the Jewish prophet Daniel perfectly described the rise and fall of the great empires that would rule the world from the time of the Babylonian king and his kingdom until the end of the present age.

Besides Daniel, other ancient Hebrew Prophets like Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel were given the capacity to see into the future to a time when the Jewish people – dispersed around the world from A.D. 70 to 1948 – would again be a nation in the land of Israel. These men – not to mention Jesus Himself – predicted every detail in the history of the Jewish people hundreds and even thousands of years in advance.

Again, these predictions given in Scripture were so accurately fulfilled that the critic's only response was to claim that the prophecies were made *after* the events they predicted. This claim is based on the presupposition that such predictions are impossible, and infers that a large part of the Bible's authors were dishonest.

It also ignores the fact that in many prophetic passages it is simply impossible to use this kind of argument to discredit the Bible's prophetic phenomenon. For example, the prophetic Books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation speak in precise detail of what is happening in our world today on a global level – the economic and military growth of China, the push towards a one-world economy, government and religion, that will eventually be controlled by the Antichrist, a united Europe, the Middle East Peace Process and many other current trends.

The problem is even more difficult for the sceptic when we take into account the fact that not a single prophecy given in Scripture has ever shown itself to be false. Think about it. For the Bible to openly declare that its predictions were a hundred per-cent accurate, and then offer hundreds of predictive verses on various matters and topics, it would be very easy for anyone to prove the Bible was not inspired by finding just one false prediction.

Importance of Prophecy Today

Sadly, today many lay people, and even “ministers” of the Gospel, believe and teach that the prophetic message in Scripture concerning future events is both uncertain and allegorical, and even divisive. How shameful! The fact that such a large part of the Bible consists of prophetic material indicates to us the importance of the prophetic message in the plan of God for His people and the nations of the world. The Apostle Peter clearly commands Christians to pay attention to the prophetic portions of Scripture:

We have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

(2 Peter 1:19-20)

And the Book of Revelation promises a special blessing to anyone who studies its prophecies and takes to heart what they say:

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

(Revelation 1:3-4)

Finally, let us not forget that after His resurrection Jesus gave a harsh rebuke to His two unbelieving disciples on the road to Emmaus for not understanding what the Prophets had plainly foretold, showing that it is the duty of every believer to have an intelligent knowledge and understanding of the prophetic portions of Scripture:

Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!”

Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the Scriptures.

(Luke 24:25-28)

There are many reasons why prophecy was and still is so important today. First, a knowledge and appreciation of biblical prophecy and its accurate fulfilment proves the inspiration of Scripture and validates its entire message.

It also enables earnest seekers of truth to differentiate between God’s inspired Word and the many other religious books that have been produced over the centuries. One of the most important questions that throbs in the human heart today is which religious is the right one.

To paraphrase the noted scholar Wilbur M. Smith, the only sure answer to this question is this: Never once among the classical and religious literature of the ancient world has their authors ever made such detailed descriptions of a Saviour who would arrive in the human race hundreds of centuries later or of the rise and fall of great empires and their kings. Neither can the founders of any of the modern-day cults produce ancient texts for-telling their appearance on the scene.

Yet the Lord Jesus was able to show His astonished and unbelieving disciples and Apostles that He was foretold in all the Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi (see *Luke 24:15*).

Further, the great prophetic truths contained in the Bible – especially those concerning the Second Coming of the Lord to judge the world and set up His Kingdom on Earth – encourage believers to live in holiness in an immoral world; to be salt and light for unbelievers, because we will one day stand before Him to give an account of our actions, that will be measured against God’s holy standards, not those of modern society.

No scholar of academic substance can deny that Jesus Christ lived on this Earth more than two-thousand years ago and that His fulfilment of Old Testament Messianic prophecies has been verified by powerful historical evidence and plain logic. However, we find three times as many prophecies in the Bible related to His Second Coming as to the First. This means the Second Advent of Christ is three times as certain as the First. Let us be very attentive then.

Finally, fulfilled prophecy is a very powerful instrument to get people interested in the Bible and led to salvation. Some who have never read the Scriptures, or expressed interest in the Christian faith, have often been fascinated and intrigued by the accurate fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

The great scientist Sir Isaac Newton was one of those people. He composed many works about the Prophets and the importance of the prophetic literature in the Bible. In one of his books he wrote:

The authority of the prophets is divine and comprehends the sum of religion...Their writings contain the covenant between God and His people, with instructions for keeping this covenant, instances of God's judgement upon them that break it and predictions of things to come.

He gave this, and the prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify man's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but so that after that they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event; and His own providence not the interpreter's be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event of things predicted many ages before will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence.

In other words, the fulfilment of ancient biblical prophecies provides ample proof of their inspiration and is **a warning of events yet to be fulfilled**, especially **in the last days**. It is this area of prophecy that we will focus on in this book.

The Olivet Discourse

Concerning the last days the Word of God gives us a very precise and detailed blueprint of the global scene. The Prophets warn us of the general trends, events and specific characters that will appear on the world's stage before our Lord Jesus Christ returns to set up His Millennium Kingdom.

Considering the Bible's unerring record of fulfilled prophecy we touched on above, I believe it is of utmost importance to listen at this moment in history more than ever to what the Prophets have to say; and especially to the greatest of all the Prophets – Jesus Himself. When asked for signs to look out for related to His return He told His beloved disciples:

You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

(Matthew 24:6-15)

For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equalled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

At that time if anyone says to you, “Look here is the Christ!” or, “There he is!” do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect – if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.

So, if anyone tells you, “There he is, out in the desert,” do not go out, or, “Here he is, in the inner rooms,” do not believe it. For as lighting that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. Immediately after the distress of those days ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

(Matthew 24:21-30)

In a parallel passage in the Gospel of Luke Jesus added additional information:

When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away. Then he said to them: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven...”

There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

(Luke 21:9-12, 25-29)

Since our Lord Jesus returned to heaven almost every generation since then has interpreted many of these biblical prophecies in light of its own historical experience, and every generation that believed it was living in the last days was wrong. So will we not be mistaken as our fellow-believers were if we try to discern the current signs of the times in our own generation?

I believe this is a valid question. However, it is the appearance and convergence of the end-time events and characters predicted in Scripture and their incredible increase in frequency and intensity that causes me to pause and think.

In the Scriptures quoted above Jesus said the global catastrophes related to His Second Advent would be like “*birth pains*” in a woman about to give birth to her child. When a woman begins to feel her first sharp pains, she knows the event she has been waiting for is finally upon her and will not delay.

The Lord is saying that all the predicted signs – wars, famines, earthquakes, apostasy, false prophets, immorality, lawlessness, and so forth – would increase in frequency and intensity as history draws to a close. Jesus’ parable at the conclusion of His end-time prophecy completely agrees with this analysis:

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.

(Matthew 24:32-34)

Just as we can tell that the general time of summer is near when we see the first leaves appear on the fig tree, so we will be able to tell the general time of Christ's return when we see all these prophetic events happen together; and with an increase in frequency and intensity as we get closer to the end.

Dear reader, as I said in the opening lines of this book, in these very days we are witnessing such things. As a result of these drastic events and rapid changes, people from both secular and religious backgrounds, are all asking the same questions: "Could the end be near?" "What are the biblical signs that we should be looking out for?" My purpose is to answer these questions as best I can.

In this book I will attempt to outline some of the most important prophetic signs of the times prophesied in the Old and New Testament, and their incredible fulfilment right before our eyes, that I believe point us to the fact that the Day of the Lord is at hand.

In saying this, I do not want to create fanaticism, or to set dates, for that is completely forbidden in Scripture (see *Matthew 24:36*). Rather, my aim is to inform you of the hidden meaning behind the current events and trends we see and hear about daily, so that you will not be deceived and led astray.

Not only Jesus, but many other New Testament writers spoke of the wisdom of discerning the signs of the times and warned us concerning the necessity to take appropriate action. Considering such an exhortation, I urge you to follow me in the following chapters where we will examine:

1. The increase in frequency and magnitude of wars, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, plagues, famines, global weather pattern changes, super-strains of old diseases and the demise of miracle drugs.

2. The build-up of weapons of mass destruction that have the potential to totally destroy the whole human race in a matter of hours.
3. The increase of wickedness, in the form of violence, deception, occult practices, sexual immorality and apostasy, to mention a few.
4. The explosion of cults and false prophets.
5. The speed with which the visible Church has turned away from biblical truths and morality and fallen into apostasy.
6. The emergence of secret international councils, such as the Trilateral Commission, the CFR and the Bilderberg Group, and of globalist international organizations, such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the International Criminal Court, the World Trade Organization and NATO, which can be seen as the preliminary steps toward the formation of a one-world government, economy and religion.
7. The birth of the world's global-faith community.
8. Current trends that are subtly preparing mankind for the reign of the coming Antichrist and his Mark of the Beast System.

01

THE INCREASE OF WARS

You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

(Matthew 24:6)

It has been estimated that in the past four thousand years there have been fewer than three hundred without a major war, a fact leading someone to make the wry suggestion that peace was merely the time when everybody stopped to reload. The twentieth century was hailed by many as the beginning of a millennium of peace, but this turned sour in 1914 when the First World War, believed by some to be the war to end all wars, took the lives of millions on its battlefields.

In order to avoid a repetition of this disaster the League of Nations was founded in 1920, with the keeping of peace as its primary aim. However, less than twenty years later almost all of its members were caught up in the Second World War that took the lives of many more people.

In 1946 the League of Nations was replaced by the United Nations Organization. It was established to deliver all succeeding generations from what is called the scourge of war. But in spite of their efforts, for nearly half a century the world was subject to the Cold War.

Since the year 1945 the number of wars has increased tremendously. As many new nations demanded their independence and old empires disintegrated, it is estimated that more than three hundred and fifty wars were fought since World War Two, including the terrible Vietnam War; the Cambodia killings; the

catastrophic genocide in several African countries and elsewhere; the untold millions of Chinese murdered during the Cultural Revolution; the endless conflict in Northern Ireland and the Middle East; and the civil wars on virtually every continent. The World Atlas – a military study – concluded that the world has not known a single day since World War Two without some nation waging war or conflict somewhere on the planet.

Despite the thousands of negotiations and signed peace treaties, the past century was truly the century of war and this century seems to be no better. As a result of the dangers to national security most nations throughout the world have joined global military alliances to protect themselves from potential future threats.

Build-up of Arms for World War Three

In addition to the increase of wars around the world today, many nations have produced new weapons of mass destruction that have the potential to totally eliminate all life forms from planet Earth in a matter of hours.

Since the break-up of the communist Soviet Union in the year 1991, the Russian and American military agreed to a series of disarmament treaties that often produced a sigh of relief among the populations of the world. According to one historical research carried out, there have been more than six thousand disarmament negotiating sessions since the year 1945. Despite these treaties, very few nuclear bombs were ever actually destroyed. The United States, Britain, Russia, China and Israel have all designed advanced neutron atomic bombs.

The Biological Weapons Convention of 1972 strictly forbid the developing, producing and stockpiling of biological and chemical weapons by any nation. Nonetheless, many Third World nations have been secretly developing deadly biological and chemical

weapons (CBW) that could easily devastate unprotected populations in a future crisis.

These weapons are an alternative defence for a Third World nation because of their low cost and their ability to be used secretly. This is why some have described biological and chemical weapons as the “poor man’s nuclear bomb.”

Yet it is not only Third World nations that are developing these deadly weapons; literally every nation in the West has also developed its own stockpile of doomsday weapons to protect themselves against a potential enemy.

The nations of the world spend billions annually for the build-up of armaments and large armies. Only careful students of Bible prophecy know the reason for this. These developments are preparing the nations for the final years of history, when the most advanced technology will be unleashed during the wars of the Great Tribulation.

The weapons used during these final seven years will be the most destructive ever used in the history of warfare. Jesus warned that only His return to Planet Earth, at the Battle of Armageddon, would make it possible for anyone to survive:

For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equalled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

(Matthew 24:21-23)

There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

(Luke 21:25-27)

Luke says “*men will faint from terror,*” which literally means to stop breathing and die, and that “*the heavenly bodies*” – the atmosphere, solar system and galaxies – “*will be shaken.*” One writer says the word *shaken* used by Luke here is presented as the real source of the unprecedented fear and anxiety that causes a great number of people to faint from fear and drop dead: “It means the perceived laws of astrophysics will waver throughout the observable Universe. The things we have always taken for granted, like the stars, planets, solar systems and galaxies – continuing on exact orbits with exact timing – will waver from their usual orbits and timing.”

02

EARTHQUAKES, FAMINES AND PLAGUES

There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places.

(Luke 21:11)

Earthquakes have certainly made media headlines in record numbers in recent years. One of the reasons for this is that they are increasing in frequency, number and destruction around the globe. Experts now agree that the frequency and intensity of earthquakes is on the increase significantly and that killer quakes are happening more often than ever before.

History shows that the number of killer quakes remained fairly constant since 1890 A.D. until the 1950s, averaging between two to four per decade. But in the decade of the 1950s there were 9 earthquakes; in the 1960s there were 13; in the decade of the 1970s there were 51; in the decade of the 1980s there were 86; and from 1990 through to 2000 there were more than 150.

According to one source: “In the 1990s alone, measuring by the Richter Scale, there were 9 earthquakes in the seven to nine category, 56 in the six to seven category, and 145 in the five to six range. Most damage caused by earthquakes in 1996 was by those in the 5.6 to 6.5 range.” But it has gotten worse since then as the experts said it would.

Volcanoes can be as equally destructive and devastating as earthquakes. In A.D. 79 Mount Vesuvius near Naples in modern Italy erupted and completely buried the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum which caused the death of almost 10% of their population. In 1631 an even more explosive eruption killed 18,000 people. History reveals that Pompeii was a very evil and decadent

civilization. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius suddenly poured out ash and poison gas, while a concrete-like substance of boiling pumice hardened around the bodies of people in its path. The lesson of Pompeii has been preserved for all history, because the volcanic ash created statues of the remains of its victims.

There are up to 600 active volcanoes in the world today, including Mount Etna in Sicily, which may have been active for 3,000 years. Its most notable eruptions included one in 1169, which killed 15,000 people in neighbouring towns of Catania; another exactly 150 years later when 20,000 were engulfed; and one in 1928.

Others such as Mammoth Mountain in California, Popocatepetl near heavily populated Mexico City, and Mount Vesuvius could erupt at any time and bring about hundreds of thousands of deaths. According to one expert a very important factor to remember is that, "Volcanoes and earthquakes occur along the same fault lines and have an effect upon each other, sometimes triggering an eruption or an earthquake."

In May 1980 Mount St Helens in the United States blew its top and 1,300 feet of its peak shot outwards, filling twenty-four square miles of an adjacent valley. Some scientists predict that within the next few years Mammoth Lakes will experience a massive volcanic eruption that will make Mount St Helens look like a spark in comparison. They say that the Mammoth Lakes eruption will be similar to the Krakatoa Volcano which blew up with ten thousand times more force than the nuclear bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima.

The sound of Krakatoa was the loudest sound in recorded history. Gas was fired into the air and giant waves went out in all directions killing thousands of people. Hours after the volcano erupted tsunami waves travelling at over four hundred miles an hour raced into the beaches of Calcutta.

Decreasing Grain Supply

One news report reveals that today the world stands on the brink of unprecedented famines: “About 30 million people are experiencing alarming hunger, severe levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in north-eastern Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.”

For some years now the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has classified the world grain supply as very dangerously low. This has caused prices for grain to increase over the last few years. FAO also estimates that about 815 million people of the 7.6 billion people in the world, or 10.7%, were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2016.

In the Book of Revelation the Apostle John tells us that during the Great Tribulation there will be many places on Earth that will suffer from massive food shortages. In chapter six we read that a quart of wheat will be sold for a denarius. A denarius was the daily wage of an average workman in New Testament times. The rider of the black horse is believed to be a symbol of economic collapse.

New Diseases But no Cures

In the above prophecy Jesus mentions the coming of *pestilence* or *plagues*, deadly and incurable diseases, in the last days prior to His Second Coming. One might be inclined to think that diseases and plagues are only to be found rampant in a world affected by war, hunger and economic calamity, but these pandemics have already taken hold of our modern world at an increasing rate.

At the beginning of the 1950s drugs like penicillin and antibiotics produced amazing results. There were also great steps made in the field of immunology and vaccines. It seemed that infectious diseases were really being wiped out.

But today we are in a battle that is much worse than before the discovery of the miracle drugs. Disease is on the march again and the human race is not prepared in its defence in what is an “unending siege of pestilence.” Take for instance the AIDS virus, that has touched the lives of millions of people, and after decades of intense research nearly everyone who gets it dies. AIDS is probably the worst plague that has ever hit the Earth.

Its long incubating period – the HIV Positive Stage – usually results in many being infected by the carrier, often before the carrier even knows he or she is infected. Though the disease develops slowly, it is inevitably 100% fatal.

The thing that makes AIDS so difficult to fight is that it is primarily passed on through one of man’s strongest drives – sexual intercourse – therefore guaranteeing its spread. The virus spread like wildfire in sub-Saharan Africa, where in many places it is reported that the average male has an average of twenty-five different sex partners per year.

The epicentre of the AIDS virus also shifted to the exploding populations of Asia in recent years. In places like Bangkok, Thailand and Manila, Philippines, which are world-renowned for female and male prostitution, the AIDS problem has already approached catastrophic proportions.

The Due Penalty for Their Error

Throughout Scripture we see that God has often punished sin with killer plagues, especially those linked to sexual promiscuity and perversion. The Book of Numbers records an episode where the Israelites were struck with a plague in the plains of Moab after an orgy with prostitutes. Moses contained the disease by killing every potential carrier on direct orders from God Himself. Nevertheless, 24,000 people died from that plague in a single day.

In A.D. 1500 there was a similar scare to the AIDS virus. For the first time the dreaded disease syphilis hit the continent of Europe and killed one third of the population. Many believed it was God's reply to sexual promiscuity. The dreaded plague struck Rome first and came out of the body and limbs in terrible ulcers. The following is a historic report of some of the details:

Rome was among the first victims, thousands died each day. The syphilis epidemic that set Europe a fire in 1495 was probably the greatest calamity that ever struck the human race. It was a new disease. Skeletal remains of Europeans showed no signs of syphilis lesions of bones before that. It was no respecter of persons. In Rome, Gaspare Torella, private physician to the powerful and infamous Borgias, had 17 cases to treat in that Papal family alone.

Henry VIII of England contracted it, which probably accounts for the still-born children his various wives bore him. People's bodies erupted with ulcers that ate to the bone and became open sores and ulcers which no one could hide and then blinded, maddened, or paralysed. Prostitutes were ordered to stop practicing their trade.

For seven years, the disease syphilis raged, infecting one person in every three. The pure morality of the early settlers of America kept it at bay in that colony. They said it was a just punishment from God.

The historian used the phrase "infamous Borgias." It is no wonder that many Church Fathers and American colonists believed this a punishment from God; when we read of the activities of the

Borgias. Below is an extract from Gibbon's well known *Decline and Fall*:

Few know anything of the history of the popes without having heard the name of Borgia, which has become almost a byword for abominable wickedness. This was a Spanish family, two or three of whose members became Pope.

The most notorious was Rodrigo Borgia whose papal name was Alexander VI (1492-1503). This Pope's daughter, Lucrezia, was the mother of a child whose father there seems evidence to suppose was the Pope himself, her own parent.

The popes kept mistresses as a matter of course, and took them with them when they travelled. Most of the popes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had illegitimate children (whom they called nephews, from which comes the term 'nepotism') on whom they bestowed rich positions.

In his Letter to the Romans the Apostle Paul warns that homosexuals would pay a natural consequence for their sexual immorality, "*The due penalty for their perversion*" (see *Romans 1:26-28*). According to the Word of God there is a physical as well as spiritual price to pay for living this type of lifestyle.

Yet people who should know better condone homosexuality even though Scripture teaches that it is not a normal way of life. Many political leaders, schools, universities and even some Christian denominations include sex education with homosexuality discussed and excepted openly on equal basis to heterosexuality. This is not surprising, as the Bible also warns that the spread and acceptance

of homosexuality in society would be another sign of the times leading up to the end.

In the Gospel of Luke Jesus warned that as it was in the days of Lot, so it would be when the Son of Man returns (*Luke 17:28*). The Book of Genesis gives an account of how God sent two Angels to rescue Lot and his family before He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 19:1-29*). In an earlier chapter God said to Abraham, when he was interceding for these corrupt cities in prayer, “*How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin*” (*Genesis 18:20*).

A clear reading of this whole passage leaves no doubt what the sin was that provoked God’s anger against the inhabitants of Sodom and the overthrow of their towns. These wicked cities were destroyed for engaging in homosexuality; one of the reasons Jesus and other New Testament writers refer to it as sodomy (see also *Jude 1:1-8; 1Corinthians 6:9-11*). The result of this destruction can still be seen today. Molten salt lies all around the Dead Sea and lumps of sulphur can be picked up, together with black bitumen from the explosion.

We will pick up on this subject again in a following chapter, but let me finish here by saying, the Bible clearly teaches that homosexual acts, and indeed all sexual acts outside of marriage, are sinful in the eyes of God, but He offers forgiveness and a new start to all who will repent and renounce their sin. As strong as base inclinations may be, Jesus Christ can set a person free.

The Worst Is Yet to Come

While it is estimated that the AIDS disease has contributed to the death of millions worldwide, this deadly virus does not stand alone. “It may well be just the first of the modern large scale epidemics of infectious diseases,” explained one expert. “As difficult as it may

be to believe, some of the others may actually be worse.” Reports reveal today the infectious disease threat is much more dangerous than before because they have developed immunity to most all antibiotics and they are much stronger.

During the last few decades more than thirty new diseases have emerged to threaten the health of millions; diseases like Ebola, lyme disease, legionnaire’s disease, flesh-eating bacteria, dengue fever and so on, some of which have no treatment, cure or vaccine. According to some the reason for the increase of infectious diseases are due to factors such as poverty, population growth, pollution, crowding, climate change, and air travel – that can spread these new super diseases around the world overnight.

Some years back a shocking report showed that every year over eighty-one million Americans suffer from illnesses caused by bacteria in their food supply and many of them die from food poisoning.

Even though our governments and food industries are reluctant to admit the fact, many believe the GATT and NAFTA agreements have contributed much to the contamination of the world’s food supply; because food is now produced cheaply in Third World countries that do not have the safe sanitary and health standards that the Western nations have.

Many scientists are now greatly concerned about this increasing threat of food contamination in the world and the inability of traditional antibiotics to kill off these diseases. Whatever the reasons for all these calamities that have fallen upon humankind, Jesus warned that they would come, and increase in frequency and magnitude before His return.

03

FREAK WEATHER CHANGES

There will be... fearful events and great signs from heaven.

(Luke 21:11)

There will be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves.

(Luke 22:25-26)

As we all know, in recent years our planet has experienced more freak weather than any other time in history. We have witnessed avalanches, blizzards, drought, famine, monsoons, typhoons, and devastating extremes of heat and cold weather, to mention a few. This volatile weather is the subject of much debate in the world today. However, there is no scientific consensus on whether it is the result of climate change caused by man-made global warming, or the result of ocean currents or solar activity that is beyond our control.

Hypothetical Causes

The United Nations network of climate scientists, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), was set up in 1998 to investigate the reasons for climate change. In 2007 they produced a report that projected rises in temperature of between 1.08 and 4°C (3.2 and 7.2°F) by the end of the twenty-first century. Reports by the IPCC say that a raised atmospheric concentration of the gas carbon dioxide (CO₂) has intensified a natural phenomenon known as the *Green House Effect*. This is a process by which the

surface and atmosphere of the Earth are warmed as heat radiation from the Sun is absorbed by “greenhouse gases,” including methane and CO₂. Reports from the IPCC also say that the increasing industrialization has caused a rapid acceleration in the production of CO₂ emissions. Coal-burning power stations, for example, generate CO₂, as do sea, air and road traffic.

Others believe the radical climate changes have resulted from the destruction of Planet Earth’s air purifiers – the rain forests. The world’s tropical forests play an important part in holding back global warming, as they inhale CO₂. Yet many of these forests are now in retreat and have been cleared for agricultural expansion. Contrary to the IPCC views, a climate change sceptic and astrophysicist of weatheraction.com declared:

The superheat and floods in the northern hemisphere and super cold blasts in the southern hemisphere are part of the whole world weather system which is driven by solar-magnetic activity and lunar effects which are predictable months ahead.

These extreme weather situations and events, which happen simultaneously around the world, are driven by events on the Sun in our predicted Solar Lunar Action Periods (SLAPs). This weather, and climate change, are entirely driven by Solar-Magnetic Lunar effects and are nothing to do with CO₂.

Can We Exclude Weather Modification Weaponry?

Intelligence reports indicated some time back that Russia had created weather modification satellites that can create tornadoes and other weather changes on our planet. It was also reported that the government of Malaysia allowed weather modification experiments

to be conducted in certain parts of the country and that the United States has secretly developed weather modification satellites.

Perhaps the most radical of all plans to modify our weather is the Russian Space Regatta Consortium's plan to turn the night into day. This group of companies near Moscow planned to launch hundreds of mirrors into space that would be able to reflect sunlight from the far side of the Earth and actually light up the night sky over Siberia and the Arctic.

Each mirror that goes into space would be a hundred times brighter than the Moon and would be seen as far away as London, Brussels, Seattle and Quebec. Many scientists feared that this space mirror project would destroy balances in the ecosystem that would cause the Arctic to melt and further raise our sea levels.

Many people believe that some if not all of the freak weather patterns that we have been facing recently are due in some way to experiments of weather modification weaponry. Although international bodies have attempted to produce treaties that forbid weather modification weapons and experimentation, all kinds of exceptions exist in these agreements.

The HAARP experiment is said to be one of the U.S. government's top ten secrets – a joint project of the Air Force, Navy and the University of Alaska. It is said this project has the power to, “Disturb normal human thought processes, jam global communications systems, change weather patterns, adversely affect human health and impact the Earth's upper atmosphere.”

The authors of the book, *Angels don't Play this HAARP*, reveal that the HAARP project will alter the ionosphere (our natural atmospheric shield) in fundamental ways which, in the opinion of some scientists, could be cataclysmic. Co-author Dr. Nick Begich, M.D, also revealed that it is currently possible to utilize these new electromagnetic technologies to provoke earthquakes, eruptions from volcanoes or to make changes in weather patterns.

These new developments in electromagnetic research have allowed the U.S. military to develop new weapons in the case of future conflicts. But they are not alone. Reports reveal that the Russians have also been working on similar projects for the purpose of weather and mind control and alteration. One such research project is known as the *Plasma Weapons*.

Some believe HAARP could also be used for mind control. According to Dr. Begich: “One potential military use of the HAARP system is the production of high-powered electronic oscillations that could seriously impair the brain performance of very large populations in selected regions over an expanded period of time.”

One biblical prophecy expert commented that there is no reason to doubt that such a weapon might be the cause of the great deception which causes the whole world to accept the Antichrist as God in the last days. It may also be the cause of the confusion cited by the prophet Zechariah on the battlefields of the last great war of the ages (see *Zechariah 10:5*). But more specifically, it may well be one of the devices that will be used to turn ordinary men into *wild animals* described by John in *Revelation 6:8*.

IPCC Future Reports

The prevailing view of the United Nations, and many political and religious leaders around the world, is that man-created global warming is responsible for climate change, and are therefore taking necessary steps to do something to reverse or slow down the process.

The IPCC warns that if we continue in this way it will have a more serious impact upon our environment, such as dramatic retreat of glaciers in non-polar regions; a diminution in sea ice around the Arctic; and a breakup of many ice shelves in the Antarctic. They

also say that there will be a future catastrophic rise in sea level as a result of the global warming problem.

As you can imagine, this news has made the average person increasingly apprehensive about the future; as we are being continually made aware of these catastrophes. In addition, we are being continually told that many animal species are also now in danger of extinction due in part to the problem of climate change. The World Conservation Union (WCU) considers more than six-hundred African fish, bird and mammal species to be under threat, with a large number critically endangered.

The International Environmental Group, Green Peace, gave a similar warning in a report back in the 1990s: “Entire island countries in the Pacific could disappear as sea levels rise and many plants and animals could face extinction as a result of global warming.”

The IPCC compiled a report in the 1990s by more than three hundred scientists, containing over two thousand pages. The report suggested that by the year 2100 global warming would have created major changes in our world. They also warned that within fifty years more than a million people a year could die from the spread of malaria, induced by global warming.

Is Global Warming Another Deception?

The above claims, especially those by the IPCC, have all been hotly debated and disputed by numerous climate change sceptics, who say that this is all alarmist propaganda that has never been scientifically proven. Many believe that what has been termed “Earth Issues,” such as the possibility of global warming, overpopulation, worldwide drought, toxic pollution, and life-threatening weather crises, are being used by the Establishment to bring about their world government.

To prevent further “climate catastrophes” supporters of the global warming theory have demanded that industrialised nations make a 20% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 and 80% by 2050. Obviously, in order to achieve this goal, agreements would need to be put in place which would be binding on these nations. This would require some kind of international authority to make sure these be respected. In March 2009 Fox News reported on this:

A UN document on Climate Change envisions reordering the world economy, likely involving trillions of dollars in wealth transfers, millions of job losses and gains, new taxes, industrial relocations, new tariffs and subsidies, and complicated payments for greenhouse gas abatement schemes and carbon taxes – all under the supervision of the UN.

In 2009 the Copenhagen Conference was held with the goal of securing an international agreement related to the climate change issue. However, the result of this conference was a disappointment to the environmental activists, because the final accord had no reference to a legally binding agreement.

The UN Secretary General of that time, Ban Ki-moon, said: “The decision of the Conference of Parties is an essential beginning. We must transform this into a legally binding treaty next year.” The *Washington Times* seemed to have understood the secret agenda of the Copenhagen Conference, for in that same year it ran an editorial, entitled *Green World Government*, which said:

Environmental alarmism is being exploited to chip away at national sovereignty. The latest threat to American liberties may be found in the innocuous sounding Copenhagen Climate Treaty which will be

discussed at the United Nations climate change conference in mid-December... The governing authority envisioned by the document reads like a bad George Orwell knockoff.

Although no binding agreement was signed at this UN-driven Copenhagen Treaty, which would have set global laws for emission reductions and opened the door for a powerful global government agency to act with unprecedented authority over sovereign nations, other world leaders agreed for the need of a legally binding treaty and committed themselves to work for this during the future climate conferences.

One reason for the failure to reach a legally binding global climate pact is that most nations desired to continue acting in their own interests, without enforced obligations that would dramatically reduce their production and living standards.

As one source commented: “81% of the world’s energy is produced by hydrocarbons – oil, coal and gas – and this energy is currently vital to the economy of the world. So, it is hard to see how the targets proposed by the UN can be reached without closing down the economies of much of the developed world.”

Other reasons involve fear that the climate change issue is being manipulated to impose the dictatorial world government mentioned above; and the growing scepticism caused by the lies and the number of embarrassing errors and exaggerated claims made on the subject of climate change by the IPCC and climate scientists.

Whom Should We Believe?

The important question that all this raises is whether the global warming issue is a real catastrophe caused by man-made activities, or a scare story used by the UN to create a centrally managed global society in which governments around the world would have to

submit to the UN plan to control the way we live, work and eat, all under the pretence of “Saving the Earth.”

Of course it is. In the year 2009 the EU heads of state met together to choose the first President of the EU, the unknown Herman Van Rompuy, and its Foreign Minister, Baroness Ashton. Interestingly, after Van Rompuy accepted the post, he made the following statement:

2009 is the first year of global governance with the establishment of the G20 in the middle of the financial crisis ... The climate conference in Copenhagen is another step toward the global management of our planet.

This statement makes it clear that the EU President believes the two main ways to bring about global governance is the financial crisis and the climate change issue. Even more interestingly, Mr Van Rompuy is known to be a regular attendee at the Bilderberg Group and Trilateral Committee meetings.

That being said, nobody can deny the way developed nations have been using up and abusing the Earth’s resources over the last few decades and polluting it in the process; consuming more food and fuel than they need, and the world can provide.

As we noted earlier, the world’s food supply is starting to suffer greatly. The weather-related disasters described at the beginning of this chapter have destroyed crops in countries like Pakistan, China and Russia and there have been frequent locust plagues in Australia and parts of Africa.

Finally, as regarding the environmental issues that the world is facing today, I would like to close this chapter with a very important point which we fail to see in our search for answers as to what this all means. I personally believe our so-called enlightened society

fails to see that there is a direct relationship between these destructive forces of nature, whatever their cause, and the spiritual condition that the nations of the world have sunk into in recent times.

The Bible reveals that ancient Israel's relationship with God was connected to things like the weather, the condition of their crops, their health, military victory and so forth. In the pages of the Old Testament Moses explicitly told the Israelites they would receive many blessings if they would diligently obey the voice of the Lord their God and observe carefully all His Commandments (*Deuteronomy 28:1*). But if they violated God's Laws and followed after false gods, they would be cursed.

Most nations of the world, especially those of Western Society, that were once Judeo-Christian nations founded on biblical principles, have cast aside God's moral Laws and gone after strange gods; the gods of power, money, and materialism. Worse still, they blindly attribute the increase of natural disasters and the break-down of society to a lack of self-esteem and global warming and fail to see that the rejection of God in favour of humanism and political correctness has caused His protective spiritual covering to be removed from our nation.

The many fantastic archaeological discoveries of the last century prove that even the ancient peoples, no matter how pagan they were, understood that there was a direct relationship between destructive natural forces and spirituality.

04

THE INCREASE OF WICKEDNESS

Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of many will grow cold.

(Matthew 24:12)

VIOLENCE:

Every day we see violence taking place all around the world, and for a variety of reasons. We hear of mass murders, serial killers, kidnappings, child abuse, spouse abuse, human trafficking and teenagers killing parents and teachers. We hear of conflicts in places where people of different tribes and religions use terrorism and brutal force to impose their ideas or religion on others, and governments that use violence to suppress any opposition to their corrupt rule.

We see in some parts of the world regular physical violence against female citizens, sometimes in the name of religion and sometimes as a result of the sex trade, which often involves young children. The list goes on and on.

To reinforce His statement made in Matthew 24 quoted above and elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus compared the days immediately preceding His return to the days of Noah and of Lot, Abraham's nephew (see *Luke 17:26, 28*).

Here the Lord's emphasis is on the fact that life was going on as usual; people were marrying, having parties, doing business, preparing for the future and living their lives in total oblivion to the destruction that was about to befall them. However, in the Book of Genesis we read of something else that was going on in the days of Lot and Noah:

The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.

(Genesis 6:5-6)

Here we discover the time of Noah was a time when mankind had become wicked and evil beyond recovery. These verses indicate that there was something in the thought life of human beings that caused them to behave in this way: “*Every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.*” Further on in Genesis chapter six verse eleven we read: “*Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.*”

Can anyone deny that our world has become as corrupt and wicked as in the days of these men? And it is no wonder. Almost all forms of entertainment are full of violence, sex and the occult. Add to this the chilling fact that our “enlightened” experts contribute every wrongdoing to genetics, psychological illness, our upbringing, or the environment in which we live.

As a result, our new generation has lost all sense of what wrongdoing is, and why people behave the way they do. Nobody takes responsibility for his behaviour anymore; they pass the blame to something or someone else.

SEXUAL IMMORALITY:

In addition to the increase of violence in our world today, sexual immorality is also rampant as the Bible says it would be. Interestingly, in *Revelation 9:21* the Apostle John lists sexual immorality as one of the most prominent sins of the Tribulation Period. The Greek word used in this verse is *porneia* and refers to all kinds of sexual activity outside of marriage.

In recent years, we have witnessed a worldwide rejection of the biblical doctrine that one man married to one woman is God’s will

for sexuality and family life. Instead all around we see easy divorce, multiple sex partners, gay marriages, an increase in teenage pregnancies, a huge rise in abortions, sexually transmitted diseases, and aggressive warfare by our political and religious leaders to have these abominations legalized.

The new secular world religion is profoundly anti-Christian and teaches that there is no right or wrong and that it is not politically correct to say that God has given commandments to be obeyed on the issue. They tell us that modern attitudes to sex and sexuality bring freedom whereas the biblical Laws on the subject are repressive and damaging.

So it will come as no surprise that our young people are constantly put under pressure from the media, entertainment, and the educational system to experiment with sex, and sex with same-sex partners. Not so long ago the United Nations Organization advised governments all over the world to give explicit sexual information to children as young as five years of age.

The sex education agenda issued by the UN Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation recommended that five to eight year olds learn about self-gratification and gender violence. It also recommended teaching nine year olds the “safety of abortion, the positive and negative effects of aphrodisiacs, and about homophobia, trans-phobia and abuse of power.”

We also find that in much of society today those who oppose these secular views, in particular homosexual practices, are targeted for persecution or even prosecution. The European Parliament passed a resolution for abortion rights and gay marriages to be promoted throughout the European Union and called on all EU members to recognize same-sex civil partnerships equally with heterosexual marriage and for all critics to be silenced.

The resolution says that the European Parliament takes the view that, “Discriminatory comments against homosexuals by social and

political leaders fuel hatred and violence,” and calls on the relevant governing bodies to condemn them. By “discriminatory” they mean those who say that homosexual acts are sinful, as the Word of God says they are (see *Leviticus 20:13*; *Romans 1:27*).

In 2009 President Barak Obama addressed a large rally of the United States Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transsexuals (LGTB) Community. Obama declared that when people look back over the years of his presidency, they will, “See a time in which we as a nation finally recognized relationships between two men or two women as just as real and admirable as relationships between a man and a woman.”

What a shame. To say that “gay marriage” is equal to a marriage between a man and a woman goes against all logic and nature itself. A sexual relationship between a man and a woman is capable of reproducing, but a homosexual union can do nothing of the kind. Gay families are dependent on heterosexuals or artificial insemination to produce the children they adopt.

Be warned, those who are promoting the LGTB agenda do not have the interests of the gay community at heart. Many ex-homosexuals have warned the public against accepting the media’s and Hollywood’s glamorization of the homosexual lifestyle, because it is very different to what they portray it to be. They also warn the ultimate goal of the LGTB Movement is to silence all opposition to anything that is pro-family or pro-Christian.

Intolerance in the Name of Tolerance

My friend, there are powerful forces within governmental bodies today, supported by the mass media, the film industry, the education system and liberal Christian churches, that are violently imposing the un-godly agenda spoken of above. Although they may not agree, very few local politicians and citizens oppose the development of

these modern trends because they will be strongly accused of intolerance, hatred and homophobia. Those who hold to God's view of marriage and sexuality are obliged to keep their "outdated views" out of public life and risk losing their jobs if they speak up for biblical moral values.

In the name of "tolerance," "peace" and "love" a very new form of intolerance is present where it is unacceptable to go against the new secular religion of our day. This is another powerful sign of the times that was prophesied for the last days by the Apostles of Christ long ago. In the words of the Apostle Paul:

For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths.

(2 Timothy 4:3-5)

In both Noah's and Lot's culture we learn that society had become corrupt and debased to such a point that God had to judge them with total destruction. Today, ungodliness is paraded and glorified without a hint of protest from the general public. But God is not mocked; His judgement is coming upon this world.

Just as in the days of Noah and Lot people were living their lives, oblivious to the destruction that was coming upon them, so the return of Christ will catch deceived humanity sleeping when He returns to save those who are waiting for Him and to judge the world. In light of this truth, we as believers would do well to heed the advice of Paul where he wrote:

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable,

convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.

(2 Timothy 4:1-3)

OCCULT PRACTICES:

Today it seems our society is literally being swept away by the supernatural. Movies, books, toys and computer games dealing with supernatural themes and aliens from outer space have been flooding the market place for years. In the Book of Revelation chapter nine the Apostle John lists the four most prominent sins that will be rampant on the Earth during the seven-year Tribulation Period: *“And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their fornication or their thefts.”*

One of the signs of how far society is already heavily involved in the area of sorcery is the increasing number of people, especially our youth, who openly experiment with things like satanism and witchcraft; which eventually open them up to the seduction and oppression of dark demonic forces.

Many parents are unaware that perversion, decadence, satanism and suicide are common themes in today’s music scene and that many of the world’s most famous film stars from the seventies onwards have openly proclaimed their involvement in satanism and the occult.

Every human being has a God-created capacity to worship the true God. If a person does not worship God, he or she will inevitably end up worshipping something else. Just look at what happens at any rock concert. Thousands of people, most of them teenagers, are not just listening to music, but are worshipping the performers. The Bible teaches us that before Satan’s fall, he was a worship leader in the spiritual realm. So he knows all about the power of music to cause people to behave in certain ways.

In addition, personalities like Harry Potter and Sabrina the teenage witch, to mention a few, have made pagan spirituality and mythology part of Western culture. Apologists for these kinds of programmes say they have no influence on young people's behaviour or beliefs, but the evidence paints a totally different picture.

The festival of Halloween has also opened people up to the occult world. Many would say Halloween is harmless and fun, or a time to remember the dead, but it has its roots in the pagan festival of Samhain. Samhain was the time to appease the supernatural powers believed to be controlling the process of nature. It was also believed to be the best time for divinations concerning marriage, luck, health and death, and was the only day on which the help of the devil was invoked for such purposes.

People Who Should Know Better!

It is not just the media and entertainment business that has influenced our youth to experiment with the occult; the United Nations-run education system has played an important role in the spread of New Age occult practices, and the pantheistic theory that we humans are all God, and that we need not worry about being accountable to a personal Creator for our moral behaviour.

In one of his books, leader of the Global Warming Movement, Al Gore, suggests that we return to the worship of nature and strongly upholds various nature-worshipping sects and Native American religions as an example.

The *Times* newspaper reported on a school in Lancashire, England, where Transcendental Meditation (TM) is taught to students, which is modelled on similar schools in the United States of America. Children at the age of ten and upwards begin the day by shutting

their eyes and reciting mantras. TM is a whole new system of learning known as *United Field Education System*.

One New Age spokesman, John Dunphy, said that he was convinced the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the school, "By teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith."

Dunphy went on to say: "The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and the new – the rotting corpse of Christianity... and the new faith of humanism." Little did Mr Dunphy know that he himself was fulfilling biblical prophecy by speaking in such terms!

An investigating reporter by the name of Bob Woodward discovered that Hilary Clinton frequently consulted New Age psychic and teacher Jean Houston in order to contact Elenor Roosevelt, who allegedly helped Hilary to compose her book, *It Takes a Village and Other Lessons Children Teach Us*; a book that greatly influenced American society.

Connection Between the Occult and Drug-Use

Occult practices very often go together with drug-taking and can have very serious results for those involved; as most drugs create an altered state of consciousness into which demon spirits can enter to influence or take control. The same can apply for those involved with alcohol abuse. In 1971 the *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* dealt with the reality of demon possession and how to diagnose it:

There is a need to ascertain if there is any involvement in drug addiction, as it is common that addicts, especially with heroin and alcohol, become involved with black magic and vice versa... Some have been

known in some cases to have been very religious people who defaulted and thus left themselves open to some power other than God to control their lives.

Two Sources of Supernatural Power

New Age beliefs and occult arts deceive people into believing that there is an impersonal neutral cosmic force that we can all tap into to draw supernatural power from. Some practitioners believe they are drawing on this supernatural power from “good spirits” who can help them in their spiritual growth and life’s journey.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Once you open yourself up to this so-called force, you are really tapping into and drawing supernatural power from demonic spirits who are hiding behind the scenes (see *1 Corinthians 8:4*). The Word of God tells us that there are only two sources of supernatural power that we can experience. The first and only reliable source is from God Himself. The second is from Satan and his demons. There is no other source!

Once you start practicing Yoga, Transcendental Meditation, or go seeking after fortune tellers, tarot cards and astrology, and experiment with things involved with witchcraft; such as trying to cast spells or consult the dead, you have opened the door to the dark side, to Satan and all his demons, and given them the legal right to enter your world and mind. This is why God gave such strict warnings in His Word against engaging in such practices (see *Deuteronomy 18:9-13*). Only Jesus Christ can deliver a person from the power of evil once we have allowed it into our lives.

Watch You Are Not Deceived

Throughout Scripture we are warned that deception will be rampant on this planet in the last days. In the Gospels Jesus continually

warned us of this as do the other New Testament writers in many of their Epistles. The Apostle John warns:

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

(1John 4:1-2)

What does John mean by test the spirits, do not believe every spirit? He means that behind false religions and twisted doctrines there is an evil spirit influencing the minds of people. Therefore, a doctrine, whether religious, scientific or moral, must be tested by the Holy Scriptures which were inspired by the Spirit of God.

The Bible teaches us that there is a war going on in the spiritual realm, or invisible realm, between God's Kingdom and Satan's kingdom. In this warfare, there are renegade spiritual beings, or demons, attempting to deceive mankind from the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and bring them into captivity:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(2 Corinthians 4.3-5)

One of the ways Satan achieves his goal is through liberal thinkers who accuse the Bible of being a collection of myths, in spite of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Unfortunately, the general public today knows so little of Scripture and its divine authority that they are gullible to these lies.

The way to be delivered from this spiritual deception is to diligently study the Bible, have a firm knowledge of its contents, and put them into practice. And, especially, to know and believe this truth: that

Jesus Christ is *the Way, the Truth and the Life*, and nobody can come to God except through Him, and that He died for our sins and rose again on the third day to give eternal life as a free gift to those who will believe on Him and repent of their sin.

These increasing attacks on the Bible's integrity today, together with the huge rise in occult practices, the increasing interest in the counterfeit supernatural, and the entire movement and convergence of mystical religions, are all paving the way for the False Prophet's unprecedented spiritual deception spoken of in Revelation chapter thirteen.

Deception has always been with us, and though it is rampant in these days as the Bible warned, the coming man of sin and his accomplice will elevate deception to an art form, and the whole world will be ready for it.

CALLING GOOD EVIL AND EVIL GOOD:

Second Thessalonians chapter two also speaks of widespread lawlessness as a social sign of the times, and speaks of it as a mystery, "*For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.*" Why a mystery? Because the increase in lawlessness is not only the open sin we have spoken of above, but wickedness and rebellion under the form of godliness.

It is when society, and even professing Christians, begin to accept and condone behaviour that was condemned by the most notorious of sinners in previous generations. It is when the believer's love for truth has grown cold and they have allowed themselves to be conformed to this world. This type of lawlessness can only be seen and understood by a firm knowledge of God's Word and by revelation from the Holy Spirit.

05

THE APPEARANCE OF FALSE PROPHETS

For false christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.

(Matthew 24:24-26)

According to our precious Saviour another sign of the times would be the proliferation of false christs and false prophets, who will come and lead many people away from the truth. One of the problems I encountered when doing research for this chapter was that these false prophets and preachers have come from so many quarters, that to comment on each of them would cause me to write a very large book on this subject alone.

So, for the sake of time and space, I will point to some of the more well-known false religions, cults and areas of deception that Jesus and the Apostles said would arise down through the centuries and reach their climax prior to the Second Coming.

Sometimes these have been subtle infiltrations of false ideas and doctrines, that either add to or subtract from the faith handed down to us by God's holy Apostles and Prophets. Other times they have been open attacks on the integrity of the Bible and on the divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus. In his First Epistle the Apostle John warns us that this is the spirit of antichrist:

Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist – he denies the Father and the Son. No-one who denies the Son has the Father, whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

(1 John 2:22-24)

And again, in chapter four of that same Epistle John writes:

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

(1John 4:1-4)

Here John gives us two tests to recognize the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of Antichrist. Jesus is not only the Messiah promised in the Old Testament Prophets; He is the Messiah with also a unique relationship to the Father. In the Gospel of John Jesus says that He and the Father are one, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father also.

The divinity of Jesus Christ is a repeated theme throughout the entire Bible. Therefore, to acknowledge that Jesus Christ “*has come in the flesh*” means believing that He is God who came to dwell in human form on Earth.

In his Letter to the Philippians Paul teaches that Jesus emptied Himself of His divine privileges (but never ceased to be God) to become Man and go to the Cross for our salvation. The Scriptures make it clear that Jesus was not a Man who became God, but God who became Man. He was and is fully God and fully Man.

One such view that denies this truth is the third century Arian heresy, which continues to be recycled today in the teaching of the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

THE ARIAN HERSEY

In the early Church one of the most well-known denials of the truth of Christ's divinity came through a priest in Alexandria, Egypt by the name of Arius (256-336 A.D.). This man published a doctrine which taught that Jesus was not of the same substance as the Father, but was a created being; that is, Jesus is a kind of lesser god who takes second place to the Father.

To deal with this doctrine Emperor Constantine called an ecumenical Council to convene in Nicaea (325 A.D). This heresy was refuted by a Christian called Athanasius, who proved from Scripture and the witness of the early Church Fathers that Jesus was not a created being, but has existed from eternity, being of one substance with the Father.

Athanasius won the debate and the Council condemned Arius and his false teaching, currently known as *Arianism*. That Council then agreed to the following statement about the identity of Jesus Christ in the Nicene Creed:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made, who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made Man; He suffered, and the third day He rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead and His kingdom will have no end.

Modern Example of Arianism

The most modern example of the Arian heresy comes from the Jehovah's Witnesses, who teach that Jesus Christ is a Person distinct from God the Father, and that before His earthly life Jesus was a spirit creature, the Archangel Michael, who God created and became the "Christ" (Messiah) at His baptism.

According to the *New World Translation*, the Jehovah's Witnesses mistranslation of the Bible, *John 1:1* reads: "The word is a god," instead of "*the word was God.*" They teach that Jesus was and always will be beneath Jehovah and that the two are not equal.

This teaching fits in exactly with the warning that John gives us in his Epistle quoted above when he spoke of those that deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. By diminishing the status of our Lord Jesus to a created being, who is a second in command to the Father, they manifest the spirit of antichrist.

This argument applies to a multitude of religious cults that have arisen over the last hundred and fifty years, such as the Mormons, the Unification Church and Scientology, to name a few. I will speak about these further on in this chapter.

DOCETISM AND ISLAM

The Apostle John wrote his Epistle to correct errors which were already coming into the Church. One such error was Docetism, that comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means *I seem*. This teaching considered the humanity and sufferings of the earthly Christ as apparent rather than real.

That is, Jesus only seemed to be a real human being. Although this teaching was beginning to appear in New Testament times, it reached its high point in the next generation, especially among the Gnostics. A heretical document known as the Acts of John 93 says:

I will tell you another glory, brothers, sometimes when I meant to touch him I encountered a material, solid body; but at other times again when I felt him, his substance was immaterial and incorporeal ... as if it did not exist at all.

In this same passage we learn that “John” checked for footprints, but Jesus left none. Neither did Jesus blink. He is a spiritual being; His humanity is a “phantom.” In the introduction to his First Epistle the real John refutes this teaching and emphasizes that Jesus was really flesh and blood:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of Life. The life appeared, we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

(1John 1:1-3)

Together with this heresy came the false idea that Jesus did not really die on the Cross. The *Apocalypse of Peter* 81:4-24 speaks of a substitute being put to shame and crucified in His place:

I saw him apparently being seized by them. And I said, “What am I seeing, O Lord? Is it really you whom they take? And are you holding on to me? And are they hammering the feet and hands of another? Who is this one above the cross, who is glad and laughing?”
The Saviour said to me, “He whom you saw being glad and laughing above the cross is the living Jesus. But he into whose hands and feet they are driving the nails

is his fleshly part, which is the substitute. They put to shame that which remained in his likeness. And look at him, and (look at) me!”

This obscure passage is a dialogue between Peter and Jesus, with Peter as the first speaker. The key point is that there were two beings: the living Lord and Saviour, Jesus, and the human substitute.

The Saviour was from the Father; He was a spiritual being who could not have anything to do with flesh, bodies or death. He could not be involved with a fallen and corrupt material existence. The earthly, living substitute, a mere human who only represented Jesus, was the one crucified. The heavenly Jesus laughed at the world’s ignorance.

Another text that says the same thing about Jesus comes from the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*. It says that Jesus did not die in reality but in appearance. It was another person, Simon, who actually bore the Cross. And a similar idea appears in the Gnostic text, the *Gospel of Judas*, which was recently acclaimed as great discovery by academics.

What is remarkable about these Gnostic texts is that one of the major world religions of our day takes its teaching from these heretical gospels and denies the core beliefs of Christianity – the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I am speaking of the religion of Islam. In the Qur’an (*Sura al-Nisaa 157-158*) we read:

They said ... “We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah,” but they did not kill him, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no certain knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of surely they did not kill him.

The Islamic faith also denies the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and His oneness with the Father. The Islamic Jesus is not only a created being, but is made lower than Muhammad, and is no more than a messenger. In the Qur'an *Sura 3:59* we read: "The similitude of Jesus before Allah is that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be,' and he was."

Not only does Islam deny that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh; it puts a curse on all who confess this truth: "The Jews call Uzair a son of Allah, and the Christians call Christ the son of Allah ... Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the truth."

Again, when we apply John's advice to the teaching of Muhammad and the Qur'an, we will quickly discover that this prophet does not pass the biblical test but displays the spirit of antichrist. Therefore, Christians and Muslims are certainly not sister faiths, as some would try to have us believe, and they are certainly not worshipping the same God.

In fact, Islam teaches that Muhammad is the last prophet, superseding the Patriarchs and Jesus Christ, and that the Qur'an is the mother of all books, with the Bible subservient to it. To a Muslim it is Allah's will for Islam to rule the world, by force when necessary.

The goal of the *Organization of the Islamic Conference* (OIC) is to give Islam a special place in all societies. It claims that Islam, the Qur'an, Sharia and Muhammad must all be protected from criticism however factual that criticism may be.

The OIC and its member states have also pressured other UN countries to work on a binding treaty which would protect the religion of Islam from any kind of criticism. The result would be a ban on any criticism of the beliefs of Muhammad worldwide and therefore a ban on Christians to show the errors of Islamic beliefs and to preach the Gospel to Muslims.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Echoing the words of his Master some years later, the Apostle Peter warned us that false teachers would actually come into the Church with destructive doctrines and deny the Lord who bought them:

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them – bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up.

(2 Peter 2:1-4)

An example of one of these destructive heresies is the denial that through His “*once for all*,” NEVER TO BE REPEATED, **sacrifice** at Calvary, Jesus redeemed those who believe on Him. This is the central message of the Christian faith and a repeated theme throughout the whole New Testament, especially in the Letter to the Hebrews (see *Hebrews* 7:27, 9:12, 26, 28, 10:10, 12, 14).

One of the oldest, and by far the most obvious, examples of a denial of this truth is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Mass. The Catholic belief is that:

The sacrifice (in the Mass) is identical with the sacrifice of the cross inasmuch as Jesus Christ is both priest and victim. The only difference lies in the manner of offering which is bloody upon the cross and bloodless on our altars. If anyone saith that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God let him be anathema (The Council of Trent).

This was reaffirmed at the Second Vatican Council which stated:

The Mass, the Lord's Supper, is ... a sacrifice in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated. As often as the sacrifice of the cross, by which Christ our Passover is sacrificed, is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried on.

It is very clear from these statements that the Mass is a *sacrifice*, although a bloodless one; and that the "bloodless sacrifice of the Mass" is expiatory for sins; the means by which sins are atoned for and forgiven.

In addition to this erroneous teaching, it is claimed that only its ordained priests have the power to transform the bread and wine into the literal body and blood of Jesus Christ. This is known as Transubstantiation.

In the Question and Answer Catholic Catechism the following questions are asked and the following answers are given: (Q) What is the sacrament of the Eucharist? (A) The Eucharist is a sacrament which really, truly, and substantially contains the body and blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine.

(Q) How does Christ become present in the Eucharist? (A) Christ becomes present in the Eucharist by means of Transubstantiation. Transubstantiation is the term used to identify the change that takes place at the consecration.

One only needs to read the Bible to see such teaching is completely unbiblical and an offense to Christ's death on the Cross. The Word of God makes it abundantly clear that, "*Without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin*" (Hebrews 9:22). How then can a sacrifice which is bloodless achieve pardon for sins?

In the Gospel of John we learn that while Jesus was dying on the Cross, He cried out, “*It is finished,*” and then gave up the spirit (*John 20:30*). By this He meant that the work of redemption was finished and there was no further offering that needed to be made.

The True Meaning of Communion

Communion, or the Lord’s Supper, is the *remembrance* of the Lord’s one-time sacrifice for sin. Jesus made it very clear, as He administered the first communion with His disciples, that the purpose of it all was to be a constant reminder of what He was about to do for them, and for all believers, through His death (*Luke 22:19*). The real and sole power of communion is the power of remembrance.

As the disciples (and we) ate the broken bread, they were to think of Jesus’ body that was broken for them, and as they drank the wine, they were to remember how Jesus’ precious blood was shed for them (*Mark 14:22-25*). To invest these details and elements with a significance never intended by our Lord is to miss the majestic simplicity and true meaning of communion.

In *John 6:53-54* Jesus did speak of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, but He used these words symbolically, as He did many other times in Scripture. In the same Gospel of John, Jesus said He was the door of the sheep, and, elsewhere, that He was the true vine. Further on in Chapter six of the Gospel of John our Lord said: “*The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life,*” meaning that they were to be interpreted in a spiritual sense.

For believers, communion is a reminder to us of the substitutionary work of Christ for our sin, and it is also a profession on our part that we have become partakers of Christ and draw our life, our spiritual food, from the truths of His death and resurrection.

This second purpose is the reason why the Apostle Paul said that eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner could bring damnation. A person who takes communion without being cleansed by the blood of Jesus is professing a lie.

Methods to Keep the Sheep in *their* Fold

One of the characteristics of Roman Catholicism, and this would apply to many of the other religious organizations around today, is a strong desire to keep the sheep within *their* fold, and for personal interests. A common way of accomplishing this goal is to create a legalistic religious environment in which members develop a strong fear of questioning the status quo.

Down through the centuries the Roman Catholic Church has developed finely-tuned skills to do just that. Its unbiblical doctrines and practices continually reinforce the belief that this church is indispensable for having a right relationship with God, so that to leave is made to appear like rejecting God.

Many of its popes declared that there is no salvation apart from the pope and from Catholicism, and that no one can interpret or understand the Bible apart from Catholic teaching and tradition. As we shall demonstrate below, throughout history, the Roman Catholic Church has been one of those religious organizations that has misinterpreted and misrepresented Scripture the most; adding things that are not there and leaving out things that are.

Before doing this, however, I would like to correct any misunderstanding between the meaning of the term *Catholic Church* and the *Roman Catholic Church*. The word *catholic* simply means *common* or *universal*.

The Church of Jesus Christ, of which He and He alone is the Head (see *Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:23; Colossians 1:18, 2:19*), is truly catholic in that it comprises all those, and only those, who in every

place and period of time have been united to Him through the New Birth and a common faith (see *Titus 1:4; 2 Peter 1:1*), and because it embraces the Gospel as perceived and proclaimed by the twelve Apostles (*Acts 2:42-43*). This is why in the Nicene Creed we say we believe in “One Catholic and Apostolic Church.”

A Roman Catholic, on the other hand, is a person who believes that the Roman Catholic Church was instituted by the Lord Jesus, and who accepts the authoritative teaching of that church as defined and expressed by its popes, bishops and councils.

Unbiblical Roman Catholic Practices

The Office of Pope:

The Roman Catholic Church claims the pope to be infallible. He is called holy father, your holiness and vicar of Christ. Such a statement is in complete contrast to the plain teaching of the Word of God. It is based on a misinterpretation of Jesus’ words to Peter: “*And I tell you that you are Peter (meaning piece of a rock), and on this rock I will build my church*” (*Matthew 16:18*); a statement the Lord made to all His disciples on other occasions (see *Matthew 18:18-19; John 20:23-24*).

Papal infallibility also contradicts the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church itself prior to 1870. The Council of Constance (1414) declared that, “Every lawfully convoked council representing the Church derives its authority immediately from Christ, and every one, the pope included, is subject to it in matters of faith.” And let us not forget the warning that Jesus gave His Apostles concerning such an office as pope:

But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on

*earth father, for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.
Nor are you to be called teacher, for you have one teacher,
the Christ.*

(Matthew 23:8-11)

After the time of Emperor Constantine the Church at Rome became Roman in its organization and approach and began to embrace many of its pagan religious ceremonies and beliefs. One of the most prominent cults it embraced was the worship of the Mithras, which was probably the greatest competitor to Christianity during the development of the early Church. Interestingly, worshippers of the Mithras, believed by the Romans to be a mediator between the sun god and humanity, followed a leader called *Papa* (pope), who ruled from the Vatican Hill in ancient Rome.

Denying the Bible's Authority:

While the Roman Catholic Church professes to accept the Bible as the Holy Word of God, it does not believe the Bible ALONE contains ALL that we need to know with regard to what we believe and how to live and serve God as true Christians. It claims that the Bible together with the “sacred traditions” of that church are necessary and of equal authority, because they are both the Word of God. The Council of Trent:

The Church receives and venerates with equal feeling of piety and reverence all the books of the Old and New Testament – and also the traditions relating as well to faith and morals as having either from the mouth of Christ Himself or from the dictation of the Holy Ghost been preserved by continuous succession in the Catholic Church.

The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed this:

The Church does not draw her certainty about all revealed truths from the Holy Scriptures alone. Hence, both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honoured with equal feelings of devotion and reverence.

What incredible statements! This is their teaching in spite of the fact that many of the early Fathers held to what has been the position of the Christian faith since the time of the Apostles; that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are not only divinely inspired; they comprise the ONLY authoritative rule of faith and practice. It is true that the Apostle John says:

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

(John 21:25)

However, John also says:

Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

(John 20:30)

The Scriptures do not contain *all* that Christ and His Apostles taught and did, but that which is contained therein is both sufficient and “*able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus*” (2Timothy 3:15). For “*the secret things belong the Lord our God,*

but the things revealed belong to us and our children forever” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

The early Church Father Justin Martyn said: “We are enjoined by Christ Himself to put no faith in human doctrines, but in those declared by the blessed prophets and taught by himself.”

In line with this Basil the Great insisted: “It is a manifest falling away from faith and a mark of presumption, either to omit anything in Scripture or to introduce anything not in Scripture.” Chrysostom too: “There is no way of knowing what is the true Church of Christ save by Scripture.”

And Irenaeus encouraged those of his time: “Read diligently the Gospels given unto us by the apostles, and read diligently the prophets, and ye shall find every action and the whole doctrine preached there.”

Jerome aptly taught: “As we deny not those things that are written, so we refuse those things which are not written.” Finally, I call to mind what our Lord Jesus said to the religious leaders of his day who made this very mistake of equating Scripture with tradition:

And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?... So, for the sake of your tradition you make void the word of God. You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you: “This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. In vain do they worship me; teaching human precepts as doctrines.

(Matthew 15:3, 6-10)

Jesus condemned the religious leaders of His day because they not only taught things which were not in Scripture, but also things that were completely contrary. By doing this they had set aside the commandment of God, and declared null and void that which He had expressly decreed.

There is a severe warning in Scripture for anyone who adds or takes away from God's Word (see *Proverbs 30:6; Deuteronomy 4:2; 2 John 9; Revelation 22:18*).

True Apostolic Tradition

When the Apostles spoke of tradition in the New Testament, they were speaking of the authoritative teachings they had taught “*whether by word of mouth or by letter.*” The Apostle Paul encouraged the believers at Thessalonians to “*Stand firm and hold to the traditions we passed on to you*” (2 *Thessalonians 2:15*).

Again, in his First Letter to the Corinthians Paul wrote to the believers: “*I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions, just as I passed them on to you*” (1 *Corinthians 11:2*). The Apostle is saying here to the believers that he commended them for keeping his instructions, just as he had delivered them to the Church.

In order to merit any consideration religious traditions must meet with certain criteria. One, they must comply with the clear teaching of Scripture, and not be at variance. Two, they must not take precedence over the clear teaching and commandments in Scripture. Most, if not all, of what the Roman Catholic Church holds to be “God-made traditions” does not meet with this criteria and are to be rejected as human precepts and the commandments of men.

Twisting Scripture:

Roman Catholics are not at liberty to interpret the Bible in order to discover its true meaning. This right is said to belong solely to their church hierarchy, as decreed at the Council of Trent and reiterated by the Second Vatican Council.

This implies that when it comes to a correct understanding of what the Bible says, we should not trust our own judgement, in case we err, but should come to the conclusion, trusting in our own judgement of course, that their understanding is correct.

Believers are also required to filter out what they read in the Bible through the lenses of Catholic doctrines. For example, the Bible plainly speaks of Mary having sexual relations with her husband Joseph after the birth of her first Son, Jesus Christ (*Matthew 1:25*), and that Jesus had many brothers and sisters (*Matthew 12:46-50, 13:55-57; Mark 6:3-4; John 7:5*).

In spite of this scriptural evidence, Catholics must read these passages without ever questioning the doctrine that Mary remained always a virgin. Can you see the absurdity? The New Testament writers constantly urge believers to use their own judgement and reason to discover the truth: “*Test everything, hold fast to that which is good...*” (*1Thessalonians 5:21*). “*Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind*” (*Romans 14:5-6*). “*I speak to sensible people: judge for yourselves what I say*” (*1Corinthians 10:14*).

Despite the unrelenting efforts of the pagan Roman emperors to destroy every copy of the Bible during the first three centuries after Christ, Christianity became the official state religion of the Roman Empire following the conversion of Emperor Constantine in A.D. 325.

However, centuries later the medieval Roman Church fell into apostasy, rejected biblical truth and made political alliances with the kings of Europe. For many centuries they kept the Bible in the Latin language, which most people could not understand, and issued laws that made possession of a Bible illegal for any Christian layman. During the centuries of the Inquisitions in Europe, there were appalling penalties, including burning at the stake, for anyone who tried to translate the Bible into the common language, or for anyone found to possess a copy in their homes.

Consequently, most people were unable to compare the false doctrines that were widespread in the medieval Roman Church against the doctrines in the Word of God. Not until the Reformation in 1520 A.D. did the light of the Gospel of Christ come to the European population through the translation and printing of the Bible in contemporary languages.

In opposition to the Roman Catholic position, that their church councils, tradition and papal decrees could supersede the teaching of Scripture, the spiritual cry of the Protestant Reformers was *Sola Scriptura* – Scripture alone! Let it also be yours.

Elevating Mary:

In the Roman Catholic Church Mary the mother of Jesus is elevated to a position which has no basis at all in the New Testament. She has been given the title *Mother of God* (*Catechism, Article 167*) and *Queen of Heaven* (*Article 168A*). *Article 117* says: “All mankind has contracted the guilt and stain of original sin, except the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son.” Again, “As no man goes to the Father except by the Son, so no man goes to the Son except by His Mother.” Here Mary is extolled to having an important part to play in our salvation.

There are also statues of Mary and the saints that are treated like pagan idols. These statues are frequently carried through city streets in processions, many of which are quite large. In October 1999, a procession of two and a half million Catholics followed a statue of the Virgin of Zapopan.

In December 2001, more than eight million Catholics came to Mexico City to honour Our Lady of Guadalupe, including huge processions following a painting of the “apparition.” In Fatima, Portugal, it is a tradition to have candle-light processions in honour

of Our Lady of Fatima. Crowds of pilgrims carrying lighted candles follow a statue, often consisting of thousands of people.

Apparitions of Mary have also appeared in various areas around the world. These supernatural apparitions of “Mary” encourage people to pray the rosary, wear scapulars and claim that the rosary and the immaculate heart of Mary are going to save the world and get people to heaven.

Sometimes Mary appears with “baby Jesus” in her arms. The Infant of Prague is a statue of Jesus Christ as a baby. It is held in a church in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Miracles are attributed to it and pilgrims come from all over the world to venerate it.

Jesus is no longer a baby. He was a grown Man when He was crucified, resurrected from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus was also a grown Man in resurrected glory when Stephen saw Him standing at the right hand of God in heaven (see *Acts 7:56*).

The message given in these apparitions and moving statues are a deception which will not get people to heaven or a place of safety, neither will they prevent the “approaching holocaust” because the peace of the world has not been entrusted to Mary. Jesus alone holds the keys to heaven (*Revelation 3:7*).

There have also been campaigns to have Mary officially proclaimed a mediatrix, co-mediator with Jesus between God and humanity, even a fourth member of the Trinity. Catholics already address prayers to Mary as a mediator in the Hail Mary prayer. The Lord Jesus is the only Mediator between God and mankind and He alone is our great High Priest, who intercedes to the Father on our behalf (see *1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34*).

Mary is by no means the mother of God, neither was she immaculately conceived, nor assumed into heaven. She was saved as you and I are saved; through her faith in the work of the Cross. In her prayer recorded in the Gospel of Luke she says:

My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me.

(Luke 1:46-50)

Mary was highly favoured by God in quite an exceptional way and was truly *blessed* among women. She conceived supernaturally by the Holy Spirit to bring forth the Messiah by the Virgin Birth. But apart from being the vehicle through whom God was manifest in the flesh, she had nothing whatsoever to do with Christ's work of salvation.

Jesus did not elevate Mary above others. On the contrary, in the Gospel of Matthew Jesus says: "*I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist*" (*Matthew 11:11*). This statement indicates that not even Mary was greater than he. Jesus also publicly corrected His mother on a number of occasions (see *Matthew 12:46-50; Luke 2:48-50; John 2:4*).

The elevation of Mary to the role given her by the Roman Catholic Church shows a close connection to the ancient Babylonian mystery cults. These had a goddess mother figure known as the Queen of Heaven, which in reality was a pernicious demonic spirit designed to lead people away from the true God to the worship of devils (see *Jeremiah 7:16-19*).

Un-Biblical Prayers:

Catholic Masses consist mainly of standard written prayers and responses that are repeated at every Mass, although there is some variety due to Scripture readings. Catholics are taught to revere and pray not only to Mary, but to a special group of people called "saints."

Nowhere in the Bible can we find reference to a special class of holy people who are called saints and to whom we are to pray on behalf of the living; the Bible actually forbids such practices (see *Isaiah 8:19*). Every person who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour is a saint, which means sanctified, set apart (please see Table A for biblical references related to this subject).

Only God has the authority to judge people and declare them righteous. He does not have special favourites, but listens to the prayers of everyone who has received His Son Jesus into their hearts. To elevate a group of Christians above other Christians is a form of idolatry and an affront to the Gospel.

The Rosary is a series of repeated prayers with ten “Hail Marys” for every “Our Father.” Although some pray the Rosary slowly and thoughtfully, others say the prayers rapidly and automatically, to the extent that the words are often indistinguishable. Jesus told us that when we pray, we are not to keep on babbling like pagans, who think they will be heard because of their many words. In the Gospel of Matthew He teaches us how and to whom we are to pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

(Matthew 6:9-14)

This prayer, which is commonly called the Lord’s Prayer, is more accurately called the Model Prayer. It was given as a model of what prayer to the Father should consist of. However, the Roman Catholic Church adopted the reciting of this prayer and made it into nothing more than custom and the vain repetition spoken of above. Biblical prayer is not based on special words or objects; it is based on our faith in the grace of God and our special relationship with

Him through the merit of His Son. It should be a natural form of communication like when talking to a close friend. The Apostle Peter tells us to, “*Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you*” (1Peter 5:7).

The Psalms show how David poured out his heart to God and in the Prophets we see much evidence of this. The New Testament gives us many other examples of how we are to pray to God (see *Ephesians 3:14-19; Colossians 1:9-12; Acts 4:20*).

Insisting Salvation Is by Works:

The central message of the Gospel is that salvation cannot be earned through human effort and good deeds, but is a free gift from God through faith in His Son:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

(Ephesians 2:8-10)

For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.” Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”

(Galatians 3:10-12)

God is able to do this through the righteousness of His Son being *imputed* to the believer the moment he acknowledges his need of a Saviour and repents of his sin. When the Bible speaks of imputation, it means that which God charges or lays to the account of someone which originally belonged to another, namely Christ. Paul wrote:

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

(2 Corinthians 5:21)

Because the Father treated His precious Son as if He had sinned our sin, He is now able to treat true believers as if they had never sinned, by laying to their account the righteousness of Christ:

He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. In order that, as it is written, “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

(1 Corinthians 1:30)

However, this doctrine may seem to contradict other passages of Scripture which speak on the same subject. For example, James appears to say that salvation is based on human works:

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

(James 2:14-18)

But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

(James 2:18-19)

This difficulty in the Bible is more apparent than real. The Apostle Paul glorified in the universal offer of salvation through faith,

because it was a message of power to save the worst and most unworthy of men and women, regardless of who they were, or what they had been or done before coming to repentance.

But when it came to the question of *how* that salvation could be appropriated, the Apostle was unchangeable in his insistence that salvation is a gift of God's grace ((please see Table B for more biblical references). That being the case, the biblical references which link salvation to *good works*, or *works of the law*, should not be interpreted in such a way that puts this fundamental doctrine in dispute.

Yet faith in Christ is not merely something external; it means being united to Him in such a way that our whole life is bound up in His (please see Table C). As a result of this union, there should inevitably be some moral change in our life and character. We cannot claim to be Christians walking in faith without having something of the righteous nature of our precious Saviour being manifest in the way we live and behave. Our actions are an indication of our inner faith says James above, and can be used to determine where we stand with the Lord; or if we stand with Him at all!

So, as you can see, James and Paul do not disagree in their teaching on salvation; they approach the same subject from different perspectives. Paul plainly emphasized that justification is by faith alone and James agrees with him, but puts emphasis on the fact that genuine faith in the Lord should produce actions.

Paul actually says the same thing in many of his writings. Immediately after telling us in his Letter to the Ephesians that we are saved by faith not works, he goes on to say we were, "*Created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life*" (Ephesians 2:10).

However, these "*good works*" are "*works of faith,*" the direct fruits of being united with the Lord through the Holy Spirit. They do not

represent any virtuous human attainments that could become the basis for our salvation, but are offered to God in gratitude for all He has already done for us in Christ Jesus (see *1Thessalonians 1:3*; *2Thessalonians 1:11*).

God designed our salvation in this way so as to totally eliminate any boasting, bragging or pride from man about his holiness or spiritual accomplishments, and so that all the praise and glory would go to Him alone, because He alone is worthy (see *Luke 18:9-15*; *Romans 3:27*; *1Corinthians 1:31*; *Ephesians 2:9*).

As far as the Roman Catholic Church is concerned, it is not enough to trust in the saving merits of Jesus Christ alone; you must do much more than that. For a start you must be baptized. Then you must engage in good works in order to procure your salvation. According to the Council of Trent:

If anyone saith that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sin for Christ's sake alone; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be anathema.

If anyone saith that the good works of one that is justified... does not truly merit increase of grace, eternal life and the attainment of that eternal life... let him be anathema.

As we can see from these statements, salvation is not a free gift but it has to be earned, indeed won, as reiterated by the Second Vatican Council:

From the most ancient times in the Church, good works were also offered to God for the salvation of the sinner... because they are necessary or at least better and more efficacious helps in the task of winning salvation.

Purgatory and Indulgences:

In Catholicism, even devout Christians have to suffer for a time in Purgatory, the place where their souls are confined for a period after death to be purified. Apparently, when God forgives sins, He may still require that the sinner pay for his or her sins by suffering either here on Earth or in Purgatory. The degree of this suffering is proportional to the degree of sinfulness.

This too is completely contrary to the central message of the Gospel proclaimed by the Apostles and believed by the New Testament Church. It is abundantly clear that the moment a sinner turns to Christ in true repentance and faith, his past sins are not only forgiven; the punishment which those sins rightly deserved is completely remitted. Jesus said:

Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned: he has crossed over from death to life.

(John 5:24-25)

The Apostle Paul encouraged believers with these words: *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1)*. The New Testament also makes it clear that at the moment of death a believer in Christ immediately enters into the presence of God. Paul confessed: *“We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8)*; *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21)*.

The penitent thief crucified beside Jesus received this assurance from the Lord: *“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:42)*. To go immediately into the presence of Christ after death is the reward of every true believer, no matter how bad you were before coming to faith in Him.

During the Middle Ages the popes said that they could get people out of Purgatory and into heaven by means of purchasing indulgences. This assignment was given to the priests who spoke of the horrible torments of Purgatory, but told the people that if they purchased an indulgence for their deceased, then their soul would immediately escape into heaven.

People were also told that if they bought an indulgence for themselves, it guaranteed their forgiveness, including the sins committed after the purchase of the indulgence. This encouraged wild living without fear of the spiritual consequences.

In modern times, earning indulgences is done primarily through special prayers and religious practices which are indulged. The suffering of the souls in Purgatory can be reduced by means of good works done here on Earth on their behalf. This includes having masses on their behalf, and it is traditional even today to give money to the priest who says the mass on behalf of the dead.

Denying Jesus Is the Only Way:

The New Testament affirms “*There is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus*” (1 Timothy 2:5). To this I would like to add one further observation: Jesus is not the only way TO salvation, He is also the only way OF salvation. The Apostle Peter made this clear when he said:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

(Acts 4:12-13)

According to the Second Vatican Council, however:

This sacred Synod... basing itself upon sacred Scripture and tradition, teaches that the Church... is necessary for salvation... It is through Christ's

Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help towards salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained.

Again, in the Question and Answer Catholic Catechism the following question is asked and the following answer given: (Q) Is the Church necessary for salvation? (A) Yes, the Church is necessary for salvation. Christ Himself declared that no one can be saved except through faith and baptism. He thereby affirmed the necessity of the Church... into which a person enters as through a door, in the sacrament of baptism.

In light of this teaching, it should come as no surprise that most Roman Catholics question the need to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. After all, where they not Born Again, cleansed of their sins and incorporated into Christ the moment they were baptized?

The New Testament writers make it very clear that we have to first RECEIVE Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour in order to become *children of God* and *partakers of the divine nature*. For example, when Paul was once asked what one must do to be saved, he gave this simple reply: “*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...*” (Acts 16:30). In response to a similar question the Apostle Peter replied: “*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved*” (Acts 2:21).

A believer should then be baptized, not in order to make him a believer or receive salvation, but because he has already been made a believer and incorporated into the body of Christ, through his repentance from sin and acceptance of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on his behalf (see Acts 8:12-14, 36-40, 16:14, 18:8; Mark 16:16). His baptism is an outward expression of an inward reality (Romans 6:3-5).

An Unbiblical Priesthood:

The Church of which Jesus Christ is the Head knows absolutely nothing of the office of the priest as distinct from the laity. On the contrary, the Apostles taught that all true believers have been made priests to minister unto God (*Revelation 1:6, 5:10, 20:6*). They comprise a “*holy priesthood*,” one of whose functions is to offer “*spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*” (*1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15*).

True believers also have boldness to enter the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus (*Hebrews 10:19*); they have direct access to His presence and are able to approach the throne of grace with confidence, “*So that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need*” (*Hebrews 4:16*). “*For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit*” (*Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; Romans 5:2*). Direct and immediate access to God without the help of any “intermediaries,” my friends.

In the Old Testament era only those who belonged to Levi were appointed by God to be priests. However, all this was to change with the coming of Christ and the New Covenant, and the inception of the New Testament Church. Then the office of the priesthood was to disappear, for a better hope was introduced, “*By which we draw near to God*” (*Hebrews 7:18*).

This also explains why the office of priest is not listed anywhere among the offices which Christ gave to His Church, namely Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers (*Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28*). The Roman Catholic Church totally denies this biblical teaching and makes a clear distinction between the priest and the laity. The priest, it affirms, is a class apart and wholly indispensable. The Council of Trent declared:

The priest is the minister of God... It is clear that their function is such that none greater can be conceived... he that despiseth the priest despiseth God; he that hears him hears God.

If any one saith that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood; or that there is not any power – of forgiving and retaining sins – let him be anathema.

The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed the belief that by carrying out sacred functions, their priests act as Christ's ministers: "By Baptism priests introduce men into the People of God; by the sacrament of Penance they reconcile sinners with God and the Church." They also teach: "It is necessary by divine law to confess to a priest each and every mortal sin."

As we stated previously, it also teaches that if its priests say the correct words and perform the correct ritual actions then the bread and wine will literally turn into the body, blood soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. This is both magic and idolatry. The Eucharist is an idol made by human hands and human words, and when Catholics worship it, their love and adoration goes to the elements instead of going to Christ.

Use of Painful Practices:

Some Roman Catholics believe that they will receive special favours from God or the saints if they do painful things such as whipping themselves or walking barefoot on their knees. This is similar to the ancient pagan religions, where their followers are required to inflict pain in order to appease or receive favour from their gods. A good example of this in Scripture is where the priests

of Baal cut themselves with sharp objects until they bled to gain favour from their god (see *1Kings 18:20-35*).

Forbidding Marriage and Certain Foods:

The Word of God connects the forbidding of marriage and the forbidding of people to eat certain foods directly to the doctrines of demons:

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared with a hot iron. They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

(1Timothy 4:1-4)

Celibacy is scriptural, yet it is a matter of calling or personal conviction and not of external compulsion (see *Matthew 19:10-13; 1Corinthians 7*). Peter and most of the other Apostles were married. The Apostle Paul asked:

Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brother and Cephas?

(1Corinthians 9:5)

Even in the early Roman Catholic Church many priests had wives, but later some popes decided they would have more power and wealth if the priests remained single. After that they decreed laws that forbid any priest to get married.

Some believe it was these laws that gave rise to the widespread sexual immorality, perversion, seduction, rape, child abuse injustice

and cruelty in that organization over the centuries to this very day. Personally, I believe it is love for these practices that makes many within that organization desire to become her servant in the first place.

The Catholic Church also required abstinence from eating meat during Lent and on other special days. People who broke these rules were accused of heresy and punished. During the Inquisition Period, many were tortured and killed for eating meat or eggs, or drinking milk during Lent.

Until the Second Vatican Council it was considered to be a mortal sin for any Catholic to eat meat on Fridays. Only after that council did these rules become more relaxed. Most modern Catholics believe that they only need to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and Friday during Lent.

The doctrine of abstaining from foods is in total contrast to the teaching given by Jesus and the Apostles in the New Testament. Fasting too is scriptural, but, again, it was designed to be a matter of personal conviction and not of external compulsion. The Apostle Paul warns that Christians should not judge one another based on what they eat or drink and when they do it (*Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:1-9*).

Use of Idolatrous Objects:

The Roman Catholic Church is built on idolatry, which can be defined as the religious worship of an image, material object, person, or anything that takes the place of complete devotion to God the Father.

Webster's Dictionary defines a charm as "anything worn to avert ill or secure good fortune." Charms are actually idols because people attribute power to them and put their trust in them instead of trusting in God.

Roman Catholicism has many objects which are believed to bring blessings and protection. They include rosaries, holy oil, holy water, blessed salt, relics, statues, crucifixes, medals, scapulars, holy cards or jewellery of Mary, the saints, the Archangel Michael, Jesus and the pope. The list also includes objects associated with visions or mystical experiences of saints, and anything related to apparitions of Mary.

The Rosary, the brown scapular and special devotions to Mary are said to help people get to heaven. Water from Lourdes, San Giovanni, the Saint Benedict medal, and objects associated with Padre Pio are believed to cause physical healing.

These are all ways of worshipping and trusting in material things instead of trusting in the Lord. They are accursed objects and will bring a curse on anyone who trusts in them. If you have any such object in your possession, I suggest you get rid of it from your home. God is your protection and true Christians must trust in Jesus and apply His blood to their lives through faith, and not trust in material objects, special words, rituals, or mute idols.

The Catholic Church itself is an idol. As we have seen, she claims that no one can get to heaven without her and without her sacraments. She calls herself Holy Mother Church, claims to be infallible, demands absolute loyalty and obedience from her followers and puts a curse on anyone who contradicts her abominable traditions and doctrines.

The pope is also an idol and several of them have made idolatrous statements about themselves. Pope Leo XIII said in the year 1894 that as pope, he held on the Earth the place of God Almighty. Pope Pius X, who reigned from 1903 to 1914 and is now a canonized saint, said that when the Pope speaks, it is Jesus Christ Himself speaking. Pope Pius XI who ruled from 1922 to 1939 said that because he was the Vicar of Christ, he was also God on Earth.

Nothing Has Changed

Many Catholic apologists have admitted the Roman Church has taken on some un-Christian practices over the centuries, but that a major renewal of the Holy Spirit has been taking place as a result of the Second Vatican Council which addressed these issues.

Whatever “issues” that council addressed, it certainly did not include any of those we have mentioned above. On the contrary, it only reaffirmed that these un-biblical practices were still an integral part of their religion. For example, concerning the practice of indulgences that council had this to say:

Holy Mother Church again recommends the practice of indulgences to the faithful... Indulgences are the taking away of the temporal punishment due to sins when their guilt has already been forgiven. In granting an indulgence the Church uses its power as ministers of Christ’s Redemption.

It teaches and commands that the usage of indulgences... should be kept in the Church; and it condemns with anathema those who say that indulgences are useless or that the Church does not have the power to grant them.

Regarding the use of scapulars and medals, the Second Vatican Council reaffirmed their use with the promise that:

The faithful who use with devotion an object of piety (crucifix, rosary, scapular or medal) after it has been blessed by any priest, can gain a partial indulgence. But if this object of piety is blessed by the Pope, or any bishop, the faithful who wears it with devotion can

also gain a plenary indulgence on the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

The council also reiterated other teachings, such as Jesus being worshipped in the “sacred host” which comprises the blessed sacrament; and Masses for the dead, for which that same council had this to say:

Holy Mother Church is extremely concerned for the faithful departed. She has decided to intercede for them to the fullest extent in every Mass. The Church offers the Paschal Sacrifice (the Mass) for the dead so that the dead may be helped by the prayers, and the living may be consoled by hope.

These are just a few examples of the many pagan practices that were re-affirmed and re-iterated by the Second Vatican Council. Yet they are enough to show that they re-proposed the decrees of the Second Council of Nicaea, the Council of Florence and the Council of Trent. What they have long taught and believed is still taught and believed in Catholicism today.

Another Powerful Sign

Despite the many abominable errors of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the centuries, and even more so today, more and more supposedly Evangelical Christians are subtly being led to believe that Roman Catholicism is a valid expression of the Christian faith and an authentic Christian Church working for the evangelisation of the world.

This is another sign of the great apostasy that is to come in the last days of this age. For anyone with eyes to see, the mission of that

corrupt organization is not to bring men and women to a saving faith in Jesus Christ for the salvation of the soul, but to bring the masses within that church itself for the salvation of her wealth!

The Roman Catholic Church may profess to preach “the gospel,” but it is not the Gospel received and proclaimed by the Apostles. It is *a different gospel*, which, in the words of the Apostle Paul, is really no gospel at all (see *Galatians 1:6*). Paul goes on to say this to those who would not preach the Gospel he had received from the Lord and preached:

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

(Galatians 1:8-10)

Hope for Born-Again Catholics

I have no doubt there are probably hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholics who have found a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and serve Him faithfully, not because of the Roman Catholic Church but in spite of it. Yet as long as you remain in that religious system, it will be very difficult for you to fulfil your destiny that God has for you in Christ.

If you are one of those people, I urge you to follow the example of Paul, who having discovered that what he had long believed was far removed from the truth, turned his back on his former religion and the praise of men, considering it a waste for the sake of knowing Christ (*Philippians 3:7-12*).

Like him, many believers down through the centuries have had to endure reproach as followers of Jesus (*1 Peter 4:14*), but now they

are among those who are rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name (see *Acts 5:41*).

In addition, after his conversion Paul immediately sought out the disciples who were at Damascus (*Acts 9:19*). May I encourage you to do the same. Seek out an assembly, or small group, which is composed of true believers.

There are also hundreds of thousands of other Roman Catholics who may not be Born Again and may not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, but who are sincerely seeking the truth and the freedom to be found in Him.

If you are one of those people, I encourage you to emulate those early Christians, who, having listened to what the Apostle Paul had to say about most of the issues under consideration, “*Examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true*” (*Acts 17:11*).

PROTESTANT DENIALS OF THE FAITH

It is not just Rome that has been practicing the unbiblical doctrines that we have seen have so far. While Catholicism is responsible for adding to the Word of God, many Protestant denominations are responsible for subtracting from it.

It is sad, but true, that when those of other faiths, especially of Islam, debate with Christian leaders, they often support their case against the truth of Christianity by referring to statements made by liberal Christians who deny the divinity of Jesus Christ and the authenticity of the most basic teaching in the Old and New Testament.

From the beginning of the Higher Critical School of biblical critics in Germany and England in the nineteenth century, we witnessed a progressive abandonment of faith in the authenticity of the Word of God by many European seminaries, while the North American seminaries and Bible colleges continued to uphold the accuracy of

Scripture to some degree. However, after the 1960s there occurred a more widespread rejection of belief in the historic accuracy of the Bible.

Higher Critical Theology rejects the inspiration of Scripture and calls into question the Creation Account, the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection and His Second Coming. In reality, it rejects any intervention of God in human affairs. To these critics the presence of a miracle or prophecy in a biblical text is absolute proof that it is not genuine; and this before even examining the compelling prophetic, archaeological and scientific evidence to the contrary.

A House Built on Sand

In his book, *The Story We Find Ourselves in*, leader of the Emerging Church, Brian McLaren, said that the teaching of Jesus Christ taking the sins of the world upon Himself, “Sounds like divine child abuse.” McLaren also said that the future way of life for a Christian will, “Require us to join humbly and charitably with people of other faiths – Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Secularists and others – in the pursuit of peace, environmental stewardship and justice for all people, things that matter greatly to the heart of God.”

It is a recurring theme throughout the whole New Testament, and prefigured in the Law and the Prophets, that the most important thing to the heart of God is that all men repent of their sin, renounce it, and believe on His Son for forgiveness, for He wants no man to perish (2 *Peter* 3:9-10).

Today, Brian McLaren’s theology is taught by a variety of different sources, especially from within many Protestant denominations. I will pick up again on this apostasy in the following chapters.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

In the last hundred and fifty years, hundreds of religious cults have sprung up sowing much doubt and confusion, and have caused many people to deviate from the true path of salvation. These groups are too numerous to be listed here, but it will be helpful to examine the basic and destructive practices of the most popular of them.

The Jehovah's Witnesses form one of today's most active cults. They were originally called *Russellites* after their founder Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), and later called themselves *Millennial Dawn*. After that they took the name *International Bible Students Union*, and after that the *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*, which is still their official name.

Charles Russell had an orthodox theistic upbringing, but while he was still a teenager, he became intrigued by theories that related to the precise date of the end of the world and by pyramidology. He also became convinced that human beings had no soul and therefore faced no judgement after death.

Russell taught that out of the whole human race only an elite group of 144,000, that included himself and his followers, would inherit eternal life. However, this idea had to be revised when the cult's membership went over that number.

Through a series of books and a weekly sermon, which was published in some 2,000 newspapers in North America and Europe, the movement grew very rapidly. But Russell's fame was eventually damaged by several charges and court cases which exposed his blatant dishonesty and corruption.

After his death, Russell's place was taken by his successor, Joseph Franklin Rutherford, who claimed divine revelation for the name Jehovah's Witnesses, an anglicized version of an ancient Hebrew name for God in the Old Testament. Rutherford quickly found ways

of blurring the failed prophecies of Russell that the world would come to an end in 1874 and produced subsequent teaching on the issue.

Are These *Witnesses* Reliable?

The Jehovah's Witnesses organization is probably one of the most authoritarian religious cults in the world today. It claims to be the sole collective channel of God's truth to men on Earth, denies the Orthodox Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the immortality of the human soul.

Even the slightest deviation from its rigid un-biblical teaching results in the expulsion of its members from the group. As many as three million people worldwide are tied to what Russell's contemporaries described as, "The destructive doctrines of one man, who is neither a scholar nor a theologian."

MORMONISM

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, popularly known as *Mormons*, is one of the most pervasive cults in the world today. It was founded by an American by the name of Joseph Smith, who while still a teenager claimed to have had a vision in which God forbade him to join any of the established churches.

Some years later Smith had another vision where an angel called *Moroni* is said to have told him that God's true message for mankind was written down in Egyptian hieroglyphics on gold tablets buried in Palmyra, New York.

Not long after this Smith received permission to unearth the plates, and claimed that when he did, he was given the ability to translate them. This work, published in 1830, became known as the *Book of Mormon*. In that same year, Smith and some friends founded the

“Church of Christ,” which was later to be given its longer title quoted above.

The organization grew rapidly, but persecution forced the group to transfer to Illinois, where Smith was shot dead while being held in custody on a number of serious charges. After this, Mormon leader Brigham Young took most of the church’s members to Utah where it still remains strong today.

Joseph Smith’s claims have long since been proven fraudulent and the Book of Mormon, the integrity of which was said to have been guaranteed by numerous angelic visits during its translating and printing, and said by Mormons to be the most correct book on Earth, has been altered about 3,000 times since its first edition.

Smith also claimed the right to guide his church through further revelations, one of which included permission for polygamous marriages (Smith had seventeen wives and Brigham Young had twenty-three), and the possibility for all males to become gods. The official church renounced the practice in 1890 but a significant breakaway group still holds to it.

Mormons believe in the theory of many gods and teach that all males have the possibility of attaining eternal divinity. Joseph Smith stated that God has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as that of any man, and that He lived on Earth as a human being before progressing to His present state.

In the Mormon church Jesus Christ is seen as a separate god from the Father (Elohim). For them, Jesus was created as a spirit child by the father and mother in heaven, and is the older brother of all men and spirit beings.

Mormons teach that Jesus’ body was created through a sexual union between Elohim and Mary, that He was married, and that His death on the Cross does not provide full atonement for all sin, but it does provide everyone with a resurrection.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST

The Church of Christ, Scientist is a misleading name for a cult that is neither Christian or scientific. It was founded in the United States in 1879 by Mary Baker Eddy, a very religious but psychologically unstable person, who was greatly influenced by Phineas Quimby, a hypnotist and self-titled healer who called his principles *Christian Science*.

Eddy claimed that her books, *Science and Health*, published in 1875, and *Key to the Scriptures*, published some years later, came to her by divine revelation, and that she was, “Only a scribe echoing the harmonies of heaven in divine metaphysics” (*Christian Science Journal*, January 1901). In spite of these claims, evidence reveals that her material had to be corrected by a hired clergyman.

The teaching of Christian Science is clearly pantheistic. It says that God is an impersonal principle of life, truth, love, intelligence and spirit and that he is all that truly exists. It also teaches that matter is an illusion and that there is no reality except mind or spirit.

THE UNIFICATION CHURCH

The Unification Church was founded in Korea in 1954 by Sun Myung Moon and is one of today’s best known cults. Popularly known as the Moonies, this church claims to have over three million members in over 120 countries, although these figures have been called into dispute by observers. Moon claimed that in 1945 he had a great struggle with the forces of evil from which he emerged as, “The absolute victor of heaven and earth... and lord of creation.” As a result, Moon’s declarations from that time on were to be given precedence over all other religious teaching.

Moon told TIME Magazine that, “God is now... establishing a new religion, and this religion is the Unification Church.” Further claims

by Moon of this kind do not fit very well with his prison record tied to bigamy, social disorder and tax evasion.

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

The Church of Scientology was founded in 1949 in California by an American science fiction writer, L. Ron Hubbard. It has no official doctrine about God, but Hubbard's writings on *dianetics* – his own system of therapy aimed at clearing the mind – assumes some kind of impersonal deity. However, scientology's members are free to believe what they want about whatever divine being may exist.

Among their many doctrines is one which teaches that everyone is a *thetan*, an immortal spirit with unlimited powers over its Universe (though not all are aware of this), who willed themselves into existence trillions of years ago, and later brought the material world into existence. Now trapped in their physical bodies, people need to be released to resume their original god-like status. To assist in this adventure cult ministers are available, but for fees which sometimes exceed hundreds of dollars per hour!

In Scientology, there is no sin or need for repentance. Salvation means freedom from reincarnation. A person must work with an *auditor* on his *engrams* (hang-ups) to achieve the state of *clear*, then progress up the *bridge to total freedom*.

As many as twenty million people worldwide embrace these bizarre beliefs of Hubbard, and observe the anniversary of the publication of *dianetics*, despite the fact that various media sources have reported that church leaders had indictments and convictions for wiretapping, conspiracy and other serious crimes.

HARE KRISHNA

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), commonly referred to as Hare Krishna, was founded in the 1950s by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, a man who abandoned his wife and five children to devote himself to the worship of the Hindu god, Krishna.

Krishnaism has a long history indeed. In the fifteenth century Chaithanya Mahaprabhu taught that Krishna was the supreme God who had revealed himself in the form of Vishnu. This was the complete opposite to the Hindu sect of Vishnuism which taught that the supreme God was Vishnu who revealed himself to mankind as Krishna.

The real difference between pure Hinduism and both of these sects is that Hindu's god is impersonal and unknowable, whereas Vishnuism and Krishnaism both encouraged interaction with personalized aspects of deity. In 1965 Prabhupada left his native India for the United States and within a few months he founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness that has grown rapidly ever since.

Core Beliefs of Hare Krishnas

The Hare Krishnas, easily recognized in their orange robes, spend many hours each day in worship, chanting and studying the Bhagavad-Gita and soliciting donations from the public to fund their movement. Doctrinally, this faith is a mixture of ideas, it embraces Hindu traditions of both monism and pantheism, and has elements of both polytheism and monotheism.

God is lord Krishna, a personal creator. The souls of all living things are part of him, but whatever Krishna does freely for his own pleasure – intoxication, sex outside marriage, and so forth – is

prohibited for his followers. To be saved a person must give his total devotion to Krishna. Chanting Krishna's name constantly, worshipping images and obeying the rules of ISKCON throughout many reincarnated lives releases a follower from bad karma.

Those who are unenlightened continue in endless reincarnation based on the sinful acts of a person's previous life. Followers of Krishna live in buildings that house numerous Hindu gods that must be washed every day in a mixture of cow's urine, milk and rose water.

In ISKCON Jesus Christ is not an important figure. He is usually thought of as an enlightened vegetarian teacher who taught meditation. He is not an incarnation of God. However, some Krishna devotees consider Christ to be a great *avatar*. Avatar is a Sanskrit word that means *descent*, and describes a deity coming down to Earth in the Hindu religion.

YOGA

In their search for spiritual enlightenment many people of Western Society have recently looked to the Eastern religions and opened themselves up to the practice of Yoga and Transcendental Meditation. Although they believe Yoga to be nothing more than a series of therapeutic exercises, it is much more for millions of devotees in the East and elsewhere. In reality, Yoga is deeply connected to the Hindu religion. According to a famous Hindu saying, "There is no Hinduism without Yoga and no Yoga without Hinduism."

The word *Yoga* stems from a Sanskrit term that means to *bind together*, to *yoke*, or to *unite*, and the philosophy has the general idea of *union with the absolute*. Therefore, the purpose of all Yoga is union with the ultimate reality through the realization of the divine god-self, often called *self-realization*.

Over thousands of years Hinduism has developed a number of techniques to manipulate human consciousness with the goal of bringing about an altered state of consciousness through which one can discover an “inner spiritual power,” “the god within.”

For example, Yoga has symbolic body movements that are designed to close “all nine doors of the body” so that no sense perception from the outside can penetrate into the mind. When all outer sensation is shut off, the body will create sense perceptions of an inner kind, with an inner light and pleasure.

Yoga also uses body postures, known as *asanas*, which are intended to immobilize the whole body in a completely motionless and hardened fixed position. Meditation words, known as *mantras* are recited to immobilize the consciousness. Mantras are usually the names of the Hindu gods used for worship.

These techniques are called Yoga. Their purpose is to lead one to the realization of one’s true “god-hood,” through an inward meditative journey that finally finds the ultimate source of everything within the human psyche. So Yoga can never be seen as simply a means of gaining physical exercise, reducing stress or a medical therapy. On the contrary, it is completely pantheistic in nature and clearly related to the occult.

The idea that we are all God goes right back to the opening pages of the Bible, where it is described as the lie of the devil and not the source of spiritual enlightenment. The practice of Yoga has become so popular in Western Society today that it is recommended, even imposed, in many medical, psychological, educational and religious circles.

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

The International Meditation Society, which is better known as *Transcendental Meditation* (TM) is another of many cults to come

out of an Indian background, and whose theology is also completely pantheistic. After several failed attempts, Mahesh Prasad Varma, later known as *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*, eventually found widespread recognition for his meditation techniques in the 1960s, when he attracted a number of famous devotees, including the British music group, the Beatles.

Although TM professes to be non-religious, it is in fact a thoroughly Hindu meditation technique that uses secret Sanskrit words as mantras to connect with the spirit world. In 1977, a New Jersey Federal Court barred the teaching of TM in state schools after having read over 1,500 pages submitted by the movement. Although its founder claims TM is the only way to salvation and success in life, its claims have proved vacuous, and they ignore the dangers in cultivating altered states of consciousness.

TM claims that everything in Creation is the manifestation of the un-manifested impersonal being and promotes the confusing pantheistic idea that each individual is, in his own true nature, the impersonal god.

THE NEW AGE RELIGION

The New Age Movement is the fastest growing social phenomena in the world today. Its principles go back many centuries and can be traced in many ancient occult traditions and mystical religions. The present movement became popular during the 1960s, when many people became attracted to the idea of a new age where cultural, religious and political differences would be replaced by universal unity and love.

The New Age does well to highlight the emptiness of rationalism and materialism and to stress compassion, love, unity, and the importance of experience and spirituality. But it goes much further than this. New Age is based on an astrological theory that each star

age lasts 2,000 years. It claims that we are moving from the futile and failing Age of Pisces to the Age of Aquarius, that began around the year 2000, when humanity will eventually achieve “holistic health.”

The Age of Pisces, which means fish, the symbol some have given to Christianity, is said to be the age of the assertive and the rational, whereas the Age of Aquarius, symbolized by a rainbow, is said to be the age of the intuitive and the spiritual.

The New Age also proclaims itself to be a bridge to the future and the only hope of humanity. Its aim is to totally reconstruct civilization into a one world federation, in which geographical, ethnic and cultural boundaries will be destroyed and humanity realizes its own divinity.

It believes that we are making evolutionary progress towards utopia, that this materialistic, assertive and rational Age of Pisces is coming to an end and humanity is progressing into a time of greater spirituality and world harmony. Many in the movement believe we will shortly see, and indeed are working towards, the establishment of a new world order, a new world religion and a new world government, which will be ushered in by a world teacher who will bring economic and religious unity for mankind.

Beliefs and Practices

The New Age movement has no leader, structure or central organization. It embraces elements of all religions and movements and has therefore a limitless variety of beliefs, philosophies, and practices; including paganism, monism, pantheism, reincarnation, mythology, astrology, spiritism, witchcraft, occultism, yoga, transcendental meditation, karma, zen, levitation, fire-walking, isolation tanks, hypnosis, shiatsu, magic, mysticism, massage,

numerology, horoscopes, channelling, fortune telling, tarot cards, clairvoyance, and consulting the dead.

Many New Age followers also use “Music, self-hypnosis, chanting, New Age deep relaxation exercises, psychedelic drugs, guided creative visualization and crystal power techniques for inducing altered states of consciousness in order to contact and interact with higher forces and energies.”

While some of these practices are quite harmless in themselves, many others are of the occult and are strictly forbidden in Scripture. Before entering the Promised Land, Moses warned the Israelites against engaging in such practices:

When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead. For whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord.

(Deuteronomy 18:9-13)

Pantheism – All Is God

Although the New Age Movement is very disparate, we can summarize its beliefs in the following three statements: *All is God*, *All is One*, and *All is Well*. The first of these sayings, all is God, is generally known as *pantheism*, from the Greek *pan* (all) and *theos* (God). To put it simply, the idea of pantheism is that God is in everything and everything is God; and all that has existed, exists now and will exist in the future is God.

This teaching goes all the way back to the ancient Greeks. The philosopher Plotinus (A.D. 205-270) reshuffled the idea of Plato

and others, added a good dose of mysticism and formulated the philosophical system that became known as Neo-Platonism.

His solution to the Greeks' problem of trying to reconcile what they called "the one and many" was to say that ultimate reality is the one from which all existence flows and to which it strives to return. These "flowings" are in the form of a kind of descending or widening stream – first ideas, then soul, and then matter. This system later became known as the *Great Chain of Being*.

In this idea there is no essential distinction between the Creator and His Creation. Although the divine image becomes fainter as one moves *down-stream*, everything that exists has divinity in it, or it could not exist at all. It also means that there is no true beginning and no ending, neither of the cosmos or of individuals.

Mixing Well with Man-Centred Ideas

Although pantheism is one of the earliest philosophical theories known to man, it mixes well with our modern man-centred religious concepts, especially because it excludes a personal God to whom we are morally answerable to in this life and the life to come. Pantheism has also remained one of the world's most pervasive philosophies; Buddhism, Hinduism, Theosophy and the New Age religion are all basically pantheistic in nature.

Another pantheistic religion, also embraced by the New Age Movement, is the so-called Gaia Hypothesis, that was first proposed by the British scientist James Lovelock and has become increasingly popular among environmentalists today. This says that the Earth is one single living organism, with the entire biosphere as a self-regulating system which controls and maintains the conditions of life.

The Gaia Hypothesis has attracted massive support and its ideas has led many to personify *Mother Nature*, or *Mother Earth*, and others

to speak of the Earth as God's body. This form of thinking is a modern mixture of animism and pantheism which goes far beyond the respect we should have for the natural world, and the individual and corporate responsibility we have to take care of it.

To encourage and educate the conservation and development of the Earth's resources has a logic behind it, but treating nature as a divine entity, which calls for our worship, has none. It is no coincidence that in Greek mythology Gaia was the name of the Earth goddess.

Bowing to Oneself

As in New Age teaching there is no God outside His Creation, the One, True, Personal God of the Bible is de-personified; He is an impersonal energy, a creative force that runs through all Creation. The trees, animals, rocks, stars, planets and even human beings are all divine.

As the prominent New Age advocate Shirley Maclaine puts it, "Everyone is God, everyone." She claims the way to find God is to look within – hence the title of one of her books, *Going Within*. Another New Age advocate, Swami Muktananda, says: "Kneel to your own self. Honour and worship your own being. God dwells within you as you."

In *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, former New Age spokesman Randall Baer underlined the pantheistic element in New Age thinking with these words: "In a neo-paganistic revival, New Agers bow to the god they think is contained in every aspect of Creation. Stars are god, trees are god, planet Earth is god, dolphins are god, everything is god."

New Age author Benjamin Creme confirms this statement: "In a sense there is no such thing as God. And in another sense, there is nothing else but God – only God exists. All is God. And because all

is God, there is no God.” This statement makes it easy to see why pantheism can properly be called a form of atheism, because if God is everything in general, then He is nothing in particular.

Awkward Questions for Pantheism

In spite of its attractive appeal to concepts of unity, harmony, and love, the New Age pantheism, a form of monism, not only has serious negative implications; it is also faced with some difficult questions. One is forced to ask where the basis for objective truth is, if there is no distinction between God and the world, between God and self, and between self and the world.

And where do people get their individuality and personal identity from? Or how do we explain the existence of evil and ignorance? We may also ask when there is an argument between two people, who both believe to be God, who gives in? Which of the two can possibly admit to being wrong since they are both supposed to be God?

And because a person believes that he or she is God, does that mean this person believes he must dominate in all relationships with others, or ignore a country and its laws? And how does he account for sickness? If he is God, why can he do nothing about death, disease and human suffering that is rampant on our planet? As one observer pointed out: “As soon as you begin to apply its philosophy to the real world, the New Age Movement is shown to be nothing more than a great metaphysical fraud.”

Monism – *All Is One*

In the New Age Movement all is one. The technical term for this belief is monism and was embraced by the Greek philosopher Tales (585 B.C.), who is usually thought of as the father of Greek

philosophy. Thales rejected many of the mythological explanations of the origin and nature of the Universe, believing that the physical world contained rational and intelligible evidence as to its origin and meaning.

Within this general framework, Thales embraced Monism, the theory that all reality consists of only one basic stuff of essence out of which everything in the cosmos was made. He believed that this primal substance was water, which was said to contain the cause of motion and change, and therefore of life itself. In this sense, it could be said to be divine.

Other philosophers of the same era focused their monism elsewhere. Anaximenes (550 B.C.) taught that the primal substance was air; Heraclitus (500 B.C.) saw fire as the first principle of reality, from which everything flowed in a constant state of flux, guided by a kind of universal reason; Parmenides (480 B.C.) believed that the only reality was *being*, of which nothing can be said other than it is. Empedocles (495-435 B.C.) taught that all matter was composed of four elements, earth, water, air and fire, and that their interaction explained all motion and change.

Monism has taken various other forms over the centuries. Some regarded the primal substance as material and others regarded it as spiritual, both of which are in direct conflict with theism.

Objections for Monism

First, the totality of things includes evil, whereas God is without evil of any kind. Monism also implies that there is no essential difference between good and evil, because eventually everything flows into a single unity, an idea that has very serious implications. To quote the words of Os Guinness: “There are no moral absolutes, moral values are only relatively true or sociologically useful and the question of ethics is only the question of the optimal ground rules.”

But to reject moral absolutes and say that right and wrong are ultimately the same thing is to destroy any basis for law and order and morality in society.

A Spirituality Without Repentance

From such a belief system, it is easy to see why New Age teaching rejects much of Orthodox Christianity, which is considered too rigid. As you can imagine, the word sin is not a popular word for its followers. New Age teaches that man's problem is not sin, but ignorance of our true self and true potential, which is solved by enlightenment, spiritual revelation and good education.

Put very simply, it invites people to make up their own moral menu for life and living, choosing their own truths, their own values and their own reality. The philosophy of Shirley MacLaine, along with many other New Age advocates, could be summed up in these words: "If it feels good, do it." The New Age offers the attraction of a spirituality without the price of repentance. "Guidance comes from within," it is said, and many in the movement feel led to condone or practice divorce, abortion, promiscuity, homosexuality and much worse.

No Grounds for Judgement

As you might also have gathered from the above analysis, the biblical doctrine of Judgement in the New Age is too a very unpopular word for its followers. Instead, reincarnation is taught almost universally throughout the movement, but not always where one will be graded up or down depending on how good or bad he has been. Monism is taken to even further extremes in some parts of the New Age in which there is no distinction made between God and Satan. Since all is one, the devil himself is worshipped.

All Is Well

The third saying that summarizes New Age beliefs is that all is well. We are all making progress onwards and upwards towards complete spiritual enlightenment and utopia. As I mentioned previously, many see the establishment of a new world government and a new world religion and that this utopia will be ushered in by a world teacher who will bring economic and religious unity.

They are absolutely right; the Bible calls such a man the Antichrist, and that is what our spiritually enlightened, politically correct world will get. And if anyone refuses to worship him, he will have them beheaded. So much for tolerance!

In *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s* Marilyn Ferguson makes it quite clear that the New Age Movement sees itself as much more than just another religion or cult:

Broader than reform, deeper than revolution, this benign conspiracy for a new human agenda has triggered the most rapid cultural realignment in history. This great shuddering, irrevocable shift overtaking us is not a new political, religious, philosophical system. It is a new mind, the ascendance of a startling world-view.

New Age teaches that in order to bring this about there needs to be a “*Consciousness Renaissance*,” in which man achieves higher states of “*god-consciousness*” until he sees that “heaven is here on earth every day.” This idea is reinforced by another overlapping branch of New Age; a *Quantum Leap of Consciousness*.

Areas of Influence

The influence of New Age beliefs on society today is absolutely enormous, and has affected and penetrated every area of our culture and human experience without people even being aware of it. It has infiltrated the arts, music, politics, the business world, the medical profession, the education system and even many Christian denominations.

Watch out for the over-emphasis and misapplication of the biblical teachings on love, tolerance and unity, and the absolute silence, and often abhorrence, on the necessity for unbelievers to repent.

The famous pop star Terence Trent Darby claimed that the late Marvin Gaye dictated songs to him from heaven; this is what New Agers call a *channel*. Many others in the music industry openly admit to using these practices.

The New Age Movement penetrated the business world in the 1990s. Shortly after, many New Age bookstores planted large business sections for their followers in all branches. As a result, a growing number of large companies now encourage TM and training courses based on New Age concepts. Some finance houses even employ astrologers and use other New Age techniques to increase productivity.

New Age concepts and techniques have not only affected the business world; they have also crept into the medical profession. One survey found that seven hundred doctors in Great Britain practice TM and recommend it to their patients. Also, alternative medicine, which sometimes involves New Age practices, has become increasingly popular and on demand.

Why We Must Reject New Age Teaching

As we have said, there are some parts of New Age practices and beliefs that are good and helpful for personal development and

healthy living. For example, the concern for world peace, ecology and spiritual enlightenment. Other good examples include the stress on good nutrition, compassion and respect for other people, animals, and nature; all of which find a basis in biblical teaching. Yet as the Apostle Paul warns us, “*Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.*”

New Age beliefs completely fall short, contradict and reject most of the glorious truths portrayed in the Holy Scriptures; truths which their advocates have misapplied, misinterpreted and twisted over the centuries.

To begin with, New Age teaching is far from the truth about God the Father, who is not an impersonal, abstract force, but a Unique, Personal, Plural, Spiritual, Eternally Self-Existent, Transcendent, Immanent, Omniscient, Immutable, Holy, Loving Being. He is also the Creator and Ruler of the whole Universe and the Judge of all mankind.

By **Unique**, I mean there is only one God and that all other objects of worship or ideas given the name god are just figments of one’s imagination.

By **Personal**, I mean that God is a living Being who thinks, feels and acts according to His own will and pleasure. He is also the Creator of everything and He created human beings in His own image so we could live in a personal relationship with Him, which involves the love and worship of God and love for our fellow human beings. As St Augustine said: “You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”

By **Plural**, I mean that there are three distinguishable Persons within a single Godhead – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

By **Transcendent**, I mean that God is over and above all things, outside of time and space and completely distinct from the

Universe. However, the New Age religion takes us back to paganism and Paul warns us in the Book of Romans against those who exchange the truth of God for a lie and worship and serve created things rather than the Creator.

By **Immanent**, I mean that while God remains separate from the Universe in being and essence, He permeates, fills and sustains it in every aspect.

By **Spiritual**, I mean that God has no physical attributes or dimensions; that He does not have a body, or any characteristics that can be defined in terms of size or shape.

By **Eternally Self-Existent**, I mean that God has always had the power of being within Himself and has neither beginning nor end.

By **Immutable**, I mean that God is unchangeable in every aspect of His being.

By **Omniscient**, I mean that God knows everything, including the past, present and future.

By **Holy**, I mean that God is completely without sin or deficiency in His being, essence or actions.

By **Creator**, I mean that God by His own choice and power brought into being all reality other than Himself.

By **Ruler and Judge**, of all mankind I mean that God is in sovereign control of everything that exists or happens and He alone determines the eternal destiny of every member of the human race.

Far from the Truth about Jesus

Second, the New Age gets nowhere near the truth about God the Son, Jesus Christ, who is considered as one of the ascended masters

together with Buddha, Krishna and others in the movement. Unfortunately, in trying to accommodate Christ into New Age thinking, adherents miss out on the glorious truth that He was and is God made flesh for our salvation. And that Jesus alone has the power to free a person from sin and its dire consequences – guilt, fear, death and hell – and to enable him to love and serve others and become more like Himself in character.

On the contrary, although there is a great deal of talk about compassion and love for others in the New Age movement, its doctrines are very self-centred. The starting point for change is with personal development and a love of self.

The worship of oneself manifests itself in books and courses on self-realisation, self-fulfilment, self-help, self-confidence, self-improvement, self-worth and self-love. The highest goal of all is to find one's own happiness, satisfaction and success. To find one's own self is to find God it is believed.

This of course, is an explicit assault on the self-denial at the heart of true Christianity and is another one of the devil's lies. The only way to true fulfilment and happiness is through loving and serving the one true God and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, loving and serving others. The way of fulfilment is not self-worship, but self-denial, exemplified in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And what a fulfilment that brings! Jesus promised it:

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?

(Luke 9:23-26)

“Not by My Own Strength”

Finally, the New Age does not even come close the truth about God the Holy Spirit. Within the Movement we see a search for spiritual power, spiritual experience and transformed lives. Transformation is sought through altered consciousness, Yoga, TM, visualisation, the seven chakras, re-birthing or astral travel and so on.

There may be a power in these activities, but it does not compare to the liberating and fulfilling power of the Holy Spirit in the life of a born-again believer. Actually, these practices can open a person up to evil spiritual powers which seek to enslave and control rather than liberate.

The remedy does not lie in the rejection of Christianity, but in a reappraisal and true understanding of what is at the heart of the Christian faith handed down to us in the Holy Scriptures. If we do this, we will see how everything else in this world falls short of the glorious truths about the Trinitarian God of the Christian Orthodox faith.

06

THE GREAT END-TIME APOSTASY

At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of many will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

(Matthew 24:10-13)

In his Second Letter to the Thessalonians the Apostle Paul echoes these words of Jesus in His famous Olivet Discourse and assures us that the Day of the Lord will not come until the Antichrist is revealed and the world has witnessed a widespread “*falling away*” from biblical truth:

Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

(2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

Paul’s use of the word “*that day*” is a shortened version of “*the day of the Lord,*” which he uses other times in his Epistles (see *1 Corinthians 1:8, 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:2*) and refers to the Second Advent of Jesus and His judgement on the nations. In the Old Testament the Day of the Lord refers to that period of time when God will deal directly with human sin and includes the Great Tribulation Period, as well as the whole millennial reign of Christ, which will culminate with the Great White Throne Judgement.

The Greek word for falling away, or rebellion, is the word *apostasìa*, and is found also in *Acts 21:21*, where it is translated

forsake. Paul is saying that before the Second Coming, and before the Antichrist is revealed, there will be a falling away, a forsaking of truth, on the part of professing believers.

The Fifth Column Firmly Entrenched

The Bible uses the word apostasy to describe opposition to the Christian faith from people who already claim to be believers in Christ, but believe and teach false doctrine and practice ungodly behaviour (see *Titus 1:16*). Spiritual apostasy is not an ignorance of truth but a departure from it. It occurs when a person deliberately forsakes doctrines that he previously believed.

It certainly does not take much effort to see that we are already living in such a time. The fifth column is firmly entrenched in almost all major Christian denominations. Many true believers are completely shocked with the faith compromises that professing Christian leaders and ministers have made in recent years. Some of them are blatantly obvious, while others are more subtle and deceptive. Below is just a small list:

1. They deny that Jesus Christ is God incarnate and the *only* means of salvation.
2. They deny that salvation is a free gift through repentance and faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the Cross.
3. They deny the inspiration, inerrancy, and absolute authority of the Bible.
4. They deny the Virgin Birth, bodily resurrection, and Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Earth to reign as King.

5. They deny Jesus Christ's righteous judgements, eternal rewards and divine punishment on wickedness and evil.
6. They deny the supernatural and historical miracles of Scripture, the story of Creation, the historicity of Adam and Eve, original sin and the Fall of man.
7. They deny the revealed nature of the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
8. They put much emphasis on the Christian's duty to love and respect fellow-believers and people of other faiths, and at the same time downgrade or dismiss the biblical doctrine of repentance from sin through the New Birth and the necessity for holiness and self-denial in the believer's life.

Though the above list is far from complete, it does highlight some of the most common and destructive deceptions that have crept into the Evangelical Christian Churches in recent times. For these apostates, the essential biblical doctrines are unimportant, and are seen as divisive and even destructive.

Naturally, with this wrong belief has come in its by-product, wrong behaviour. In the first chapter of the Book of Romans Paul describes the low moral level to which man has sunk apart from God. Shockingly, more and more individual Christians and even entire denominations are living this way today.

Sinful and degrading behaviour that was not even condoned by the most notorious of sinners a generation ago is now being applauded and accepted as alternative lifestyles for professing Christians and ordained ministers. They have now openly ordaining non-celibate homosexuals to the pastorate.

These apostates have denied their Master who bought them with His precious blood in order to sanctify them and have given in to the pressure of this present-day, doctrine-less, permissive, anything goes, do not offend anyone new world religion.

Many Bible prophecy scholars believe the seventh Church addressed in the Book of Revelation is the Church Jesus will find on Earth prior to His return and that we are witnessing it today. But what does the Spirit of God have to say to the Church in Laodicea?

I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, "I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing." You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

(Revelation 3:15-18)

A Last Great Awakening?

Many believe and teach that we can look forward to a great, visible and spiritual awakening before the coming of the Lord takes place, but as the Scriptures quoted above demonstrate, it will be the complete opposite. In addition to these, there are many other biblical passages that tell us worldwide apostasy and terrible persecution against true believers will be one of the defining characteristics of the last days. Writing to his young friend Timothy the Apostle Paul declared:

You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than

lovers of God, holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power.

(2 Timothy 3:1-6)

For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths.

(2 Timothy 4:3-5)

The phrase “*last days*” used above is different from the phrase “*later*” or “*latter*” used in *1 Timothy 4:1*. What Paul is telling us here is that during the last days there will be especially difficult and terrible times of apostasy in the visible Church and the general trend will be for things to get worse as the Church Age draws to a close (see *2 Timothy 3:13*).

Obviously, the type of sins listed above have always been prevalent in society at large, but the shocking thing is that they will come into the Church as we get close to the end. Christians are pictured as living on the lowest level. The entire context of Second Timothy chapter 3 is describing people who profess to know God and “*hold to a form of godliness, while denying its power.*” In other words, they will act religious, but will reject the power that could purify their hearts and make them godly.

First Timothy chapter 4 tells of specific times of apostasy when *some* would be involved, but Second Timothy tells us more. It describes a decadence that gets worse as we move ahead and will reach its zenith at the end of the age, just before Christ returns to rescue all *true* believers who have accepted Him as Saviour and Lord and who hold to the faith handed down to us through the Apostles.

In his Second Epistle the Apostle Peter gives a very forceful rebuke and attack against these apostates that he predicted would come into the Church to deceive, deny and disobey the truth in the future:

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will even deny the Master who bought them – bringing swift destruction on themselves. Even so many will follow their licentious ways, and because of these teachers the way of truth will be maligned.

(2 Peter 2:1-3)

Also the Apostle Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, wrote his entire Epistle as a warning that the apostates which Peter had warned about some years previously had already wormed their way in (see also *1 John 2:18-23*).

Weeds Among the Wheat

As well as the true Church in our world today, there is also an apostate church. This false bride, claiming to be of Christ, denies Jesus as the only means by which we can be saved and has made compromises with other religious faiths in an interfaith union.

According to biblical prophecy, this interfaith union will become the world's first super church, which the Apostle John refers to in the Book of Revelation as the *Whore of Babylon*; a false religious system that will promote and cooperate with the coming Antichrist during the first three and a half years of the Great Tribulation; and is indeed setting the stage for his coming right now.

This description is a reference to her spiritual filth and unfaithfulness to God. It also alludes to her religious doctrines that are consistent with the ancient Babylonian religious practices.

Not only is this false church aggressively attacking biblical truths, historical facts and moral absolutes this very hour, her members are openly ridiculing and slandering true believers who practice and teach them.

These false prophets preach self-love and love of pleasure from the pulpits as the way to true happiness. Their motto could be summed up in the words, “Make everyone feel good about themselves and do not say anything that will make them feel bad.”

Do not be deceived, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not only a message of love, forgiveness and acceptance by the true God; it is also a message of condemnation for those who refuse to change their ungodly lifestyles and turn away from sin. Without this message of repentance the Gospel becomes nothing more than New Age modern counselling.

The True Revival

Dear friends, because most of the official denominations of Christianity have become apostate and openly deny, downgrade and contradict the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith today, it is literally impossible to find a Church where the Word of God is faithfully preached and defended.

And in the days ahead open evangelism will probably become more and more restricted in nations around the world; as “political correctness” is making it more difficult to say anything that contradicts the false doctrines and humanistic opinions of those in power.

In considering this reality we must not be discouraged. While the Word of God predicts that there will be a growing departure from the Lord as the Church Age progresses, those same Scriptures predict that its increase can be understood as a general indication that the appearance of our Saviour is near. Those same Scriptures

also promise the true Church will be supernaturally protected and empowered by God to make Him known throughout the world because:

This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

(Matthew 24:14)

Therefore, let us not consider the increase of apostasy as a sign to just give up and wait for Christ to return while a whole generation of people are being deceived. Our Lord left us very specific instructions on this matter. We are to be the salt and light of the Earth and to do business until He comes (see *Luke 19:11-28*). This means we are to use our talents and every means possible to spread the Gospel of salvation.

07

THE REVIVAL OF IMPERIAL ROME

More than three thousand years ago God gave His servant Daniel a revelation of the future that we recognize as one of the most incredible prophetic revelations ever given to man. The humble prophet was given a revelation that revealed, not the next year, or even the next hundred years, but what now has been more than 2,500 years. Of course, Daniel did not receive every detail, but was shown the major flow of world history from his own day until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Due to his ability to interpret prophetic dreams and visions Daniel rose from the position of an exiled slave to the respected prime minister of Babylon. During his reign God sent Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon a dream of an image that perfectly describes the empires that would rule the Earth from the time of the Babylonian king until the end of the world. Here is Daniel's perfect description and interpretation of that dream:

You O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendour was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth;

this was the dream; now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

You O king are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, he has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all – you are the head of gold.

But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potters' clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold – the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.

(Daniel 2:31-46)

History has proven Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream to be accurate to the smallest detail. The empire which supplanted

Nebuchadnezzar's "*head of gold*" was the Medo-Persian Empire, the "*chest and arms of silver*," which in turn was displaced by Alexander the Great of Greece, the "*belly and thighs of bronze*." Alexander's empire then fell to the Roman Empire, the "*legs of iron*," a powerful symbol that accurately characterizes the very nature of this empire.

For centuries historians have used the term *iron* when describing Rome and its imperial rule: "Rome's iron grip," "Rome's iron hand," "Rome's iron rule" and so on. The Roman Empire came into existence almost sixty years before Christ was born and it continued in power until 1453 A.D., when the Byzantine Eastern Roman Empire was finally conquered by the Islamic forces.

The two iron legs of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream are very significant, as they accurately predict Rome's division into Eastern and Western Rome. By A.D. 395 the Roman Empire had split into two political areas of rule: the Latin speaking West with its capital in Rome, and the Greek speaking East with its capital in Constantinople, modern Istanbul (this division was also religious and has continued to manifest itself over the centuries in the separation between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy).

However, this division of the empire into two political units was not to be the last division that kingdom would go through, as Daniel pointed out to the Babylonian king when he described the statue's feet and toes. According to the above prophecy, there is to be yet another division. But this will not be a division of two, as indicated by the statue's legs, but a division of ten, as indicated by the feet and ten toes. Here Daniel predicts a time when the Roman Empire will consist of ten kingdoms or leaders.

Many scholars have debated as to which kingdoms or nations these ten toes actually represent. But most careful students of Bible prophecy agree that they refer to a final form of power from the old Roman Empire which will exist in the last days, and which will be

the power base for the coming Antichrist's world government. One Bible scholar suggests that the final form of the old Roman Empire will be a federation composed of autocracies and democracies, represented by the iron and clay that does not mix, which will be crushed by the "*Stone cut out of the mountain without hands*" – the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Another interpretation of the unstable mix of iron and clay in the newly constituted empire is that they represent the diverse racial, religious and political backgrounds of the final form of the Roman Empire, which is what we see today in the European Union.

Since the movement from one section of the statue to the next represents the passage of time, we can conclude that the feet and toe stage of the statue must follow the leg stage. However, there is nothing in past history which corresponds to a Roman coalition of ten nations or leaders. So it is correct to say that this fifth and final kingdom in Daniel chapter two is yet to come and perform its role in human history.

This same prophecy of Daniel chapter two, together with those in Daniel chapter seven and the Book of Revelation, strongly support this interpretation. Remember the prophet tells us that this final and revived form of the ancient Roman Empire will be on Earth when God sets up His Earthly Kingdom:

And in the days of these kings [the rulers of the ten divisions of the Roman kingdom] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone [Jesus Christ] was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this.

(Daniel 2:44-46)

According to this prophecy the Roman Empire will experience sudden destruction which did not happen at Christ's First Coming. The Roman Empire of Christ's day did not end suddenly, but gradually deteriorated and declined over many centuries from within; although it went into a mystery form where it remains to this day. Therefore, we must conclude that the final form of the Roman Empire will emerge in the end times and be in place before the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, when He comes to establish His Millennial Kingdom and rule and reign over the Earth.

Daniel's Dream of Four Beasts

Years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the giant metallic statue, and shortly before Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians, Daniel had a vision of his own that further expands on Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Below is how he describes it:

I Daniel saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it.

Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, Arise, devour many bodies!

After this as I watched another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it.

After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces and

stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that had preceded it, and it had ten horns.

(Daniel 7:2-8)

God foretells to His prophets all that is to happen and why. Not only did He grant to King Nebuchadnezzar a vision of future events, years later He repeated the same sequence of events with Daniel, this time using animals rather than metals. In Daniel's vision above the four great beasts represent the same Gentile kingdoms as those depicted in chapter two, only this time the character of those kingdoms is revealed. These animals clearly portray the profiles and personalities of the coming world empires and their kings.

The first beast in Daniel's dream was "*like a lion and had eagles' wings,*" a precise representation of the Babylonian national symbol. Daniel had already witnessed part of this vision. Nebuchadnezzar, who had risen to the heights of success, was puffed up with pride, but God struck him to the ground in a supernatural display of power (*Daniel 4:28-34*) until he learned to worship the true God. However, Babylon's days were numbered; King Cyrus of Persia moved to capture the Empire in 538 B.C. and defeated her on the Tigris River south of Bagdad.

The second beast, "*that looked like a bear ... raised up on one side,*" represents the Medo-Persian Empire. It was lob-sided because the Medes were more prominent than the Persians. The "*three tusks in its mouth*" represent the three prominent conquests of the empire: Lydia 546 B.C., Babylon 539 B.C., and Egypt 525 B.C.

The third beast, "*like a leopard... that had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads,*" represents Greece, led by Alexander the Great. The speed of which Alexander's military forces attacked their enemies is portrayed by the winged-leopard, an extremely

swift animal. However, in 323 B.C. Alexander died a sudden death at the early age of thirty-two. When on his death-bed he was asked to whom he willed his kingdom, to everyone's surprise he replied, "Give it to the strong." So, Alexander's four senior generals of his army, Lysimachus, Cassander, Ptolemy, and Seleucus took over his kingdom and divided it into four kingdoms, represented by the "four heads" in Daniel's vision.

The fourth beast, "*terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong,*" represents the Roman Empire and the final form of Gentile power on Earth. The most important fact that distinguishes this empire from those before it is not its strength, ferocity or power, but that it has "*ten horns.*"

These ten horns correspond to the "*ten toes*" of Nebuchadnezzar's statue (and the "*ten horns*" of *Revelation 13:1, 17:3*), which will take the form of the coalition of ten world leaders, or kingdoms, mentioned earlier, and will encompass the same territory as the ancient Roman Empire.

As previously demonstrated, in presenting these two phases of the Roman Empire Daniel skips over hundreds of centuries, all the way from ancient Rome to end-time prophecy. This is further confirmed because Daniel's vision in chapter seven includes a lot of additional information about the future of the fourth kingdom that was not given to the Babylonian king; in particular, information about the appearance of another leader, "*the little horn,*" the Antichrist who, according to Old and New Testament teaching, is to appear in the last days prior to the Second Advent. Here is how Daniel describes it:

I was considering the horns when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them, to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly.

As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousand served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.

The court sat in judgement and the books were opened. I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me and the visions of my head terrified me. I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation of the matter: "As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of the earth. But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever."

Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped what was left with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and concerning the other horn, which came up and to make room for which three of them fell out – the horn that had eyes

and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and that seemed greater than the others.

As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them, until the Ancient One came; then judgement was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom.

This is what he said: “As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them. This one shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his power for a time, two times and half a time.

Then the court shall sit in judgement, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and totally destroyed. The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High and their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.”

(Daniel 7:8-28)

This prophecy says the Antichrist will emerge from this ten-nation confederation. That he will take advantage of a future crisis within the coalition and by means of force seize control of three of the ten nations. The remaining seven nations will then submit to the Antichrist and accept his dictatorial rule over their population (*Daniel 7:8, 24b; Revelation 17:13,17*).

However, these same Scriptures say that after this (and a series of other events during the reign of Antichrist), One like the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven and to Him is given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages

should serve Him, something which has not yet taken place in history.

Here again Daniel tells us this revived form of the ancient Roman Empire will be in place at the Second Advent. Jesus Christ will descend from heaven for the second time in world history to destroy the beast and establish a new global government that shall not pass away or be destroyed by anyone. This is a recurrent theme throughout much of the Bible.

The Lord Jesus identified Himself with these prophecies of Daniel chapter seven at His trial before the High Priest when He was being accused of blasphemy. Speaking of His coronation and Second Coming to rule the world He said:

From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

(Matthew 26:64-65)

Cause to Wonder

The events of history here are incredible in their importance, as they reveal how amazingly Daniel's predictions were literally fulfilled. At the time of this vision Babylon was the undisputed military power on Earth. The Medes and Persians had not yet even formed an alliance and were no match for the mighty Babylonians. Yet long before, Daniel not only predicted the future Medo-Persian alliance, he also foretold that the Medes, who were at first the strongest, would be taken over by the Persians later.

Daniel also correctly predicted that after Persia had become a wealthy and mighty world empire they would be suddenly destroyed by the Greeks, who at the time of Daniel's vision showed no sign of ever launching a military campaign against a world power. Even though the Greeks were a brave people and extremely

advanced in knowledge, technology, and culture, they were too busy fighting each other to even consider launching a military campaign, and they even spoke different dialects. This will help you understand how seemingly impossible Daniel's prediction was.

Close to the end of the seventy-year dominance of the Babylonian Empire in 538 B.C., Daniel received another vision which further describes the sudden conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great and the division of his empire into four parts (see *Daniel* 8:3-9, 8:20-22, 11:3-5).

The following verses of chapter 11 give amazing details of the wars of Ptolemy, the Grecian general who ruled Egypt after Alexander's death, and his successors against the Seleucids of Syria. This prophecy then climaxes with details about the Seleucid ruler Antiochus Epiphanes (11:21-36), a type of Antichrist.

The Last Empire

Remarkably, Daniel also predicted that Rome, the fourth empire, would become the greatest the world had ever seen and was destined to conquer all the ancient nations that stood in its way. This too is quite remarkable, because when Daniel wrote down his divinely inspired prophecy, Rome, like Greece, was a small city state of little importance in Italy. Unless divinely inspired, it would have been impossible to predict that such a small state would rise to dominate the entire world.

Most other empires accepted the culture and tradition of their subjects, but as Daniel predicted, the Roman Empire was distinct from all other empires in that its policy required its governors to crush the laws, religions and languages of every nation it conquered. In fact, after centuries of human history, Europe, the Middle East and North America have retained forms of

government, language, laws and culture that were derived from ancient Rome.

This astonishing prophecy of Daniel also foretold how no fifth world empire would ever succeed in replacing Rome. A knowledge of world history proves that all the plans and ambitions of the world's kings, generals, emperors and dictators over the last two-thousand years have utterly failed in their aim.

08

A LIKELY CANDIDATE

Many Bible prophecy scholars see the European Union as the most obvious candidate for a revived Roman Empire, that will take the form of a coalition or confederation of ten world leaders in the last days. Others see the United Nations Organisation. If the former view is correct, we have witnessed that coalition taking place right before our very eyes.

Two very important events of the twentieth century provided the necessary impetus for this reunification. I am referring to World War I and World War II. For hundreds of centuries the separate nations of Europe fought one another again and again, but following the Second World War a dramatic change occurred.

Instead of building up arms for the next great conflict the political leaders of Europe became united in the decision that Europe not only needed a mechanism to coordinate its economies, but a political structure to make sure no further war between the major powers would ever devastate the continent again.

The series of steps toward unification began as early as 1946 when Winston Churchill forcefully asserted that “the tragedy of Europe” could only be solved if the issues of ancient nationalism and sovereignty could give way to a sense of European national grouping. Churchill also said that the path to European peace and prosperity on the world stage was clear, “We must build a United States of Europe.”

Churchill’s call initiated the first step that would lay the foundation for a new organisation to unite European countries economically and politically in order to secure lasting peace. In 1948 three of Europe’s smallest nations – Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands – came together at the Benelux Conference, held in

Brussels, Belgium, as they saw unity as their only hope of survival in a post-war world.

Another step was taken in 1951 when these three nations signed the Treaty of Paris, together with the additional nations of Germany, France and Italy to form a common market for coal and steel (known as the Schumann Plan) in a peaceful and equal environment.

The process of creating a super state continued in 1957 when the Treaty of Rome was signed on Capitoline Hill – one of the famous Seven Hills of Rome. On this occasion, Italy France and Germany joined the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium as founder members to create the European Economic Community – the Common Market. The EEC allowed free movement of goods, and services that promoted greater economic integration, and set the stage for the European Union to become the economic, political and military union that it is today.

Since the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the EU has added treaty upon treaty, which has resulted in a gradual takeover of the deciding powers of national governments. It has done this secretly without most people even being aware of what is happening, and to the point that it now decides for more of our laws and how we are to be governed than any local politician dares to admit.

The year 1973 saw another giant step toward unification. The countries of Ireland, Denmark and the United Kingdom – who initially stood aside, suspicious of giving control over its own economic affairs – joined the EEC together with Greece, making it a ten-nation confederation.

Then in the year 1986 Spain and Portugal joined the union and the agenda expanded beyond economics when the EEC officially adopted the goal of uniting Europe politically – implementing the Single European Act in 1987.

The European Community reformed itself in 1992 by means of the Maastricht Treaty in which it gave itself a new name – the European Union (EU) – along with other great powers. The EU moved rapidly toward the elimination of travel restrictions and customs barriers between member states. All economic borders between the nations of the European Union were removed and a common passport was issued to travellers. Study in Universities within the nations was also permitted without any restrictions.

Introduction of Euro Currency

The European Union's introduction of the Euro currency in 1999 for use by business and government was another significant step toward creating a super state economy, an effective common market and the elimination of all trade barriers between member states. The creation of the Euro currency as the single currency of Europe also paved the way for fully integrated tax systems as well as a common fiscal and monetary policy.

A process of further enlargement in the union began with the admission of Sweden, Finland and Austria in 1995, and many former Soviet Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 2005. By the year 2007, when two nations of formerly communist Eastern Europe, Bulgaria and Romania, joined the European Union, the organization had twenty-seven member states, making it a large family. These two poverty-stricken nations saw the EU as a promise of future economic prosperity and the only real hope to defend their weak democratic government from any resurgent communist power.

In 2009 the EU moved even closer to accomplishing the goal dreamed by its founders – a Euro state with its own president, foreign ministers, laws currency and flag – when they ratified the Lisbon Treaty. Under this treaty power was given to the EU to make

laws regarding public services, law enforcement, immigration, energy, public health, tourism, the EU budget, climate change, culture, moral issues and sport. As the Lisbon Treaty is a “self-amending” treaty, it is possible to add new clauses without the need for further EU treaties or referendums (Art. 48 TEU).

EU Governmental Entities

Currently, the EU Government is organized into three bodies; a Parliament, the Council of European Union, and the European Commission. Europe held its first election for the European Parliament in June 1979, creating the first directly elected multinational super state assembly in history, that was set to deal with European Community problems.

Since that time the citizens of the European Union have been able to vote to elect members to the Parliament that meets in Strasbourg, France. In November 2009, the EU leaders came together behind closed doors to choose the EU’s first President and its Foreign Minister – Herman Van Rompuy and Baroness Ashton.

Other EU governmental entities include the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors, the European Central Bank and the European Investment Bank. The EU has also worked towards creating a united military and criminal justice system. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1948 by the allies of World War II to ensure the common defence of the nations of Western Europe against the growing threat of Russia and the Warsaw Pact nations of Eastern Europe.

As we can see, the nations of Europe have come together, gradually and steadily, and is more integrated today than at any time since the days of imperial Rome. It is considered to be the second most powerful political union in the world.

There is little doubt that the EU sees itself as the successor to the ancient Roman Empire. Some years ago it issued a poster to show off the design for their upcoming Parliament Building in Strasbourg. The poster showed the Tower of Babel carrying the following slogan: “Many tongues, one voice.”

At the back of the building a crane can be seen rebuilding the tower and above the tower are the stars of the EU flag. When asked why the EU Parliament modelled its building on the Tower of Babel, an EU official replied: “What they failed to complete 3000 years ago, we in Europe will finish now.” I find this a strange statement from a Union that claims to be secular. This is the subject of our next chapter.

BACK TO BABEL

Today there are more international organizations than at any other time in history and the effects of globalism can be felt all around us. But is this push toward globalism all just the natural result of our evolving world? Or is there a hidden power – a shadow world government – behind all these modern developments pushing a definite agenda? Many experts and influential people of the secular world believe there is.

They point to powerful globalist organizations, such as the *Trilateral Commission* (TC), the *Council on Foreign Relations* (CFR), the *Bilderberg Group*, the *United Nations Organization* (UN), the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF) and the *World Trade Organization* (WTO), as those operating behind the international scene to take us beyond the days of national sovereignty, and politically independent nation states, to what is frequently referred to as the *New World Order*.

I believe they are absolutely right and that the globalism we see today is setting the stage for the sociological conditions the Scriptures predict will exist in the last days. As we already demonstrated, thousands of years ago the biblical Prophet Daniel specifically foretold that the end of the age will be characterized by a global government, a global economy and a world-wide religion that eventually will be ruled by one man, the Antichrist (*Daniel 7:7-9*). This end-time world order is described even more clearly by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation:

The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is,

those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was given authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the lamb that was slaughtered.

(Revelation 13:5-9)

Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or on the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.

(Revelation 13:16-18)

In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. They worshipped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

(Revelation 13:3-5)

Did you notice the global language, *every, all and no one*, that is used in the above verses? For the first time in history one man will seize global power and will rule over all *tribes, peoples, languages and nations* by their own consent and with absolute authority (*Daniel 11:36*).

Despite the rise and fall of countless empires throughout history, not one has ever succeeded in creating a true world government. While I am not an expert on conspiracy theories or international economics and politics, the documented evidence from renowned investigative journalists, and other experts in the field, reveals that for some time now the world's elite have been pulling the strings behind the scenes to create one.

They point us to the fact that there are powerful, power-hungry men and women secretly orchestrating world events to maintain and gain more wealth and power. Obviously, this does not mean that these men and women are not themselves under the influence and control of another unseen and powerful force. They are, and that force is Satan himself.

The sin that led to his fall was his desire to usurp God and receive the worship that belongs to Him alone (*Isaiah 14:12-14; 1 Timothy 3:6*). In the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis we learn that after the world-wide Flood the entire human race was gathered into one place, under the world's first dictator, Nimrod, according to extra-biblical historical sources (see *Genesis 10:10*).

These ungodly men and women of the first global community joined together in defiance of God's Command to scatter over the face of the Earth, (*Genesis 9:1*) by creating the Tower of Babel in the land of Shinar at Babel in ancient Mesopotamia. God's intent for the nations was for people to spread across the Earth and not to congregate in one place; as the Apostle Paul explains:

From one ancestor he made all the nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us.

(Acts 17:26-28)

If mankind settled in smaller communities and independent nation states throughout the world, they would not be tempted toward the self-importance and sense of corporate reliance that massive centralization would produce. What I mean is that centralization would tempt people to rely on their own collective wisdom and strength instead of trusting in the Lord.

Nimrod's new world order was an act of rebellion because it was motivated by pride and arrogance. He and the people decided to build a city and a tower to signify and promote their unity and self-sufficiency, casting God aside and deposing Him as the rightful King of their lives. Therefore, the first federation, or *united nations*, was a society to bring the human race together to exclude God and exalt man.

The devil is not mentioned in this Genesis account, but no doubt he was behind the rebellion. In such a situation he could easily control world affairs, since everyone was under one government and spoke the same language. Of course, they did not get very far; God Almighty came down and confused their language, preventing them from communicating or understanding each other, and scattered them across the face of the Earth (*Genesis 11:5-8*).

Yet ever since that first attempt of world government it has been Satan's goal to get the world back together again so he can rule once more. The Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, Mohammed, Charlemagne, Frederick Barbarossa, Napoleon, the British Empire, Adolph Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and many more, all tried to bring the world back to Babel.

After the First World War, the "war to end all wars," President Woodrow Wilson drafted the League of Nations to uphold peace through a one world government which failed to obtain its objective.

However, for the first time since the Tower of Babel in ancient Mesopotamia, globalization is within Satan's reach once again. As we will see in the following chapters, all the necessary elements for world government have already been put into place by the powerful globalist organizations mentioned above.

Below we will examine in detail a few of these international organizations, how they operate and how they plan to bring about their dictatorial rule.

THE SECRET BILDERBERG GROUP

One of the most secretive of the private international councils working behind the scenes to achieve world government is the globalist organization known as the Bilderberg Group. This organization is centred in Europe and has attracted elite members from every key nation on Earth since its birth in 1954.

In the early 1950s the most influential men in the world, together with the political and financial leadership of war-torn Europe, gathered together at the luxurious Hotel Bilderberg in the small Dutch town of Oosterbeek to create the necessary plans and relationships to unify the European nations for the first time since the days of ancient Rome, and to debate the future of the entire world. When the three-day meeting was over, these leaders decided to meet once every year to exchange their ideas and to analyse international affairs.

Although they are publicly known as the *Bilderbergers*, the members of this Group call themselves the *Alliance*. During the last few decades they have held top-secret meetings yearly in luxurious hotels around the world to decide what, in their opinion, is best for the future of humanity.

The Bilderberger Group was initially financed by the U.S. General Walter Bedell Smith. Its key members included head of British Intelligence, Colin Gubbins, the director of the CIA, Stansfield Turner, Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, Lord Rothschild and Lawrence Rockefeller.

Since 1954 the Bilderbergers and their meetings have represented and been attended by the elite and absolute wealth of all Western nations – financiers, industrialists, bankers, business leaders of multinational corporations, politicians, members of royalty, military leaders, presidents of the United Nations' International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Federal Reserve, the

chairmen of some of the most powerful corporations in the world, vice presidents of the United States, directors of the FBI and the CIA, secretaries general of NATO, American senators and members of Congress, many prime ministers of Europe, leaders of the European Union and the top editors, journalists and CEO's of the world's leading newspapers!

It is reported that every president of the United States since Ike Eisenhower has belonged to the Bilderberg Group, although some have not attended the meetings personally, but sent their representatives. Principle members of the British Government, such as Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and David Miliband, to name a few, are also members of the Group.

It is a known fact that no person or corporation can buy their way into a Bilderberg meeting, even though many have tried. The Group's Steering Committee decide who to invite and, put simply, they look for a "One World Enthusiast" – people who believe in what they describe as "the democratic control of society in all its activities; a goal similar to communism.

According to one source, the Bilderberg annual invitations are only sent out to very important and respected people of public life, who, through their special knowledge, personal contacts and influence in national and international circles, can promote the Group's resources and goals.

However, it is important to distinguish between active members who assist annually and others who are only invited occasionally. About eighty members are regular, having attended the meetings for many years, but others who are invited to report on subjects related to their sphere of influence or professional and academic knowledge, are uninformed about the formal structures behind the Group and remain in absolute ignorance of the Bilderbergers greater goals and universal objectives.

A select few are invited because the Bilderbergers think they may be useful instruments in their globalist plan and are later helped to reach very powerful elected positions. On the other hand, one time guests who fail to impress the Group are cast aside.

An Unusual Media Silence

Since the initial meeting of the secret Group in Holland the press has been forbidden to attend any Bilderberg meeting, and there have never been any statements released on the decisions made by the members or invitees, or any agenda for a Bilderberg meeting been made public knowledge.

There are also strict rules of censorship against members ever discussing plans and policies outside their secret gatherings. This media silence exists despite the incredible fact that the Group's meetings are annually attended by a large number of the world's most powerful and wealthiest people we mentioned above.

The leaders of the Bilderberg Group argue that this discretion is necessary to allow its members and guests to speak freely in the debates without being on the record or reported publicly. While this may be true, and any modern democratic system protects the right to privacy, many rightly argue that the general public should still have the right to know what their leaders are talking about and deciding when they meet such influential people as these.

“It is certainly curious,” says one journalist, “That no mainstream media outlet considers a gathering of such figures, whose wealth far exceeds the combined wealth of all the United States citizens, to be newsworthy, when a trip by any one of them on their own makes headline news on television. The Davos World Economic Forums and G8 meetings are discussed in every newspaper, with thousands of journalists in attendance, while no one covers Bilderberg Group meetings.”

This scares media coverage on the Bilderberg gatherings is mainly due to the fact that a large number of its members are those who control what you read and watch on the television and this may be the reason why the name is new to you.

The Bilderberg's Vision

Even if we were to give them the benefit of the doubt, in saying the efforts of the original members of this secret organization may have been well meaning in their plan to make our world a better place, it seems that the Bilderberg Group, along with their parallel kin, have gone beyond its initial beginnings to become a shadow world government that decides in total secrecy, at annual and extravagant meetings, how their evil globalist plans are to be carried out.

These people threaten to take away our God-given human rights to decide and direct our own future and destiny. "Today," says one commentator, "this is becoming much easier due to the development of rapid communications, merged with profound instant impact of the internet, incredible means of surveillance, satellites, weapons of mass destruction that can be used as threats to control others, intertwined world economic markets and new methods of behaviour engineering to manipulate individual conduct."

Obviously, to avoid resistance to their globalist plans, the members of this secret organization hide from the general public what they are planning for the future of mankind; namely, a one world government with a single global marketplace, policed by a one world army, and financially regulated by a one world bank using one global currency, and a one world New Age religion to unite all people and bring about "global peace."

THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Another secret organization similar to the Bilderberg Group is called the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR); a branch of the Round Table.

The Council on Foreign Relations was established after the Second World War by the elite groups that control the financial and political life in the U.S. to make sure that the future foreign policy of America followed their interests.

One of its founders, Edward Mandell House, chief advisor to President Woodrow Wilson, also drew up the plan for the League of Nations that was Wilson's prized proposal at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

At the end of President Wilson's term in 1921, House, and others who shared his idea to form a one world government based on a centralized global financing system, established the Council on Foreign Relations. Within a short period of time the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations agreed and helped to finance the growth and objectives of the CFR.

With more than two thousand members, they commissioned studies, networked their people into the State Department and built relationships with similar one world government groups in Britain and Europe. It is said that President Franklin Roosevelt was responsible for filling the State Department with CFR members in 1940, and that the CFR staff have controlled it ever since then.

Similar to the Bilderberg Group, the CFR has received very rare media coverage in its long existence. This media hush might seem strange until you view a CFR membership list. The number of well-known American media personnel that have been members of the Council on Foreign Relations for decades is incredible. It includes top executives from the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, the Wall Street Journal, NBS, CBS, ABC, Fox,

Time, Fortune, Business Week and many others. What is even more surprising is that many of the mega-church pastors, such as Rick Warren, are also members of this group.

To quote one commentator, “There is an interlocking membership involving key players of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Bilderberg Group, the Trilateral Commission, International Banking, high military positions, manufacturing corporations, powerful State Department diplomats and White House cabinet officials.”

In fact, it is reported that very few people make it into the inner circles of true power in Washington unless they have first served as members of the CFR or the Trilateral Commission.

The Council on Foreign Relations is totally committed and determined to eliminate all existing national boundaries and to merge all nation states into a powerful world government. As we shall see in the following chapters, members of the CFR, and their globalist allies in other key nations have formed the economic, foreign, and defence policies of the United States, Britain, France, Canada and Germany for the last sixty years.

THE TRILATERAL COMMISSION

To confuse the matter a little further, there is another co-existing, less powerful organization with the same one-world government objectives, except its members represent global trade alliances; North America, Western Europe and Pacific Asia.

This sister organization is called the *Trilateral Commission* (TC) and was founded and financed by the former leader of the Chase Manhattan Bank, David Rockefeller, and the National Security Advisor to former President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in 1973. Many of the same individuals who belong to the CFR and the Bilderbergers also joined the Trilateral Commission.

CFR members comprise Americans only, the Bilderberg Group is limited to members from the United States, Canada, and Western Europe, while the Trilateral Commission brings together the global power brokers from the three vital geographic spheres that now control the world. This little understood organization also plays an important part in the New World Order's scheme to use wealth concentrated in the hands of a few people to exert world control.

The powerful individuals who belong to the TC all share the same anti-nationalist philosophy and try to prevent the national forces within their respective countries from exercising influence on policy.

The Trilateral Commission has brought together the elite power brokers from the areas of military, politics, and business from the three geographical spheres that now control the globe – the United States, Japan and the European Union. These are the dominant superpowers in the key globalist groups: the United Nations, NATO and the World Trade Organization.

The declared political purpose of the Trilateral Commission is to achieve, “Close trilateral cooperation in keeping the peace, in managing the world economy, in fostering economic redevelopment and alleviating world poverty which will improve the chances of a smooth and peaceful evolution of the global system” (*The Trilateral Commission: Questions and Answers*, 1980).

The plan required that each of the three geopolitical superpowers create a political, military and economic alliance to dominate neighbouring countries in their respective hemisphere. Once they had succeeded in consolidating geopolitical and military control in their own sphere, their final phase would be to merge the three great spheres of power into a true one-world government.

The purpose of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, says one commentator, is to, “Quietly infiltrate the

decision-making bodies of government, education, business, the military and the media to consciously influence the key leaders to adopt the globalist philosophy of the New World Order. The whole process depends on networking at the most sophisticated level.”

Out to Gain More Control

The Trilateral Commission became publicly known during President Carter’s administration. It was realized that twenty of Carter’s highest officials and cabinet members belonged to the secret group. An article in the *Atlantic Monthly* commented: “Although the Commission’s primary concern is economic, the Trilateralists pinpointed a vital political objective. To gain control of the American presidency.”

The carefully planned conspiracy of these three organizations has been mentioned and criticized more than once by some of the world’s leading individuals. As far back as the year 1922 the Mayor of New York, John F. Hylan, is reported to have said the following in a public speech:

The real menace of our republic is the invisible government, which, like a giant octopus sprawls its slimy length over our city, state and nation. At the head is a smaller group of banking houses generally referred to as international bankers. This little coterie of powerful international bankers virtually run our government for their own selfish ends.

George Wallace, an American presidential candidate on four occasions in the 1960s and 70s made this famous statement: “There is not a dime’s worth of difference between the Democrat and

Republican parties.” Speaking along the same lines reporter Gary Allen says:

While ... Democrats and Republicans generally have greatly differing views on the economy, political policies and federal activities, as you climb the sides of the political pyramid, the two parties become more and more alike.

Bible scholar Grant Geffrey pointed out that the presidential elections in the United States have been reduced to popularity polls because citizens are given only two real choices: Team A or Team B. The teams wear different coloured shirts, but the hidden management, ownership and players are virtually the same.

Former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, told a reporter from the *Spotlight* newspaper that she considered being denounced by the Bilderbergers a “tribute” because neither Britain nor any other country should surrender its sovereignty.

The Bilderbergers planned the decision, under Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, to get rid of Thatcher, because her pro-British stance opposed the UK’s enthusiastic entry into the European Union Super State designed by the Bilderbergers.

Dear reader, the move towards a New World Order is no accident, but every single move (and world crisis) has been meticulously and cunningly planned by the heads of these secret groups for decades. Below is a list of just some of the most important ways these globalists plan to bring about their vision of a New World Order that we will discuss in more detail in the following chapters:

1. *Create a Western trading bloc*
2. *Expand NATO’s power*

3. *Further empower the United Nations*
4. *Have centralized control of all education and all people*
5. *Create one Legal System*
6. *Create one Socialist Welfare State*
7. *Create a one-world religion*

10

THE NEW ECONOMIC ORDER

The new global economy has caused a major transformation to the world's balance of wealth and power. The Industrial Revolution established the economic, political and military supremacy of the Western nations over all others for more than one hundred and fifty years. One of the contributing factors to this success was based on the West's investments in research and development.

However, powerful global financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as the recent three major global economic agreements – the *North American Free Trade Agreement* (NAFTA), the *General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs* (GATT) and the *World Trade Organization* (WTO) – have brought about this shift and led us from national sovereignty toward the one world economy spoken of previously.

The general public is completely unaware of the fact that these trade agreements only benefit the big multinational companies and international bankers at the expense of Third World countries. The leaders and shareholders of these multinational companies have worked behind closed doors for years, investing millions of dollars on political donations and employing thousands of lobbyists, to make sure local governments pass these critical trade agreements, which further their globalist economic and political agendas.

These economic agreements have now placed the economic future of Western nations into the hands of foreign officials and globalist organizations that are violently opposed to our political and religious values. Below are a few examples of these trade agreements and their consequences.

The North American Free Trade Agreement

The North American Free Trade Agreement has produced massive changes to the U.S. and Canadian economy in recent years, as many of their multinational corporations moved their factories and jobs to South American countries where the minimum salary is less than a dollar per hour. NAFTA permits any multinational company to base its manufacturing or service operations in, for example, Mexico, where there are no unions, no pensions, no health benefits and literally no employee safety regulations.

The multinational companies then ship the foreign manufactured products back to North America and Canada for sale to consumers at a price that no local manufacturing corporation can compete with. This is in stark contrast to building a manufacturing plant in developed nations where the cost of labour is high, the unions strong, the health benefits expensive and pensions obligatory.

Considering these facts, it comes as no surprise when the directors of these global corporations choose to move or build their next factory in South America and Eastern Europe, when doing so the company also avoids many corporate taxes by locating in a foreign jurisdiction.

Plans were also made for an even larger agreement that encompasses the whole of the Western Hemisphere (*The Western Hemisphere Plan*) from the tip of South America to the North Pole.

GATT and the WTO

President Bill Clinton signed the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which transferred significant control of the American economy away from the U.S. Congress and into the hands of the 117-nation World Trade Organization (WTO) without any political debate or media discussion.

The WTO was created to replace the GATT Agreement with a new global economic order at the Uruguay negotiations. The former director general of GATT, and the former head of the WHO, Peter Sutherland, declared that, “The old GATT procedure effectively had no ability to impose sanctions on the guilty.”

What this means is that under the old GATT Treaty the United States could impose trade sanctions and restrictions as part of a diplomatic campaign against countries for violating human rights; countries like North Korea, Iraq or China.

Even though this was not in accord with the rules of international trade, the GATT procedure had no legal capacity to stop America from using these tools of foreign trade diplomacy. That being the case, any nation that disagreed with a GATT ruling could ignore it and continue to impose trade sanctions or tariffs as it saw fit.

The initial purpose of the WTO was to liberalize the trade relations among the nations of the world by the lowering of tariff barriers, imposed by nations to protect their local industries from the threat of inexpensive, foreign imports. But in 1995 the WTO in Geneva, Switzerland, produced a WTO mandate with the aim of enforcing international rules and to eliminate a nation’s option to ignore GATT rulings.

Under these new rules Western nations must follow the trade rules imposed by the WTO. If any nation violates these rules in the future, by using, for example, trade sanctions, then the WTO will automatically impose trade sanctions on this country’s exports. These restrictions on any Western nation’s economic policy greatly limit and reduce their freedom to influence another country’s actions through trade sanctions.

This is exactly what happened in China in 1989 when the Chinese authorities murdered over a thousand peaceful protesters who demonstrated in favour of democracy in Beijing. The U.S. imposed

trade sanctions on China in an expression of her anger against the brutal murder of these students.

Under these new rules the WTO also allows foreign manufacturers in countries that pay workers only five per-cent of the average wages to sell their cheap products in American and European stores, thus destroying the jobs of millions of workers.

And not only, this new mandate also means that the WTO bureaucracy has sufficient power to pressure nations to change their domestic laws, another example of the continuing process of surrender of national sovereignty in preparation for a one world government.

Senator Jesse Helms observed that under the WTO, hundreds of state laws would be attacked by foreign countries. Also Sir James Goldsmith, a deceased British billionaire and member of the European Parliament, testified to the U.S. Senate in 1994, just before his death, that GATT would prove to be an erosion of America's national sovereignty.

In his best-selling book *Le Piège (The Trap)*, Sir James also wrote that GATT represented a terrible threat to the workers of industrial nations because their well-paid jobs would be transferred to lower paid workers in Third World nations.

The Hidden Exceptions in GATT

The GATT Treaty that created the WTO is altogether very complicated and it covers thousands of pages of texts. Surprisingly, only one U.S. senator went to the trouble of reading through the document, and it may come as no surprise that he voted against it. For hidden within the tens of thousands of pages are numerous special exceptions and deals for the huge financial and multinational companies, whose well-paid lobbyists worked behind the closed doors of Congress to make sure that these Free Trade

Agreements be passed. The White House administration was totally committed to the United States' membership in the World Trade Organization even though the majority of its members and decision makers are Third World nations usually opposed to Western policies.

The WTO legislation now allows these foreign bureaucrats to exercise oversight control over the economy and laws of trade that impact business throughout the United States, Canada and the entire world. For those of us who study history, we know that whoever controls the economy and currency of a nation will ultimately control that nation itself.

The World Bank and the IMF

It is significant that two world financial institutions already exist that provide the framework for the future New Economic Order that we have been discussing. They are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These institutions were created in 1944 at the famous Bretton Woods Conference.

At the end of the Second World War 730 of the world's leading politicians from all forty-four allied nations gathered at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, with the goal to stabilize and reorganize the world economy.

To quote one description: "The Bretton Woods Conference resulted in history's first example of a fully negotiated monetary order intended to govern currency relations among sovereign states. The delegates were challenged to establish rules for global commerce, to find new ways to facilitate international trade and to stabilize international exchange rates."

In response, the Bretton Woods delegates gave birth to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank Group and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT).

The World Bank Group, which is controlled by the UN, is composed of several different sectors which include the *International Bank for Reconstruction and Development* (IBRD), which is the main lending department of the World Bank, and the *International Development Association* (IDA), which is the World Bank affiliate agency that lends money to the poorest nations of the world.

The International Monetary Fund also provides loans to poor countries and both of these institutions have a presence in 186 countries of the world, including many of the republics of the former Soviet Union.”

At the Bretton Woods Conference each country obligated itself to a monetary policy based on the gold standard. They also established the U.S. dollar as the Reserve Currency (the currency that is used as the value standard for other currencies) for the post-World War world, because at that time America had the largest and most stable of all economies, and the most dollars, or units of currency, of any other country.

According to some, the delegates at Bretton Woods wanted to create a system that would eventually evolve into a global currency and a global monetary system. This was the beginning of the economic side of the New World Order, and, as we can observe from a close observation of current affairs, it has been unfolding quite steadily according to their plan.

Takeover of Third World Countries

The planned move toward world government also involves planned coercion by the globalist’s UN World Bank and International Monetary Fund to force obstinate and uncooperative (usually Third World) countries to obey the dictates of the New World Order. To force the leaders of these Third World countries to obey the dictates

of the elite, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund use “the carrot” of promised new loans and the “stick” of delayed approval of debt-restructuring for past loans.

Many with eyes to see have observed that these huge international banking and industrial groups of Western society and Japan are increasing their stake in the Third World. Throughout the countries of South America, “debt for equity” conversions have been contracted between local governments and international bankers. And “debt for nature” exchanges that involve trading acres of land and rainforest in return for eliminating payment of incredible financial debt entered into during the 1980’s free lending.

In order to achieve global dominance, it is essential that the leaders of the world’s superpowers first achieve regional dominance. The New World Order will begin by first dominating its various regions, one by one, starting with the Western Hemisphere. As I highlighted in the previous chapter, our world has for long been in the process of being restructured and divided into spheres of influence between the three major economic players, the United States, Germany and Japan.

While the Canada–Mexico–United States Free Trade Agreement has produced many negative changes to the North American economy in the last years, the Western Hemisphere Plan has even more. According to a News article back in 1992, a seminar was held in Washington D.C. with 400 powerful business leaders dealing with the Western Hemisphere Plan.

The founder of the Trilateral Commission, chairman of the Americas Society and the Council of the Americas, David Rockefeller, declared that they would map out a vast free trade zone encompassing the entire Western Hemisphere by the year 2000. However, in recognition that their aims would not be supported by the public, Rockefeller stated:

It is you, the business community of the Americas, that is going to have to provide the leadership, both the practical and moral leadership, to carry through this process of reform. It's you who will have to stay the course when the politicians, under an increasing barrage of complaints and inducements from various pressure groups, begin to waffle.

Rockefeller's statements indicate to any intelligent reader that he realized the average citizen and patriotic politician would not be in favour of the scheme once they understood its true implications. Knowing this, he encouraged the multinational businessmen, the beneficiaries of the plan, to provide leadership, both practical and moral, in order to proceed and carry through the process of reform against the democratic will of politicians and citizens.

The price to pay to partake of the new global government is to accept a free market economy; pay off international bank debts as demanded by the UN's International Monetary Fund and World Bank and remove all barriers to international Western investments and trade that burden multinational companies. If any nation refuses to join, they will be left out and excluded. If they join, they will lose total control of their economy and, ultimately, their political destiny.

Bankrupting the International Machine

As many experts in the field of politics warn us, a key element in the strategy to bring about a world economy and government is the intention to "financially bankrupt the international machine." The International Monetary Fund and World Bank know that a worldwide financial collapse is what will give the globalists the

opportunity to get control of national currencies and economies in preparation for the new global super state.

Strobe Talbott, an important person in the U.S. State Department and top advisor to Bill Clinton on relations with Russia, wrote an essay for *Time* magazine in 1992, entitled *The Birth of the Global Nations*, in which he outlined his views on the need for global government and the end of national sovereignty.

He described GATT and the UN's International Monetary Fund as the proto ministers of trade, finance and development for a united world. Talbott also admitted that once a nation appeals to the IMF for massive loans to bail themselves out of a difficult but temporary situation, the IMF can actually dictate such things as fiscal policies, how much tax a government should levy on its citizens and much more. He went on to say in the article that world government is now inevitable:

I'll bet that within the next hundred years, nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single global authority. A phrase briefly fashionable in the mid-20th century, "citizens of the world," will have assumed real meaning by the end of the 21st... All countries are basically social arrangements... No matter how permanent and even sacred they may seem at any one time, in fact they are all artificial and temporary... Perhaps national sovereignty wasn't such a good idea after all... But it has taken the events in our own wondrous and terrible century to clinch the case.

Push for Regulatory Organizations

Another trend moving us toward a global economy is the push for international regulatory organizations. In 2009 a group of twenty central bank governors and finance ministers from the world's economies held the G20 Summit. The incentive for this meeting was the impact of the banking crisis and the world recession.

The result of the Summit was the introduction of a global plan that called for uniform regulations and bylaws that will be governed by the Financial Stability Board (FSB), which includes representatives from all G20 countries.

All members of the G20 Summit agreed to put their important financial institutions and markets under the authority of this single regulatory agency – a new global economic government designed to monitor potential risks to the stability of the global economy.

As we observe these growing economic convergences, plans and developments between the nations of the world, that are gradually destroying our independence and national sovereignty, it is easy to see how they are preparing the way for the fulfilment of biblical prophecy, where virtually no one “*both small and great, rich and poor, both free and slave*” will be able to avoid the coming Mark of the Beast imposed by the False Prophet in the last days.

11

CALLS TO FURTHER EMPOWER THE UN

After the tragic First World War, the League of Nations was set up to settle international quarrels through cooperation between the nations of the world. Its aim was said to prevent war by means of collective security, disarmament, and the settling of international disputes through negotiation. It also produced treaties that dealt with labour conditions, just treatment of minorities, the arms trade, global health and prisoners of war.

This was the first attempt to create a global organization to regulate the behaviour of nations. Yet the League of Nations failed to prevent the outbreak of World War Two. After that tragedy, Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill worked together to set up a new world peace-keeping organization which became known as the United Nations.

In 1945 the United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco with the aim to preserve world peace through cooperation and joint action; cooperation in international law; international security; economic development and social progress. Nearly every nation became a member of its General Assembly, and the decisions were made by the Security Council that was dominated by the rival superpowers, America and Russia.

The UN also inherited a number of agencies and organizations that were founded by the League of Nations. But similar to the League of Nations, one of the most serious issues of the UN has been its lack of power to enforce resolutions and prevent outbreaks of conflict between and within nations. One reason for that lack of power was because the UN had no permanent army of its own, but depended on its member states for support.

However, steps have been taken. A three-year study report produced back in the 1990s, entitled *Our Global Neighbourhood, The Report of the Commission on Global Governance*, by an independent group of twenty-eight global leaders, described the strategy to replace the fragmented and uncoordinated national governments with a true world government. Since then, this advisory group has been suggesting various ways that the world community could better govern the populations of the world.

The report *Our Global Neighbourhood* also claims that the international system the United Nations Charter put in place at the end of the Second World War needs to be renewed and that the inadequacies of existing institutions must be resolved.

In 1991 an elite group of globalists gathered at a meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, to produce a manifesto, called *Common Responsibility in the 1990s: The Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance*. Many world leaders, including Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, appointed as the Secretary General of the UN in 1992, endorsed this document for the coming world government.

A United Nations report, *Renewing the United Nations System*, financed by the *Ford Foundation* in 1999, recommended very significant steps toward world government. Throughout the document the writers discuss the steps that should be taken “until the world is ready for global government.”

The report also suggested that the UN should independently raise funds for its personal budget by assessing a global surcharge tax on all arms sales, all transnational movement of currencies, all international trade, on the production of such specific materials as petroleum, and a UN levy on international air and sea travel. In addition to these, the report recommended assessing a one day income tax on every world citizen each year.

Many see these proposals to have the United Nations Organization assess a global tax on all the citizens as an example of the plan to gradually transform the old international UN consultative body of member states into a global super state. If the UN was able to provide its own global revenue, then it would no longer have to depend on the political and financial support of its member states.

Reading Between the Lines

Although UN spokesmen are usually quite discrete about discussing their plan for world government, occasionally a diplomat or report will reveal it. Former British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in an interview that the United Nations needs to prepare itself to take on an imperial role.

He declared that the UN must usurp national sovereignty and take control of countries as the occupying military and political power when governments collapse, as in Kosovo, Somalia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone.

Hurd also warned about the need for the UN to intervene in crisis situations “earlier” to prevent things getting to the stage where countries are run by corrupt warlords as happened in Somalia.

Similarly, some U.S. diplomats have continually argued for the creation of a more unified and efficient UN structure and for the urgent need to organize the world’s peace keeping forces to deal with global hotspots.

Some powerful European and North American politicians have even proposed a plan that the UN establish a kind of “trusteeship” over those nations whose governments were collapsing due to drought, famine, or civil war, such as those that occurred in Somalia, the Congo, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone.

These tragic situations in Africa, displayed on television news around the world, provided perfect propaganda for those who have

the objective to establish the UN as the nucleus for world government. The same can be said for the issues of global warming, the economic crisis and the production of weapons of mass destruction. The globalists continually call for a “strong global regime” to save humanity from these threats, which they say cannot be solved by individual governments acting alone.

Creating a Permanent UN Military Force

Many articles have been written in the last few decades by the world’s political, military and foreign affairs specialists that call for the urgent need of a permanent standing army for the UN that would be under the control of the UN Security Council.

In 1994 an article appeared in the *Economist* where again the disasters in Somalia and Rwanda were described and how the United Nations continually tried to create a professional international army from the disparate units of numerous military forces provided by its member states but failed to do so.

The former leader of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, became an international senior statesman and has worked behind the scenes as a public spokesperson for a variety of world government groups. Gorbachev once called for the creation of regional UN security councils to work toward world government under a mandate from the United Nations.

In 1993 Gorbachev wrote a column in the English *Daily Telegraph* stating that there was an urgent need for, “A European Security Council, a Secretary General for Europe, structures that have authority and a collective mandate, plus military forces for prevention of future crises and for rapid deployment when necessary.

Another article appeared in *Newsweek* in 1994 calling for the creation of a powerful standing army for the New World Order to respond to future military crisis anywhere in the world:

The United Nations needs its own army, accountable not to national governments but to the United Nations itself. The rich nations would have to donate equipment to such an army; real live soldiers would be recruited from volunteers. Some would be trained mercenaries, like the Nepalese Gurkhas; others would be units from the armies of the Western World.

On several occasions the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, called for the creation of a permanent UN rapid deployment military force of sufficient size to defeat any future potential opponent. He wanted member states to provide these trained soldiers with the right equipment and funding on a permanent basis. Secretary General Annan was totally committed to the idea of the coming New World Order, that would replace national sovereignty with a world government led by the United Nations, and those who have followed him in office have the same intentions.

At a Bilderberg meeting in 1992 the Group debated the possibility of conditioning the public into accepting the idea of a UN army that could, through the use of force, interfere in the international policy and conflict resolution of sovereign states. To their dismay, this proposal was given front-page coverage by two of Canada's leading periodicals during the 2006 Bilderberg meeting in Ottawa.

Many see the creation of such a permanent United Nations rapid reaction force as a powerful instrument to bring about world control, as it will allow the UN Security Council to enforce the will of the governing world body against any rebellious nation or group of nations that opposes its corrupt political agenda.

12

UN'S GIANT VENTURE WITH NATO

At the close of the costly Second World War, the two Super Powers, Russia and America, dominated world affairs from 1945 onwards. But it was not long before their friendship turned into mistrust and bitter rivalry.

Consequently, in April 1949, the USA, Canada and ten Western European nations signed a defence pact, known as the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO) to prepare a powerful defence alliance against the huge armies of Russia and her Eastern allies. Another goal of NATO was to create a strong military alliance to prevent Germany from ever again becoming an independent power in Europe.

In response to the NATO Alliance the Soviet leaders set up a communist defence pact in Eastern Europe in 1995 known as the Warsaw Pact – signed in Warsaw, Poland. Its members agreed to place their armed forces under the command of a Russian general. In the year that NATO was established the Soviet Union also produced its own atomic bomb, with the result that tension between the East and West reached a high level. Each side confronted the other with the threat of nuclear weapons and a constant barrage of propaganda.

A New Imperialistic Role

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in Washington on April 23, 1999. Here the representatives of the member states met to negotiate the basis for the continuation and expansion of the alliance in the years ahead. Some raised the question for the necessity of the continuation of the

alliance, since the former Soviet Union and communist Eastern European nations, that comprised the former Warsaw Pact, were no longer a military threat to the Western countries. Other questions were raised as to the growing requests of formerly communist Eastern European nations to join the NATO Alliance, despite the Russian opposition to this trend.

However, probably the most serious question during the celebration involved the role of NATO military forces in any future conflict, as NATO, initially, had refused to get involved in any military operations outside the geographical region of its member states. This explains why NATO played no part in the British war to regain the Falkland Islands from Argentina.

Even though in the Gulf War NATO members such as Great Britain, Canada, and Italy contributed in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, they did so as separate individual nations and not under the united direction of NATO. But during the war against Kosovo, and the danger to European stability and safety caused by Serbia's military actions and human rights abuses, NATO changed its rules to intervene in the three-month bombing campaign that ended the Kosovo conflict.

The nearness of Kosovo to other member states of the NATO Alliance in Western Europe, and its location between the member states of Greece and Hungary, provided some justification for this intervention outside the Alliance's territory. Yet the intervention of NATO in Kosovo was just the beginning of a new range of expanded powers that it has assumed for itself.

The *Washington NATO Summit* of 1999 decided on a massive change in the role and purpose of the Alliance, a transformation that received little or no media coverage and almost no political debate at all. The Summit produced a document declaring that NATO would no longer be confined to its fifty-year old principle that provided a defence and protection of the national integrity of its

member states, but declared that NATO's essential and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its member states by "political and military means." The use of the word *political* actually opens the door to espionage activities such as spying, political pressure and many other unthinkable activities. The new definition of situations described in the document that could provoke or justify NATO's military intervention is absolutely incredible. They include uncertainty and instability in and around the Euro-Atlantic area, or even at the periphery of the Alliance, ethnic and religious rivalries, abuses of human rights, local and even regional instability, acts of terrorism, sabotage and organized crime, and by the disruption of the flow of vital resources, to mention a few. Both Bill Clinton and Tony Blair endorsed this revolutionary change.

The Only Alternative

As previously noted, the idea to create a strong international military force that would be able to enforce the policies of the United Nations is a prime objective of the globalists. Only a permanent army of significant size could permit the United Nations' Security Council to enforce the will of the world body against any nation or group of nations that opposes its political resolutions.

In the last few decades the UN has engaged in more peace-keeping operations than it did in its first forty years, yet the results of many of their peace-keeping operations have been disasters and embarrassing situations. Often commanders and soldiers serving in UN peace-making operations complained about the lack of leadership, lack of funds, poor planning and insufficient weaponry for their mission.

Since the UN has no army of its own, it is forced to rent troops from each of its member nations whose weapons are sometimes incompatible with each other. These are only some of the serious factors that have contributed to the lack of improvement in the UN's military capabilities over the last few decades, despite the many debates and studies involved.

It is clear the only way the UN will ever achieve the military power necessary to enforce the will of the Security Council would be to use the existing professional and modern integrated military forces of NATO. A ready force like this would respond to emergencies only when the Security Council commanded it to, and would be ready to move at once.

Under the original NATO doctrine of defence it would have been difficult to imagine its forces being used outside of Western Europe to support the United Nations' mission to achieve world government. But the development of the new imperial strategic doctrine of NATO shown above allows NATO's military alliance to do just that.

The Eastern Response

During the debates in the United Nations' Security Council, regarding NATO's intervention in Kosovo, Russia, China and many other Third World nations strongly opposed to this. But their objection was not based on the fact that they disagreed with the West's opinion that Serbia was attacking the human rights of the Albanian minority within its zone. Rather, their objection was that the intervention of NATO in Kosovo represented a dangerous and very real threat to their own sovereignty.

Some Bible prophecy scholars believe NATO's new imperialistic doctrine will lead to the creation of a new anti-NATO military

alliance in the years ahead, probably composed of Russia, China, India and many other nations of the Third World.

Remember, the biblical Prophets Daniel and John prophesied that an extremely powerful military, economic and political alliance will arise in the last days, a revival of the ancient Roman Empire, that will encompass almost every nation of the world. But these two Prophets also prophesied that the nations of the East will rebel against the worldwide domination of the Western alliance of the Antichrist:

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.

(Revelation 16:12)

But reports from the east and the north will alarm him and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many.

(Daniel 11:44)

The nations of the East will mobilize with an enormous army of two hundred million men from the “*Kings from the East*” to go to war against the Western allies under the military leadership of the world’s ultimate dictator. “*The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number*” (*Revelation 9:16*).

13

THE NEW GLOBAL FAITH COMMUNITY

In the nineteenth century many liberal scholars made an effort to discover a common essence in all religions. The result was the popular belief that all religions are just many different paths traversing a mountain in a variety of ways, but all eventually reaching the summit of God's presence.

Over the following decades this erroneous idea has prompted a vast number of attempts to promote active expressions of unity by means of ecumenical movements and interfaith events; which for the global-faith enthusiast is vital to the harmony and salvation of planet Earth.

Today this is the official religion of Western Society. To make any statement to deny this multi-faith view that all religions lead to God, such as Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation, is considered the most politically incorrect statement that one could make, and you are likely to be hurled with criticism and excluded from having your say in any area of public life. One only needs to examine the core beliefs of the major world religions to persuade you of the errors in such thinking.

Take for example the famous Day of Prayer for World Peace held at Assisi, Italy, in October 1986. This interfaith event was organized by Pope John Paul II and attracted 130 religious leaders from around the globe, including the spiritual leader of Tibet, Dalai Lama, whose national religion is Lamaism, a mixture of Buddhism and animism, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who represented the worldwide Anglican community, representatives of Buddhism, Islam, Shinto, Hinduism, as well as snake worshippers, and so forth.

Even if we all agree, and I am sure it would be correct to do so, that every religious leader was gathered to pray at this interfaith event with a genuine concern for world peace, the question we must ask is to whom were they interceding to?

To the Sovereign and loving God of Christians, in the name of Jesus Christ, or to some, if not all, of Hinduism's millions of gods? Or perhaps to Islam's severe and demanding Allah? Maybe to the spirits of inanimate objects revered in Tibetan animism? Are you getting the picture?

Certainly, there are many social issues on which followers of world religions can equally unite, and there are certainly elements of truth in every religion, but these cannot validate their faith and core beliefs. The simple fact is that all religions cannot be the same. In order to be so, they would need to be united on the very issues where they are most divided – the existence and nature of the One True God, and the way *He* has established for man to approach Him.

As a Christian it is right and just to respect the right of every human being's freedom to worship the god of their choice, but it is quite another thing for a Christian to say that everyone's choice is the right one. We need to realize that *toleration* is not the same as *validation*.

I repeat, we cannot defend *all* religions and say that *all* faiths are right, because each faith has beliefs that render those of other faiths false. This being the case, the idea that all religions are basically the same is clearly ridiculous, and even more ridiculous is the idea that they point in the same direction, or lead to the same destination.

Neither is the problem solved by appealing to the Fatherhood of God, or by suggesting that if a person is good and sincere, it makes no difference to which deity or deities he worships and prays to, because God will accept his prayer regardless. The Word of God, on which the Christian faith stands, makes this very clear to us:

For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood effective through faith.

(Romans 3:22-26)

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

(Acts 4:12-13)

Of Course It's the UN

The idea of unifying all religions has long been on the agenda of the Establishment and they are the people who have been working to bring this about; by means of these interfaith gatherings and religious alliances, together with a number of international bodies, many of which are linked to the United Nations Organization.

A former Assistant Secretary General of the UN, Robert Muller, said: “My great personal dream is to forge a tremendous alliance between all religions and spiritual groups, and the United Nations. We desperately need a United Religions Organization to bring peace to all people of the world.”

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair is credited with having made the following statement: “I will dedicate the rest of my life to uniting the world's religions. Faith is part of our future, and faith and the value it brings with it are an essential part of making globalization work.”

And Prince Charles seems to have missed the point we made above when he announced back in 1996 that in the event of his accession to the British throne, he would envisage himself as a defender of faith rather than a defender of *the* faith.

The basic message of the 2010 World Religions Summit in Winnipeg Canada was that, “Religions need to unify if the planet is to survive.” An evangelical Christian who attended this meeting said: “Participants apologized for two millennia of Christian evangelism which has proclaimed that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour of all and sought to make the whole world Christian.”

Again, the overall view at a *Rethink Conference* some years back was that Christianity, as we know it, has run its course and must be replaced. The speakers there insisted that Christianity must be *re-thought* and *re-invented* if the name of Jesus Christ is going to survive here on planet Earth; and much has been done since then to bring this about.

In 2008 one of the panellists at the *Davos World Economic Forum* said that religious leaders of different faiths must not seek to deny the “authenticity of other people’s faith, or suggest that they are illegitimate, or consigned to some kind of evil end.”

What he meant was that Christians should not say that Jesus is the only Saviour and that those who die without faith in Him are eternally lost. Not one Christian present at this meeting dared to defend the Christian position in this regard.

Emerging Church leader Brian McLaren is credited with having made the following statement: “If we have a new world, we will need a new church.” The idea is that in order to reach the so-called postmodern world we need to revise and update Christianity which will involve a “new set of answers, a different way of being Christians.” You may have guessed the way these globalists plan to unite all religions is to destroy much of Orthodox Christianity.

Need for Repentance Downplayed

Another idea of “*re-thinking Christianity*” was that instead of a programme of preaching the Gospel to humanity, Christians should

take part in a peace plan to save the world from the greatest ills of mankind – spiritual emptiness, self-centred leadership, poverty, disease, hunger and illiteracy.

One of the greatest influences in this was Rick Warren’s CFR-run Global P.E.A.C.E Plan, which has over 500,000 churches in 162 nations as part of his plan. Warren hopes to eliminate the ills of the world by (P)lanting churches, (E)quipping leaders, (A)ssisting the poor, (C)aring for the sick, and (E)ducating the next generation.

This of course seems like a good goal and fits in well with New Testament teaching, but it is deceptive and has serious consequences. In the process of putting this plan into action the need for non-Christians to be saved through repentance and faith in Jesus is either downplayed or excluded. This makes a person’s eternal destiny much less important than meeting his material and temporary needs.

This peace plan is also another version of the interfaith idea that all faiths are equally valid. In order to get this plan moving you have to find “the man of peace,” who could be of any religious faith, that will work with you to attack the problems of society listed above. One is reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul:

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 Bèliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?

(1Corinthians 6:14-15)

When we read the New Testament, it is evident that Jesus Christ was not a socialist (see *Luke 12:13-15*), even though some who have claimed to represent Him over the centuries of Church history have been very much so. These hypocrites have made attempt after

attempt to promote a social gospel, while maintaining a completely different standard for themselves.

To paraphrase an apt comment: The Lord did not try to change people's lives by moving them out of the slums and poverty; He walked the towns and streets of Israel trying to get the slums and poverty out of the people. He wanted to change their nature and plant in them the seeds of integrity, not the ugly desire to claim and plunder what belonged to others.

Only the Truth Will Make You Free

Friends, I cannot warn you enough, these interfaith movements and peace plans are out to destroy the Gospel message that Jesus Christ *alone* can save mankind and that He is the *only* Mediator between God and man.

If a Christian joins such gatherings and movements, He would be equating or even substituting the One true God, who created us and redeemed us by the precious blood of His Son, with other gods that the Bible declares to be mute idols that cannot save anyone (*Psalms 96:5*).

Such movements also oppose Bible-believing Christians who seek to preach the *whole* Gospel. They are all part of the counterfeit religious system in alliance with the global political powers of the last days described in the Book of Revelation chapter seventeen. I agree this is a clear reference to the Roman Catholic Church.

Jesus said to His disciples: “*And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free*” (*John 8.32*). God's truth is out there, but unless you seek it, you will not experience the salvation and freedom it can give you. Satan knows this very well and for that reason he has developed this great organization with which to control people in the name of religion. The word *religion* comes from the Greek word *religio*, which means to return to bondage, and

it is simply man's attempt, at the prodding of Satan, to reach God with his own rules.

14

KNOW THEIR METHODS

Dear reader, I feel it is important to repeat once again this reality: The objective of the New World Order is to bring all people and nations of the world under a one-world socialist, economic, political and religious system. During the last few decades, members of the secretive organizations spoken of earlier have been consolidating their control over the military, the economy and the political arena throughout the governments of America, Canada, Europe and Asia. These globalist planners say:

The public and leaders of most countries continue to live in a mental Universe which no longer exists – a world of separate nations – and have great difficulties thinking in terms of global perspectives and interdependence (*Toward a Renovated International System, Trilateral Task Force 1977*).

Many who have written on the subject believe phase one will be the new economic order, phase two, the new political order, and phrase three, the new religious order. Whatever the case, we all know who the beneficiaries of such a system will be when faced with changes of such magnitude.

As the New World Order stands for one world socialism, the new economic order will be a socialist system, and the beneficiaries of this system will be the economic elite, and not the desperate masses, as its proponents have made every effort to have us believe.

We can find a good example of this where the communists proposed that their system would elevate the downtrodden under soviet control. We all know that was a lie. In the former Soviet Union there was more than 250 million people. It is estimated that 2.5 million

were members of the Communist Party, and they lived a good life style. But the rest were mere slaves with the sole purpose of supporting a system for the benefit of the economic and political elite.

This is exactly what the same movers and shakers in the world economic and political hierarchy want to set up on a world-wide basis. But be warned, in order to do this, they are going to have to create a world of disorder first. In this way, people will come to them, crying for their immediate needs to be met and for protection from the “threat of terror” and “global warming,” to mention a few, under a system they will control totally.

Best Achieved through Stealth

In September 1991, former President George Bush announced to Congress that he was working to create a *New World Order*. But becoming aware of the growing opposition to world government from patriotic citizens, who began to understand what the true implications of this “new order” would mean to American democracy, the president’s National Security Advisor, Brent Scowcroft, persuaded him to refrain from educating the public about what the New World Order actually meant.

Alan Cranston, an important Democratic Senator, declared: “I believe deeply in the need for world law... I believe in the concept of federalism on the world scale.” But Cranston also boldly admitted that they could only achieve their goals of world government by stealth rather than through open public debate and democracy.

In an interview to *Transition* magazine, published by the *Institute for World Order*, Cranston admitted: “The more talk about world government, the less chance of achieving it, because it frightens people who would accept the concept of world laws.”

Zbigniew Brzezinski, the founding member of the Trilateral Commission, shared Cranston's views and strongly argues the case for world government in his book *Between Two Ages*. Here he says that, "National sovereignty is no longer a viable concept." However, realizing that the patriotism and nationalism of citizens of America, Canada and many other nations of the world would prove to be an obstacle to their globalist plans, Brzezinski advised that world government could only be reached, "Through gradual, movement toward a larger community of developed nations... through a variety of indirect ties and already-developing limitations on national sovereignty."

In 1999, the Ford Foundation financed a provocative United Nations study called *Renewing the United Nations System*, written by two former UN officials, Sir Brian Urqhart and Erskine Childers. The study recommended that the United Nations General Assembly, Security Council, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization, and International Labour Organization be transferred to one central location, possibly Bonn or New York, in order to improve efficiency and centralized political control.

Many saw this proposal as a means to prepare the way for a one-world government, especially when you consider the wording of the following phrase from the study which says:

While there is no question, at present, of the transformation of the UN system into a supranational authority, the organization is in a transitional phase, basically shaped and constrained by national sovereignty, but sometimes acting outside and beyond it.

This document also constantly refers to "gradual limitation of sovereignty," "notable abridgements of national sovereignty," and

“small steps toward an eventual trans-sovereign society.” The authors also discuss their plan to progressively erode and then replace each nation’s precious sovereignty, but they recommend that the transitional process be carried out gradually, so as not to alarm citizens of Western democracy.

From Crisis Comes Opportunities

“All we need is the right major crisis,” said David Rockefeller in a 1994 speech at the United Nations, “and the nations will accept the New World Order.” And President George Bush made a similar shocking statement; that global government could not be achieved unless some great crisis motivated the population to abandon their national sovereignty. He said: “From chaos will emerge the New World Order.”

A study from past history reveals that crises are indeed catalysts to an organized progression of changes, and there is little doubt that our world has been driven toward greater globalization by carefully planned crisis. The globalists are aware that people take pride in their countries and national identity, and will not easily give up their beloved sovereignty unless motivated by fear.

Henry Morgenthau, a member of the globalist Council on Foreign Relations and a former Treasury Secretary for President Roosevelt, made the following statement:

We can hardly expect the nation-state to make itself superfluous, at least not overnight. Rather, what we must aim for is recognition in the minds of all responsible statesmen that they are really nothing more than caretakers of a bankrupt international machine which will have to be transformed slowly into a new one.

As stated elsewhere, a key element in their strategy is their intention to “financially bankrupt the international machine.” Nations will be obliged to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank for a bail out, but under the condition that borrowers must abandon their national sovereignty.

The UN-controlled IMF and World Bank know that a worldwide financial collapse is the key event that will give them the opportunity to seize control of the national currencies and economies in preparation for global government.

In the late 1800s the German banker Mayer Rothschild said: “Give me control of a nation’s monetary system and I care not who writes their laws.” Commenting on this statement, one expert in the field said: “What Rothschild is saying is, let me control the heart of the system – money – and it makes no difference who you send to Congress, the state legislatures, or city councils, because I will have total control of your every being.”

The elite are doing this very thing; they are designing a system that will enable them to control the economic and social behaviour of everybody on this planet.

History Repeats Itself

The power a severe economic shock can exercise to undermine the stability of a national government has been clearly demonstrated throughout history. And the extent to which a global economic shock could lead to instability depends on the extent of the suffering of the people, and the trust people have in their existing government.

Well, when we observe the workings of the world’s current political leaders, and the world’s shaky economies and weakening defence capabilities, that threaten the two most dominant values in today’s society – personal peace and prosperity – you can be sure people

will be more than willing to sell their political, economic and religious freedom and accept a strong centralized government that would promise to remove the threat of war and guarantee peace and prosperity, especially if it is brought in while *seemingly* keeping the outward forms of constitutionality!

Embracing the Hegelian Theory

Another important fact to point out is that the methods the Establishment use to influence world events are by no means orderly. They embrace the philosophy of the 1800s German philosopher George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Hegel theorized that there is, “Thesis, anti-thesis and this produces synthesis” (quoted from *America’s Secret Establishment* by Anthony Sutton). In other words, conflict brings progress, and controlled conflict brings controlled progress.

You will see their methods used throughout history in almost every war and world crisis, because very often these same people have been on both sides of the conflict. For example, many historical documents reveal that both sides of World War II were financed by New York bankers.

You see, out of wars and revolutions come great opportunities for some to make great profit. Conflict can be used by corporations who supply money, arms, goods and services to both parties involved. Take the weapons trade as an example. The more wars that occur throughout the world, the more business booms for the suppliers. But during times of peace their business slacks off.

It was reported that not long before Saddam Hussein had all of his tanks lined up against Kuwait, the American ambassador to Baghdad, April Glaspie, made a visit to Iraq where she told Hussein America had no opinion on the Arab-to-Arab conflicts, like the border disagreement with Kuwait.

Obviously, this was the go-ahead-sign that Saddam Hussein needed to go in and take over Kuwait territory. But after the invasion we saw a very troubled U.S. President, and a very indignant British and French Prime Minister, come on television saying that we must come together in a new world order to stop tyrants like Hussein. What the general public is unaware of is that during the ten years prior to Operation Desert Storm, the United States and her allies had been supplying Saddam Hussein with billion-dollar loans, credits, military hardware and other aid.

Here we see just one example of the Hegelian Theory at work: They created the thesis, provided the anti-thesis, so it would result in the synthesis. The synthesis was, for a start, a New World Order. Prior to this period the United Nations had been discredited. This operation was a carefully planned event to resume the UN and use it as an excuse for moving us into a New World Order.

Other historic documents reveal that the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey provided fuel to the Nazis during World War II and that U.S.-based companies travelled the highways to refuel the enemy in North Vietnam during the Vietnam War and had protective covering by orders of Washington.

The Federal Reserve's Unlawful Control

In 1913 the United States Congress gave monopolistic control of the U.S. monetary system to a private bank called the Federal Reserve, of which it has been said is by no means federal and has doubtful reserves. When this happened, a powerful monster was created.

Since then the United States has had two governments: the constituted government of the president, Congress and the judicial system, and the very much more powerful government of the Federal Reserve. Remember what Rothschild said: "Give me

control of a nation's monetary system and I care not who writes their laws.”

The Federal Reserve's major function is to determine the money supply. It has the power to increase or decrease the money supply at any rate it chooses. This means they can create a great boom in the economy or, to the contrary, they can create a great recession or depression. This is exactly what these policy makers did during the period prior to the 1929 Great Depression.

One commentator reported that, at its own discretion, the Federal Reserve increased the money supply by approximately 60 per-cent; then at the time of the Crash they dried up the money supply. Those people who had made investments based on their expectation that there would be an abundance of money available to pay back their obligations were unable to do so.

This resulted in a great loss for some and a great gain for others. Commenting on the Great Depression Congressman Louis McFadden had this to say: “It was not accidental. It was a carefully contrived occurrence. The international bankers sought to bring about a condition of despair so that they might emerge as the rulers of us all.”

Reports reveal there are plans already underway to consolidate all financial control under the centralized authority of the Federal Reserve and, ultimately a world central bank that will include banking, brokerage and even insurance. A report released by the Social and Economic Council of the United Nations in 1994, called the *Human Development Report*, said:

A world central bank is essential for the twenty-first century for sound macro-economic management, for global financial stability and for assisting the economic expansion of the poor nations. It will take some time and probably some international financial

crisis before a full-scale world central bank can be created.

It is the opinion of many experts that they will create the international financial collapse so that they can move in with their power structure. Many people will lose a lot of money, but at the same time the elite will build new financial empires from the wealth that will be transferred to them.

They also warn us the political and economic elite are far ahead in implementing their plans and that they have made every effort to hold things together until the necessary infrastructure or apparatus has been put in place.

In the three-phase implementation for a new world order, phase one will be most likely be the new economic order. After this we can expect a drastic drop in the standard of living for the unsuspecting masses as this new economic order unfolds.

Out of this economic destruction there will be an outcry for government aid from people devastated by the economic loss. In return they will surrender their political freedoms, and then phase two – the new political order – will be brought in.

At this very moment, much of the framework has already been designed for the full implementation of the new political order. In the previous chapters of this book we discussed how the Establishment gained control over our education system with the purpose of indoctrinating the youth into socialist thought and expectations in order to reduce any resistance to the implementation of their plans.

You will have noticed how much the institutions of Western culture, traditions and morality have been under major assault in recent years. The tearing down of institutions, moral values, traditions, patriotism, and a knowledge of history is essential in order to eliminate resistance.

Use of Disinformation

Probably one of the biggest obstacles to recognizing the rise of the New World Order has been the massive amount of disinformation and double talk coming out of our governments, the media, the education system, and from many religious leaders of recent times. We are living in the age of the big lie. Central bankers, the media, governments, pastors, priests, rabbis and popes lie on a continual basis.

Disinformation is to do the opposite of communicating or receiving knowledge or facts. The most common purpose of disinformation is to spread false information or intelligence in order to confuse, deceive and even frighten people in order to achieve specific goals and purposes.

If you review the studies, the documents and the historical references to the attempts to enslave humanity into a New World Order, by means of lies, disinformation, propaganda and public opinion manipulations, you will find once again that the CFR, the TC, and the Bilderberg Group are at the forefront.

It is their greatest weapon in capturing the hearts and minds of the people they wish to control. But the diffusion of disinformation and lies can only work when people lack wisdom and true understanding that can only come from God's Word. As the Prophet Hosea lamented: "*My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge*" (Hosea 4:6).

For this reason, I ask you to prayerfully consider what I have said in this book, even though much of the information may be foreign to you and run counter to what you have believed and understood for many years. Some of the information may even seem to extreme and far-fetched and impossible to happen in our lifetime. That is why we must ask the Spirit of God to guide us into all truth.

Use of Psycho-Political Operations

A 1940s sociologist and public opinion researcher explained that psycho political operations are, “Propaganda campaigns designed to create perpetual tensions and to manipulate different groups of people to accept the particular climate of opinion the CFR seeks to achieve in the world.”

In other words, what most people believe to be public opinion is in reality planned propaganda designed to get a desired behavioural response from the public. Getting people to behave the way you want them to, by persuading them that it is in their interest to do so, is achieving a desired behavioural response.

In order to protect itself, the CFR does not reveal to every Council member what psycho-political operations the inner membership, or Special Group, is planning, and the more exclusive Bilderberg Group operates much the same way.

The rules for this deception are that the deception must contain a little of the truth and it must be extremely complexed in order to make simple fact-finding impossible. This can be done by withholding key information from the public. One investigative journalist reveals that implementation of this backhanded, deceptive propaganda, and public opinion manipulations, which include mind control agendas, are carried out in the United States by more than 200 think tanks.

Both the Tavistock Institute and the Rand Institute in England investigate the “dynamics of evolution,” which is the logic behind why people of various backgrounds, interests and information levels hold certain opinions. It is reported that the main goal of Tavistock, and like-minded American foundations, is to break down the psychological strength of the individual and render him helpless to oppose the dictates of the New World Order.

One third of Rand Corporation research is dedicated to population control studies. One of the key areas of Rand's expertise deals with studies on how to misinform and manipulate large groups of people. This often involves the use of double-talk; another of their deceptive tactics. This means they brand pacifists as terrorists, and those who try to tell the truth they label as spreading hate and evil. Today the media, largely owned by CFR-controlled corporations, has convinced the world that the resurgence of nationalism and the growth of "religious intolerance" are a threat to our world. They also brand Christians, who believe in the Bible's teaching on right and wrong, as right-winged religious fundamentalists.

More Subtle Arguments

Not only has the world's elite been working to create the New World Order we have been speaking about, but many of the world's politicians, presidents, scientists, historians, actors, pop stars, writers, religious leaders and the general public itself have been giving them a hand. In his encyclical letter of July 2009, Pope Benedict XVI admitted his support for an international paradigm shift:

In the force of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need even in the midst of a global recession... of a true world political authority... Furthermore, such an authority would need to be universally recognized and to be vested with the effective power to ensure security for us all.

I believe what unites the minds of the people who are unaware of the true political goals of the powerful institutions behind the push

towards centralization is the fear of another global war. Also the growing problems of hunger, crime, disease and other social issues they are led to believe could be addressed more effectively through centralized political power.

The Establishment has brainwashed the average person into thinking the hundreds of millions of deaths due to the horrific political and religious conflicts and international warfare of the last centuries shows the absolute need to eliminate separate nation states. They say that if there were no separate nation states, and we had one global religion; that is, mutual respect, acceptance and validation for the religious and moral beliefs of others, then there would no longer be any hatred and wars.

The famous English historian Arnold Toynbee shared these ideas in his book *Surviving the Future*. Here Toynbee, observing the terrible devastation caused by the terrible wars of the last century, concluded that it was completely necessary for the formation of a global government to prevent the total destruction of mankind in a future war between the super powers. He wrote:

We are approaching the point at which the only effective scale for operations of any importance will be the global scale. The local states ought to be deprived of their sovereignty and subordinated to the sovereignty of a global world government. I think the world state will still need armed police and the world government will have to command sufficient force to be able to impose peace...

The people of each local sovereign state will have to renounce their state's sovereignty and subordinate it to the paramount sovereignty of a literally worldwide world government... I want to see a world government established.

While these views might sound reasonable on some points, when we examine the situation a little closer, we can see many flaws in such line of thinking. No one can deny that our world is threatened by ethnic rivalries, together with devastating weapons that could lead to greater disasters than all previous wars put together.

Yet a strong argument can be made from past experience that the freedom of humanity can only flourish in a political system that divides power among different nation states to create checks and balances. Add to this the fact that there have been far more violent civil wars fought within the borders of nations than international ones.

A study of past history also strongly reveals that, even if the first leaders of the global government were benevolent in their intentions, sooner or later someone would rise to power and have evil dictatorial intentions.

More importantly, we saw how God destroyed the first global community and forced the people to separate into individual language groupings and nation states, because this was His original intention and long term plan to preserve the cultural diversity of mankind and to cause man to seek Him.

In spite of this, the words of Arnold Toynbee concerning the need for world government, and his rejection of the need for sovereignty and diversity to protect our political, economic and spiritual freedom and our culture, are no longer considered revolutionary, but are now shared by many who see themselves as “world citizens.”

15

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

All the fast-moving current trends, developments and disasters happening in our world today that we have dealt with so far in this book point to two very important facts. They are the “*signs of the times*” that tie in with many end-time biblical prophecies. They are also pushing the world towards the Great Tribulation.

We are all familiar with the term *tribulation*. We frequently associate it with trials, hardships, sorrows and oppression. But the biblical description of the coming Great Tribulation means much more than that. It means a unique time of unparalleled distress and suffering – the last seven years of human history, as we know it – that will conclude with the return of Messiah at the cataclysmic Battle of Armageddon. In His sermon on the Mount of Olives some days before His death Jesus made this clear:

For at that time there will be great suffering such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

(Matthew 24:21-23)

The Prophets Daniel and Jeremiah spoke in similar terms:

There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations came into existence.

(Daniel 12:1)

Alas! that day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob.

(Jeremiah 30:7)

What will make this coming tribulation so much worse than any other time in history is that the destruction and terror of this period will not just be limited to a few nations. Its scope will span the entire globe and will involve disasters of unimaginable horror that will virtually destroy our planet and its atmosphere.

The Book of Revelation, chapters six to nineteen contains the core biblical teaching on this time of suffering. The main thread that runs through these chapters is the three sets of seven judgements that God pours out on the inhabitants of the Earth. They are seven seal judgements (*Revelation 6-8*), seven trumpet judgements (*Revelation 8-10*) and seven bowl judgements (*Revelation 16:1-12*).

Those who hold to a pre-Millennial, pre-Tribulation Rapture interpretation of end-time biblical events believe that believers in Christ will be removed from the Earth *before* this seven-year tribulation begins and the Antichrist appears and assumes full control.

Why Seven Years?

In the last chapters of the Book of Daniel the Angel Gabriel revealed extraordinary details to the Prophet Daniel that will prevail in the world at the time of the end. Of particular interest is the final *seventieth week* of years in God's prophetic timetable:

Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city; to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore and understand from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and sixty-two

weeks; it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.

After the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing, and the troops of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. His end shall come with a flood, and there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, in the middle of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator.

(Daniel 9:24-27)

This future vision of the “*seventy weeks*” is probably the most widely discussed and best known of all Daniel’s prophecies. This is mainly due to the fact that it presents the most precise prophetic timetable of events culminating in the last days. As far back as the sixth century B.C., Daniel perfectly outlined Israel’s future destiny at the hands of the Romans, the exact date of her rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, and many identifying characteristics of the coming Antichrist at the end of the age.

To help you better comprehend this important portion of prophecy it is necessary to explain a number of key facts. The seventy weeks are 490 years, composed of 360-day years, bearing in mind that the Jewish calendar was based on a biblical lunar-solar year of 360 days.

Just as it is natural for Western nations who use the decimal system to divide extended periods of time into decades, the ancient Jews used *heptads*, or weeks of years, to indicate a period of seven years. Therefore, the word *week* could be used by biblical writers to refer to either years or days.

In the above prophecy these weeks of years began when “*the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.*” From a close analysis of biblical history we learn that the only official government decree

which authorized the city of Jerusalem and its walls to be rebuilt was given by the Persian king Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, 445 B.C.

So from 445 B.C. to 396 B.C. we have “*seven weeks*,” or 49 years. This covers Artaxerxes’ decree up to the time of Nehemiah and the covenant renewal celebration in Jerusalem. *Daniel 9:25* reads: “*There shall be seven weeks; and sixty-two weeks.*” These sixty-two weeks equal 434 years or 396 B.C. to A.D. 32. This time period began with the dedication of the Second Temple and continues to the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the “*Anointed Prince.*”

Almost five centuries after Daniel’s prediction, on the tenth day of the month of Nisan, April A.D. 32, Israel’s religious leaders openly rejected their promised Messiah. As our Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey on Palm Sunday He knew that this was the exact period prophesied by Daniel where Israel must accept or reject their King (*Daniel 9:26*).

However, Jesus already knew that He would be rejected by the political leaders and was overcome with emotion as He foresaw and contemplated the terrible destruction on Jerusalem and her children that would follow (*Luke 19:41-44*).

This leaves “*one week*” of seven years that has not yet been fulfilled, and it is these seven years which scholars understand to be the period of the Great Tribulation.

16

THE RAPTURE

A time is coming when every single member of the corporate Body of Christ who has personally trusted in Jesus, both the living and the dead, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. This event is known as the Rapture, and while many New Testament writers make reference to it in their writings, by far the most detailed description is given by the Apostle Paul in his First Letter to the Thessalonians:

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore, encourage each other with these words.

(1Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The verb “*caught up*” used here is translated from a Greek word, *harpazo*, which means to *snatch, seize, or take suddenly*. This same Greek word appears many times elsewhere in the New Testament,

and if you examine its use, you will discover that it is always translated as *take forcibly*, *snatch* or *caught up*.

Our English word *rapture*, as with many other English terms, derives from the Latin language. In the early centuries of the Christian Church the scholar Jerome translated the New Testament from the original Greek language into Latin. This translation is known as the Vulgate, from which many modern translations have their origin.

In the quotation above Jerome rendered the Greek word *harpazo* into the Latin *raeptius*, which also means to *seize*, *snatch* or *seize away*. This word was eventually introduced into the English translation as *rapture*.

While it is true to say that the word *rapture* does not occur in most English translations of the Bible, the concept of a snatching-away of living believers to meet the Lord is clearly stated in Scripture (see also *Matthew 11:12, 13:19; John 6:15, 10:12, 28:29; Acts 8:3; 2 Corinthians 12:2; 4; Jude 1:23; Revelation 12:5*).

Paul wrote his First Letter to the Thessalonians in about 50 A.D. during his second missionary journey. While the Apostle was in Corinth he received news that a serious concern had arisen among them concerning the events that would take place in the future.

During his stay there Paul had evidently taught about end-time events, including the Rapture, Christ's Second Coming and the coming of Antichrist. But in the few months since his departure a few of their members had died and they were concerned about what would happen to the deceased in Christ.

So Paul wrote to instruct them concerning God's plan for both the living and the dead in the Rapture, and to explain in detail exactly what the event is all about. He wrote to clarify his previous teaching on the subject and to assure the confused and distressed Thessalonians that not only would the dead in Christ not miss out

on the Lord's coming for His Church, but, on the contrary, they would precede those who were alive at the moment:

We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

(1Thessalonians 4:15)

When the King comes down from heaven, the first thing that will happen is that the bodies of the deceased believers will be raised and reunited to their perfected spirits, which had gone to the Lord at physical death, to take first place in the First Resurrection – the resurrection of the righteous (see *Luke 14:12-15; John 5:28-30; Daniel 12:2-4; Revelation 20:5-7*).

Note also the resurrection indicated in the above passages of Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians will not summon all the dead, but believers only (see also *1Corinthians 15:51-53; Revelation 20:4-5*). The second resurrection will come after the millennium reign, when all the dead will be raised to stand before the Great White Throne for judgement (*Revelation 20:11-15*).

Here Paul also exhorts the Thessalonians and all believers to have a different attitude towards death and to never be overcome with sorrow and despair. A time is coming when we will be reunited in a rapturous meeting when Christ Himself calls us out of our graves, or out of the world, to be with Him forever.

Furthermore, Christians can believe the promise of resurrection because it is backed up by the resurrection of Christ Himself. By this we are not forbidden to grieve, which is only natural when a loved one passes away, but we are exhorted not to grieve the way an unbeliever would do, as people to whom death is the ultimate tragedy.

More about the Living Saints

According to New Testament teaching millions of people will be removed from the face of the Earth in less than a millisecond. In fact, it will be so quick that the word *atom* is used in the Greek to describe the suddenness of the event.

When the dead have been raised, all living believers on this planet will immediately be transformed and translated into the presence of Christ without ever tasting physical death. The description of the event and how your body will be redeemed is given again by the Apostle Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians:

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

(1Corinthians 15:50-55)

In a single moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all believers who have died in Christ will have their bodies raised up, never to experience decay again, and those believers who are alive when Christ comes will have their mortal bodies changed into a glorified immortal and incorruptible body that will be fit for the heavenly realm. What an eternal weight of glory, beyond all measure, that God has prepared for those that believe! Paul speaks of it again in his Second Letter to the Corinthians:

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling – if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked.

For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

(2 Corinthians 5:1-6)

In his First Letter to the Church at Corinth quoted above, Paul refers to the Rapture as a mystery (15:51). The biblical definition of a mystery is not something difficult to unravel or solve, but a truth that has never been disclosed up to the time when it is revealed through divine revelation (see also *Ephesians 3:5-7, 9; Colossians 1:26*).

The fact that living believers would be caught up to heaven without ever tasting the pains of death was a new truth that had been hidden in God up to that time. They will not sleep, but be raptured up from the Earth to meet Christ in the air to share in His glory for all eternity.

If the idea of a rapture seems too strange and fanciful of an idea to be true and realistic, it may surprise you that other such experiences have already occurred to biblical characters and are validated historically throughout Scripture. The records of Enoch (*Hebrews 11:5*), Elijah (*2 Kings 2:11*), Paul (*2 Corinthians 12:2-4*) and Jesus (*Acts 1:10-11*) affirm the utter reality of the Rapture and strikingly foreshadow and provide prototypes of the future and the final *snatching away* that is yet to come.

The Timing Issue

Now that we have established at least the basic truth of the Rapture it is necessary to turn our attention to another important question that most Christians wish to know about the event – when it will occur. Although almost all Evangelical Christians believe in a physical rapture, there is, however, some disagreement about the *timing* of the event in relation to the Tribulation Period.

The key question in debate is whether the Church will go through any or all of the seven-year affliction before the Rapture occurs. There are many sincere and noted biblical scholars who hold different positions on the subject. Some believe in a pre-Tribulation view, others in a mid-Tribulation view, and still others in a post-Tribulation view.

But which of these views is the correct one, and is there any way of gaining some degree of certainty on the subject from the Scriptures themselves? There certainly is, but it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore them. This much I will say, however. If we hold to a pre-Tribulation view of the Rapture, it does not mean that believers will be exempt from serious troubles, trials, persecution and even martyrdom in the days to come.

I will continue to remind you, there is a growing anti-Christian sentiment around the world today and the emergence of powerful anti-Christian forces in the areas of government, political movements and social causes. Judging from our present-day circumstances, this animosity will greatly accelerate as we get closer to the close of this age.

However, Scripture teaches that God will strengthen and be with His people during these times and rescue us from them:

For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son

from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus – who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

(1Thessalonians 1:9-10)

Finally, the teaching of a pre-Tribulation Rapture should never be misconstrued to teach escapism and irresponsibility. Let me remind you again that Jesus warned us against this and told us not to be found sleeping when He returns. It is vital that Christians continue to pray and actively stand up for what is right in the midst of a world deprived of morals and principles.

17

THE COMING ANTICHRIST

As we saw in chapter nine, the biblical writers of the Old and New Testament warn us that the most wicked man in history will arise during the last generation of this age and will be empowered by the devil to seize political, economic, military and religious control of the entire world and that the world will willingly accept him. This might have been difficult to imagine for previous generations, but as the incredible evidence we have examined so far shows, the platform is already prepared.

Add to this the chilling reality that at this very hour the nations of the world are crying out for clever and competent leaders to emerge and take control at a time in history when political and economic problems are growing at a rate beyond our ability to control or repair.

However, in almost every nation around the globe we see abdication of responsibility, selfish ambition and moral corruption in our political representatives. Our world is truly suffering a famine of strong and determined leaders and longing for change. A comment made by the first president of the European Parliament, and one time secretary general of NATO, Paul-Henri Spaak, provides an example of this desire:

We do not need another committee. We have too many already. What we want is a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of all people, and to lift us out of the economic morass into which we are sinking. Send us such a man and be he God or devil we will receive him.

Another public comment made by the President of the Club of Rome, Aurelio Peccei, provides another example:

A charismatic leader, scientific, political, or religious, would be the world's only salvation from the social and economic upheavals that threaten to destroy civilization. Such a leader would have to override national and international interests as well as political and economic structures in order to lead humanity away from the maladies that afflict it.

We also saw that many in the New Age Movement believe we will shortly see, and indeed are working towards, the establishment of a new world government and religion that will eventually be ushered in by a world leader and teacher.

Now it is easy to see how this “man” will be acclaimed as the long-awaited global leader and messiah figure when he eventually appears. The world in its ignorance and desperation will openly and willingly embrace the power that will eventually enslave it with unprecedented evil and tyranny.

Names Given to Antichrist in Scripture

The Antichrist is identified by a number of names throughout the Bible. Below are just a few examples:

The lawless one (*2Thessalonians 2:8*)

A master of intrigue (*Daniel 8:23*)

A worthless shepherd (*Zechariah 11:16*)

A stern-faced king (*Daniel 8:23*)

The ruler, or prince, who is to come (*Daniel 9:26*)

A little horn (*Daniel 7:8*)

The beast (*Revelation 13:1*)

The beast from the abyss (*Revelation 11:7*)

The Assyrian (*Isaiah 10:24*)

The son of perdition (*2 Thessalonians 2:3*)

The King of Babylon (*Isaiah 14:4*)

The rider on the white horse (*Revelation 6:2*)

As a side note, it is noteworthy that this rider on the white horse is presented in the Book of Revelation as the first of the judgements of God upon a world that has become completely wicked and reprobate. The Apostle Paul also expresses this idea in some of his Epistles. Writing to the Thessalonians he says:

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.

(2 Thessalonians 2:9-13)

This deception, or *delusion*, can only deceive those who do not love and receive God's truth; such people will believe the lie, or what is false, because they are ready for it and want it. In response God sends them the Antichrist. As a Christian writer rightly commented: "They were first deceived, which was their sin; and God sent them

a strong delusion and that is their punishment.” Paul repeats this in chapter one of his Letter to the Romans; that the Lord judges the unrepentant by giving them up to the lusts and depravity of their heart.

I believe one of the devil’s lies that God gives man over to believe is the lie that has been from the beginning of time; that God is not God and everyone and everything is and can be God.

Back to the names and titles of the Antichrist. Among the many names given to describe him in Scripture, most people know him by the name given him by the Apostle John in his Epistles – the Antichrist:

Dear children this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.

(1 John 2:18)

Though many people throughout the centuries have been antichrists, operated in that spirit, the Antichrist – capital A – is coming; a man who will be the devil incarnate, the seed of Satan, and evil personified (see also *1 John 2:22, 4:3; 2 John 7*).

As the name suggests, he will be against God and His Christ. But be warned, the prefix *anti* can also mean *in place of*, and it is very probable both meanings will apply to this coming ruler. He will indeed oppose Jesus, but in the most cunning way it could be done; by pretending to be Him, or of Him. He may even make attempts to fulfil Old Testament Messianic prophecies in order to meet the Jewish expectations of their coming Messiah.

God inspired His Prophets to use these names and titles, that indicate much about the Antichrist’s career, nature, goals, power, agenda and ultimate defeat at the hands of Jesus Christ, so that His people would have the information they need to identify him when

he arrives. Those who have studied the Bible will know who he is because he will rise to rule the world through a confederation of European and Mediterranean nations – the prophesied revival of the ancient Roman Empire, that stretched from England to Egypt, and included Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

While for many centuries millions of Jews, Christians, and even Muslims, have been fascinated by the Bible's predictions that the most wicked ruler in history will arise in the final years, others have felt tremendous confusion and fear at the mention of his name.

This fear and confusion derives mainly from a misunderstanding about the Antichrist's identity and what powers he can exercise over God's people during the Great Tribulation. In this chapter I will try to dispel those fears and remove that confusion.

His Personality

The Antichrist will live up to the names given to him, in that he will deceive mankind about his true nature and identity, persecute and kill the people of God, and lead the armies of the world into the Battle of Armageddon.

He will be the most powerful dictator the world has ever seen, making all others appear weak in comparison. You will remember the four major kingdoms described in Daniel's prophetic vision (*Daniel 7:2-8*) were likened to certain animals. Babylon was depicted as a lion, the Medo-Persian Empire was likened to a bear, Greece to a swift leopard and Rome was given the title of a ten-horned ferocious beast.

In the Apostle John's description of the beast in the Book of Revelation we find all of these characteristics combined into one horrific creature:

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like that of a bear and the mouth like that of a lion.

(Revelation 13:1-2b)

The likeness of the Antichrist to these beasts is designed to show us that he combines in his person all the characteristics of the kingdoms that went before him. The Prophet Daniel gives us another description of his personality:

And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressions are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many, he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes but he shall be broken without hand.

(Daniel 8:23-26)

Here Daniel tells us that the future world leader will come forth “*In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressions are come to the full.*” This indicates the fulfilment of these prophecies will not occur until man’s sinful rebellion against God reaches its limits prior to and during the seven-year Tribulation Period.

Daniel’s prophecy above also reveals that the Antichrist will be a strong and forceful leader or king with “*fierce countenance,*” which probably means he will have a striking appearance. He will

understand “*dark sentences,*” may indicate his involvement in the occult and satanic religion.

The saying that the Antichrist shall “*prosper and practice*” seems to imply that he will bring tremendous economic prosperity, at least at the beginning. His success will cause him to “*magnify himself in his heart*” and blaspheme God. Yet he will finally meet his doom when he battles the armies of heaven and confronts the King of kings, who will cast him alive into the lake of fire.

Daniel also declared that “*His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power.*” This means that the Antichrist will exercise absolute control, which will enable him to consolidate total power over politics, economies and wars, and that he will be possessed and empowered directly by Satan himself.

Interestingly, the very first prophecy in the Bible refers to the Antichrist as the offspring, or seed, of Satan. Here God addressed Satan saying:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

(Genesis 3.15-16)

The phrase your *offspring* suggests that in some spiritual way the Antichrist will be the actual seed of Satan. Does this mean he will be an incredibly evil man, motivated by wicked thoughts and satanic powers from his birth? Various theories have been advanced on this topic.

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we read the dragon is thrown out of heaven in a great war at the mid-point of the seven-year tribulation. Satan will be cast out of heaven by the Archangel Michael and his holy Angels, and will descend to Earth – knowing that his time is short – with great wrath and determined to destroy the people of God.

Further on, in chapter thirteen, we are told the dragon comes to Earth to begin this programme by embodying his agent:

The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. One of the heads of the beast seemed to have a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. Men worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, 'Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him'?

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.

(Revelation 13:2b-8)

One popular interpretation of this passage is that the Antichrist will actually be assassinated and supernaturally raised by the devil (*the fatal wound was healed*), and it is at this moment that he will be fully possessed in spirit, soul and body by Satan.

In another passage, Daniel gives us yet one more characteristic of the Antichrist – his charismatic speaking ability, that he will use to hypnotize the masses with hypnotic words of power and promise:

While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little horn, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

(Daniel 7:8-9)

Very often we underestimate the power of political candidates who have little to offer, but sway us by their oratory skills. As Daniel says, this coming leader will be renowned for this kind of eloquence, which will make him irresistible. Yet the Antichrist will not only speak in high-blown terms, but will also utter blasphemy against God:

After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.

(Daniel 7:24b-26)

Although the man of sin will appear to be of great intelligence, persuasiveness and peace, underneath this appearance he will hate all things of God Almighty and will take pleasure in perverting His Laws. During the final three and a half years of his power over mankind (*for a time, times and half a time*) he will constantly blaspheme God privately and in public. John comments on this also:

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven.

(Revelation 13:5-7)

Daniel's prophecy about changing the "*set times and the laws*" could well mean that the Antichrist will attempt to change the present calendar used throughout much of the world – A.D. These letters refer to Anno Domini, or year of the Lord, and are quite offensive to the enemies of Jesus Christ.

For this reason, it is very possible that the Antichrist will seek to introduce a new worldwide calendar just like in the early days of the French Revolution, when the new leaders sought to gain control of the peoples by changing everything that grew out of Christian tradition.

The revolutionaries established a new calendar where the years were numbered from the date of the revolution and not from the birth of the Lord. They also attempted to substitute the seven-day week established by God with a ten-day week. Such extreme hatred and hostility to everything related to Christ will characterize the Antichrist. This man will despise all existing laws, particularly those based on Judeo-Christian values and introduce his own lawless system. Look around you, my friend, we are already there!

Jew or Gentile?

Over the centuries many have pondered the interesting question who the Antichrist might be and from what race he will arise from. Some have suggested that he might be a reincarnated leader from the past, such as Nimrod, King Ahab, Julius Caesar, Nero, Titus, Emperor Hadrian or Judas Iscariot.

They believe Judas Iscariot might be the Antichrist because the Apostle Paul refers to him in Scripture as the “*son of perdition*” (2 *Thessalonians* 2:3). This strange title is used only of one other person in all of Scripture, namely Judas (*John* 17:12) and in both cases the Bible indicates that these individuals were and will be possessed by Satan.

Yet it is more likely the title son of perdition is given to these two individuals because both of them are destined to eternal punishment, or perdition, in hell because of their open rebellion against God and His Christ.

In more recent times prophetic speculations have considered Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, Henry Kissinger, Sadam Hussein, Mao of China, David Rockefeller and various popes as potential candidates.

Concerning the Antichrist's racial identity some scholars believe there are hints in selected biblical passages that he will be a Jew. The first indication is said to be found in the Book of Daniel, where it is said he will succeed in convincing Israel to sign a covenant or peace treaty, with her Arab neighbours (*Daniel 9:27*). It is argued that it would be unlikely the Israeli government would put their trust in a Gentile leader.

The second indication also comes from the Prophet Daniel, where he recorded that the Antichrist will speak marvellous things against the God of gods and not regard the God of his fathers (see *Daniel 11:36-38*). Significantly, this phrase appears several times in Scripture, and in every single case it is used exclusively in reference to the Jews. For example, in reference to the evil King Amon, the Old Testament records: "*He forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the Lord*" (*2 Kings 21:22*).

Adherents to this view say it would not make sense for God to inspire His Prophet to comment upon the fact that a pagan Gentile rejected the pagan god of his fathers for another equally false god, unless the Antichrist will be Jewish.

The third prophecy given to indicate the Antichrist will be of Jewish origin is found in the following prophecy of Ezekiel:

And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it; and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him.

(Ezekiel 21:25-27)

It has been pointed out that the “*wicked prince*” in this unusual prophecy is a reference to the Antichrist. If this is true, it is almost inconceivable that a wicked prince of Israel would be a Gentile. Ezekiel’s prophecy also warns that the temporary triumph of the wicked prince of Israel would end when Christ returns, “*whose right it is.*”

Another prophecy scholars believe is an indication that the Antichrist will arise from the Jewish race is again found in the prophecies of Ezekiel. The Prophet was given a vision of the future world dictator being killed in the manner of a Gentile and not of a Jew. Ezekiel described the event in the following way:

Will you say “I am a god,” in the presence of those who kill you, though you are but a mortal, and no god, in the hands of those who wound you? You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hands of foreigners; for I have spoken says the Lord God.

(Ezekiel 28:9-10)

It is argued that for this prophecy to make sense the Antichrist would have to be Jewish, but be killed and buried in a manner consistent with a Gentile. Otherwise, why would God inspire His Prophet to describe the death of the uncircumcised, Gentile Antichrist dying the death of the uncircumcised?

Finally, and most importantly, Jesus warned the nation of Israel against accepting a false messiah in the last days. It is illogical, and virtually impossible, that any Gentile could possibly present himself to the Jewish people of Israel as a credible candidate. Yet Jesus said:

I have come in my Father’s name, and you receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

(John 5:43-44)

Here the New Testament uses the Greek word *allos* to describe the imposter or Antichrist. This word translates as *another*, which clearly means *another of the same genus or kind*. The New Testament does not use the Greek word *heteros*, which means *another of a different order*. In other words, Jesus declared that He as the Messiah and Son of David presented Himself to Israel but was rejected. Yet in the last days *another* of the same background would be accepted as the promised Messiah.

This certainly fits in with the name assigned to Antichrist by the Apostle John in his Epistles. As we said previously, the name Antichrist indicates that this individual will be opposed to Jesus in every respect, but at the same time will imitate or impersonate Him by posing as a messianic figure.

This Much We Know

Whatever the identity of this impostor, or whether he will be a Jew or Gentile, Scripture clearly indicates where he will arise from and that his name will be connected with the mystical Hebrew or Greek number 666.

In his famous prophecy of the seventy weeks the Prophet Daniel warns us: “*The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary*” (Daniel 9:26). The unusual grammar of this prophecy reveals that the Antichrist will be a real leader, or prince, who will rise to power in the last days and lead the revived Roman Empire of a ten-nation unified super state.

The words of the prophecy quoted above were precisely fulfilled in A.D. 70, when the Roman armies (*people*), led by Prince Titus, son of Emperor Vespasian, completely destroyed Jerusalem and killed thousands of its inhabitants. However, Daniel’s prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman legions also looks ahead to the time of the end and makes reference to the final attack on the

city of Jerusalem by the Antichrist (*the ruler who will come*) that will take place during the seven-year peace treaty, or covenant, that he will make with “*many*.”

Since it was the Roman Empire and its armies that destroyed Jerusalem and its sanctuary in A.D. 70, it logically follows that “*the ruler who will come*” must come out of the Roman Empire and people and rule over its revived form in the last days.

His Military Success

In chapters seven, eight and eleven of the Book of Daniel we are given a vision of the military success of the coming world dictator. As we saw in chapter seven of this book, Daniel chapter seven describes four great beasts that rise out of the sea. The fourth animal was dreadful and terrible and it had “*ten horns*.”

Fortunately for Daniel, God sent him an Angel to explain that the four great beasts represented four kingdoms that would arise out of the Earth and that the fourth kingdom, the ancient Roman Empire, would rise again into the world’s first super state in the form of a ten-nation Roman confederacy in the last days.

While Daniel was considering the vision of the ten future kingdoms, he saw something else, that an eleventh king, the “*little horn*,” will rise up among the nations of the original ten kings. This means that the coming ruler will arrive on the scene after the ten-nation Roman confederacy is in place. The Apostle John also describes this super state composed of ten future nations that will form the power base of the future world dictator. He wrote:

And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

(Revelation 17:12-13)

The phrase “*one hour*” probably means the alliance will be only for a short period of time. The Antichrist will most likely take advantage of a future crisis in Europe, or of a moment of instability within the federation, and either by war, or by clever manipulation, seize (*put down*) three of the ten nations within the federation and abrogate their economic, political and military power to himself (*Daniel 7:8, 7:24b*).

The remaining seven nations of the original ten will submit to his dominion and willingly accept his dictatorial rule over their population. He will then expand his empire through wars and false peace treaties until he gains a grip on all nations of the world.

Chapter seven of Daniel seems to indicate that the Antichrist will appear on the scene and gain power gradually, as did Napoleon and Hitler, beginning as one among many minor political leaders. In prophetic language he is described as the “*little horn*” who increases his power. John also seems to emphasize this fact when he said he will arise out of the sea:

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

(Revelation 13.1)

The sea in prophetic symbolism represents the Gentile world, or nations, or more specifically, the general mass of humanity or ordinary people. We find confirmation for this meaning of the word *sea*, or *waters*, in Revelation chapter seventeen: “*Then the angel said to me, ‘The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.’”*

The Apostle John goes on to give us a further description of the Antichrist’s military success during the early years of his career:

The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. Men worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?”

(Revelation 13:3-5)

His power and victories will be so great that the majority of this world will reject God’s message of salvation and willingly and enthusiastically join in the open worship of Satan and his partner. Does that seem hard to imagine? I have said this several times before, yet worth repeating: Already around the world today exists a very deep and dark inner rebellion against God. Men and women who have not received the Holy Spirit into their lives are open to great spiritual deception, no matter how refined, educated or religious they may be.

It is my personal opinion that those who worship the beast – bow down, support and submit to his government and rule – will not even be aware they are worshipping the evil one; so seared will be their consciences. They may even think they are doing something honourable, but it is worship of Satan none the less and they have no excuse for their ignorance. I am reminded of the words of Jesus; when speaking of coming persecutions, and the blindness of Israel’s religious leaders, said: *“Those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God.”*

His False Peace Treaties

The ancient prophecies of the Bible also reveal that the Antichrist will use great demonic deception and false peace treaties, as did Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin, to deceive the nations of the world. In Daniel we read:

And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many.

(Daniel 8:25)

The world's continuous peace conferences will no doubt create some unique opportunities for him to use great deception against his opponents. One of his first treacherous acts will be to sign an important peace treaty with many:

He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator.

(Daniel 9:27)

Scholars differ on the interpretation of these Scriptures, but the most popular interpretation is the “*many*” refers to the leaders of Israel. Israel will sign a treaty, or covenant, with the Antichrist and that this treaty will be designed to last for “*one week*” of years.

I explained in a previous chapter that the ancient Jews used *heptads*, or weeks of years, to indicate a period of a seven-year duration, just as we use decades to refer to a period of a ten-year duration. So the word *week* could be used by biblical writers to refer to either years or days.

Note in the Book of Daniel the Prophet tells us the Angel Gabriel was delayed “*three full weeks*” by satanic forces in answering his prayer (*Daniel 10:2*). Further on in the same chapter Daniel clarifies his meaning by specifying that these particular weeks refers to weeks of days, not weeks of years, “*The prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me twenty-one days*” (*10:13*).

Therefore, the peace treaty will be made to last for a period of seven years. It will most probably be an attempt to resolve the Arab-Israeli

conflict, which has been the focus of world attention for decades, and will guarantee Israel peace and security for that time duration. It has been suggested that Israel will be duped into thinking this peace treaty would eventually be a lasting agreement, because it would be difficult to imagine any national or political leader taking seriously a peace agreement that was proposed to last for such a period of time.

Yet former president of the United States, Jimmy Carter, and the leaders of HAMAS proposed a peace treaty – a *hudna* – to Israel with a ten-year time limit. It could well be that in the last days Israel and her leaders will be so wearied of continual threats of war that they will think any treaty, even one proposed for a prescribed time period, would be better than nothing at all.

Alliance with the Global Faith Community

The Book of Revelation declares that in his rise to power the Antichrist will also benefit much from a political alliance with the world's largest pagan religious organization referred to in Scripture as the "*Whore of Babylon.*" Initially, he will use the religious propaganda of this global faith community to consolidate his power. But once he obtains his goal, he will instruct the ten leaders of his kingdom to destroy the false church with fire (*Revelation 17:16-18*). We will speak more on this subject in chapter nineteen.

Will a Third Temple Be Built?

It is held by some biblical commentators that during the first half of the Great Tribulation the Antichrist will allow the animal sacrifice system of the Jews to continue in a newly-built Third Temple at Jerusalem under the protection of the seven-year treaty.

But after tolerating the resumption of Israel's Temple worship for a while, he will break the peace covenant three-and-one-half years after the initial signing of the treaty (*half of the week*) and "*Make sacrifice and offering cease.*"

Adherents to this view believe at this moment the satanic trinity will set up the Image of the Beast in the Most Holy Place, which will qualify as the "*abomination which causes desolation*" described in Daniel chapter nine (see also *Daniel 12:11*). Others see the Antichrist himself taking his seat in the Temple and declaring himself to be God as the abomination that desolates. The Apostle Paul says:

Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. 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. Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed when his time comes. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed. And then the lawless one will be revealed.

(2 Thessalonians 2:3-8)

A foreshadow of the former happened in 168 B.C., when the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes put a stop to the Temple sacrifice (see *Daniel 8:11, 11:31-32*) and set up his own image in the Temple to be worshipped.

Whether it is the Antichrist or his Image that qualifies as the abomination that causes desolation, Jesus Himself seems to confirm that there will indeed be a Third Temple during the last days, and that the Antichrist will commit an act of supreme defiance against

God and defile it. He specifically warned His disciples to flee to the mountains and not look back when this occurred:

So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation' spoken of through the prophet Daniel, let the reader understand, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of the house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak.

How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never be equalled again.

(Matthew 24:15-22)

More on the Fatal Wound Healed

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.

(Revelation 13:3)

One of the most popular interpretations on this passage is that the Antichrist will be assassinated and supernatural resurrected by the devil. This is believed to happen when he comes to Jerusalem and stops the daily sacrifice, and defiles the Third Temple. At this time many Jews will recognize him as the prophesied anti-messiah. But instead of waging war, they will assassinate him with a knife wound to the head.

Adherents to this view also suggest that upon death the Antichrist will go directly to hades – the place where those who rejected Christ wait for their ultimate consignment; one of the reasons why he is depicted in the Book of Revelation as ascending from the abyss

(*Revelation 11:7, 17:8*). And that just as Satan tempted the Son of God by offering Him the kingdoms of the world as a reward for worshipping him, Satan will make the same offer to the Antichrist in the debts of the Abyss and he will gladly accept. In return the devil will infuse him to the core of his being with complete wickedness and rage:

The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

(*Revelation 13:2-3*)

When he ascends from Hades with his mortal wound miraculously healed, his evil partner, the False Prophet, will capitalize on the world's amazement and use the event to convince the masses to worship the Antichrist as the world's long-awaited messiah:

Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.

(*Revelation 13:11-13*)

There are, however, various other convincing interpretations to these biblical passages. As interesting as they may be, for the sake of time and space, I must confine myself to those given above.

Persecutions for the Saints

Chapter twelve of Revelation is another one of those chapters that has brought forth a variety of very interesting interpretations. Here

we are told that Satan makes war against the Archangel Michael to control heaven, but his attempts fail and result in total defeat and banishment:

And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death. Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short.”

(Revelation 12:7-13)

Next we see that Satan (the dragon), full of wrath, immediately begins to pursue and persecute “*The woman who had given birth to the male child,*” “*Who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron*” (*Revelation 12:5*). The woman is considered an obvious metaphor for the nation of Israel, through whom the male child, Jesus Christ, was born:

So when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly from the serpent into the

wilderness, to her place where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time.

Then from his mouth the serpent poured water like a river after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, it opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.

Then the dragon was angry with the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

(Revelation 12:13-18)

Satan will not accomplish his intended annihilation of Israel. God will prepare a special place for the Jews in the desert. Those who follow the words of Jesus (*Matthew 24:15-22*) and flee to the desert will be supernaturally protected and will escape the religious persecutions of the Antichrist's forces:

The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

(Revelation 12:6-7)

Biblical scholars identify the desert area of divine protection as Edom, Moab and Ammon – modern day Jordan – in Scripture. With Satan and his demons cast down to Earth to join forces with the Antichrist and the False Prophet, the powers of hell will be unfurled on our planet as never before in history.

The prophecy of John quoted above reveals that the objects of their wrath will not only be the Jewish people (the physical offspring of Abraham), but the spiritual offspring – *“Those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.”*

Adherents to a pre-Tribulation rapture interpret these saints to be those who come to faith in Christ during the Great Tribulation. They

teach that during this period millions of Jews and Gentiles will reject the propaganda of the world dictator as a result of the 144,000 witnesses of chapter seven, and the two witnesses of chapter eleven, employed by God during this period.

Many of these believers will be captured and seal their new-found faith with martyrdom (see *Revelation 6:9-11, 7:9-14*), yet they will receive a special blessing from God for their courageous faith and devotion.

Most believers during that period will be easily identified because the Antichrist will require that all men on Earth swear total allegiance to him. All who refuse will not be given the Antichrist's special identifying mark on their forehead or hand. Without it nobody will be able to buy or sell anything. Only a believer in Jesus Christ would have reason to refuse to bow the knee.

Limited Power and Time

While the Antichrist is a terrifying person; the epitome of evil, the ultimate negation of all that is good and the enemy of God Almighty and His people, we must not forget that neither he nor Satan is equal to God. Therefore, they do not have absolute power or anything close to it; they will be able to do what they do only for as long as God Almighty allows.

The ancient biblical prophecies regarding the Antichrist's power over the saints reveal the exact time limit of their dominion. Phrases like "*1,260 days*," "*forty-two months*," "*for a time, times and half a time*" indicate that it will be for three and one half years; from the time of the Antichrist's sacrilegious defiling of the Temple in Jerusalem until the moment of his destruction at the Second Advent of the Lord.

18

THE FALSE PROPHET, THE IMAGE AND THE MARK

The Book of Revelation clearly reveals that there will be more than one beast. In addition to the Antichrist, there will come a second beast, referred to by John as the False Prophet:

Then I saw another beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed.

It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in sight of all, and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived.

(Revelation 13:11-15)

As you can see, this creature has the appearance of a gentle and harmless lamb, but it has the voice of a dragon. In other words, the False Prophet will appear to all to be a gentle, caring and benevolent being, but his voice, the content and meaning of what he says, will be anything but truthful and godly. As the name of this wicked man implies, he will probably be a religious figure and may even head up or take over the end-time apostate church.

His role will be to make the new end-time world religion acceptable and appealing to the appetites of man. Like most false prophets, his arguments will be convincing, almost hypnotic, appearing so right, exactly what the *itching ears* of un-regenerated man will want to hear. Jesus warned us of such impostors and deceivers: “*Beware of*

false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15).

The role of the False Prophet will also be to cause the masses to worship the Antichrist and he will convince them by relying on the ability given him to perform “*great signs.*”

What the Signs Might Be

There has been a growing interest over the last few years in UFO phenomena and the subject of aliens from outer space. During a speech Chuck Missler pointed out that, “The Vatican has a substantial investment in technology staff and facilities and are openly admitting they are preparing to receive an alien visitor.”

Also the New Age religion has incorporated beliefs about extra-terrestrial visitors from other planets. And there are numerous testimonies of people around the world who claim to have had direct encounters with aliens and many believe the United States’ government has conspired in a cover up about alien encounters in our world.

I do believe there is a significant percentage of people who have had real supernatural experiences or visitations. However, I believe these visitations are not from aliens from other planets, but encounters from another dimension – the invisible or spiritual realm.

In short, it is my opinion that these people have had encounters with demons. It is noteworthy that many personal testimonies of alien encounters have come from people who previous to their experience had significant involvement with the occult.

So John’s reference to the False Prophet “*making fire down from heaven to earth*” may be a reference to some kind of supernatural demonstration performed by demons passing themselves off as aliens.

The “*great signs*,” could also be a reference to counterfeit miracles and healings, and baptisms in the Holy Spirit. With all due respect to the sincere Christians involved, we have already been witnessing such things from the New Apostolic Reformation Movement (NAR).

The great signs the False Prophet performs could also be an allusion to some supernatural solutions for the economic, political and environmental catastrophes our world is facing and will face in the future; crisis that we said in chapter fourteen have been secretly planned and carried out by the elite. Time will tell.

The satanic power given to this wicked man to perform miracles will easily deceive the world because many will presume they are from God. That is why Jesus and other New Testament writers warn us continually not to be deceived simply on the basis of a miracle. Remember we said you should “*test the spirits*” against the revealed truth in Scripture.

Controlling the Masses

As the Book of Revelation reveals, the deception strategies of the Antichrist’s partner that we have noted so far are only preludes to the other outrageously deceptive acts by which he will gain ultimate control of the masses:

And by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived, and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

(Revelation 13:14-16)

The False Prophet will convince the people to build an image to be used as a means of worshipping the Antichrist. Many have speculated about what the Image of the Beast will be exactly. Some suggest it may refer to a kind of virtual reality or computer generated image.

I read an article how in India some years ago the Hare Krishna Society hired computer animators from the United States to build literal robots of Hindu gods that can move and talk. People will travel to this Hare Krishna temple to hear these robots created to look like Hindu gods speaking to them.

It may also be after the pattern of the worship demanded by the Roman emperors where all residents in the empire were required to burn a pinch of incense before a statue of Caesar as Lord. More modern examples of this can be seen in the totalitarian states like the Soviet Union or China and their statues of Stalin and Mao.

Only time will reveal exactly what the image is and how it will operate, but these two things we know for sure: The False Prophet will cause the image to speak and it will have power to discover those who will not worship the satanic trinity and kill them. Moreover, because of its supernatural life and death power, it is just one step from the Antichrist's ultimate goal – control of the world's economy:

Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. This calls for wisdom; let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.

(Revelation 13:16-18)

The Nature of the Mark

For many centuries the Mark of the Beast has fascinated millions and has formed the basis of many speculations about its meaning and connection to the identity of the Antichrist. Scripture reveals the mark will be related to both the name of the Beast and the number of his name. Some scholars believe it will most likely be a physical and visible mark.

The False Prophet will oblige the inhabitants of the Earth to receive the mark on their right hand or forehead during the final part of the Great Tribulation. One commentator suggested a reason for having the mark on the forehead might be because some individuals may be maimed due to an accident. Or it could also be that the different locations of the mark on the body depend on the status of the followers of the Antichrist. For example, high-level officials would not have to wear the mark on their forehead, but would choose to wear it on the right hand.

Whatever the case, the world will operate under a single economic system in the last days. In this system no one will be able to buy or sell without receiving the mark. It will serve as the only means to live and survive. The fact that it is the False Prophet who orchestrates this economic system may indicate that besides being a renowned religious figure, he will probably be an expert in commerce as well.

Technology May Pave the Way

It has been suggested the Mark of the Beast system will eliminate money in all its previous physical forms and force men to buy and sell through a system that will require the possession of your own individual mark or number.

If this is true, the prophecy was both astonishing and improbable when John wrote it down in the first century. How could one number be the key to allow a person to transact business, to obtain commodities or to complete any financial transactions.

For many years people thought the mark would be a tattoo on the right hand or forehead. Yet today the number of your credit card account is essential to much of your buying and selling. In a matter of just a few years, ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) have been placed in many supermarkets, enabling you to pay with your ATM card, or credit card.

Interestingly, ATMs worldwide were tested some years ago with a new electronic device that can identify people by taking an electronic photo of their eye when they walk up to an ATM machine.

A company in New Jersey, USA, called Sensa invented an ID system that takes pictures of a consumer's iris. Citibank has spent more than \$3 million to help invest this technology as they believe that PIN numbers are often lost or stolen.

However, Automated Teller Machines were just the beginning of the payment revolution in making our world cashless. Political, economic and social issues columnist for the Washington Post, Robert Samuelson, verifies this statement in the following words:

It is one of those vast social upheavals that everyone understands but that hardly anyone notices, because it seems too ordinary. The long predicted "cashless society" has quietly arrived, or nearly so. Electronic money is cheaper than cash or cheques and its more convenient... We have crossed a cultural as well as an economic threshold when plastic and money are synonymous.

Writing along the same lines the chief executive of Visa in Europe declared: “Paying for goods with notes and coins could be consigned to history within five years... and some retailers could soon start surcharging customers if they choose to buy products with cash.”

Paperless-ness has its obvious benefit of saving time and nature, but there is another motivation for a cashless society – money is not hygienic. By this I mean that banknotes may be reservoirs for flu viruses. Viruses can survive on banknotes for as long as seventeen days, but a little less on plastic because it is less porous than paper.

Radio Frequency Identification Chips

It has also been suggested that the Mark of the Beast will be implanted as a microchip beneath the skin of the right hand or forehead. Most of us are familiar with external electronic badge systems and also the RFID chips in credit cards. In fact, if you never leave home without your passport or American Express Card, you are carrying an RFID tag and can be tracked anywhere you go.

But now a less familiar technology is making it feasible for RFID microchips to be implanted beneath the skin, which can hold data and records on your complete identity. A powerful electronic scanner detects the chip and reads the vital identification data.

In some countries this invasive technology is already a reality. Dr Kevin Warwick, a professor and superintendent of the Cybernetics Department at the University of Reading in England, claimed to be the first person in the world to be implanted with a sophisticated computer chip. I quote: “This chip allowed Warwick to communicate with the University’s communication system in order to receive e-mails and other communications by radio transmission to the computer chip implanted beneath the skin of his arm.”

This new technology of biochip implants can be placed inside the skin of an animal or human to be used also for identification or tracking purposes. Reports reveal that Japan invested over \$250 million in a ten-year program to develop a whole new system of bio implants. Many experts believe that it is the illegal immigration issue and the fear of child kidnapping that will cause the public to accept easily this kind of technology in the future.

Technology Is Not Evil

Before we go any further, it is important to underline that there is not necessarily anything evil or bad about the technology we have spoken about above, although it certainly outlines a scenario where a 666 system could be easily put in place. Credit cards, computerized smart cards, automated teller machines, laser scanning and radio-frequency identification chips are all just a collection of silicone and data bits and have no moral persuasion of their own.

Like money or weapons of war, these technologies are completely dependent on the purposes and priorities of those who use them. On the other hand, these technologies, or a cashless society, could become evil, or an instrument of the Antichrist, if the condition for receiving such an implant on your hand or forehead was a requirement to renounce your faith in Jesus Christ and accept the dictates of the new global faith community.

During the judgements of the Great Tribulation terrible skin infections will break out on the people who accept the Mark of the Beast:

Then I heard a loud voice from the Temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." So the first angel went and poured his bowl

on the earth, and a foul and painful sore came on those who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped its image.

(Revelation 16:1-3)

If the mark has anything to do with technology, it is possible that these sores will be caused by the technique used to implant it in the body.

Could it Be the Pride Flag?

Some Christian commentators believe the Mark of the Beast is connected to the LGBT Rainbow Flag. They point out that the hand and forehead are biblical symbols of a person's beliefs and behaviours. In other words, what you believe and how you act upon those beliefs identify you as either belonging to Christ or Satan.

This means the Mark of the Beast is not a physical or visible mark but symbolic; it is the intentional denial of the Lordship of Jesus Christ and open rejection of the authority of His Word. It means having allowed oneself to be conformed to the evil world system as opposed to accepting the Mark of the Lamb (*Revelation 7:1-4*), which is the Holy Spirit, given to those who receive Jesus and offer their bodies as living sacrifices to be transformed into His image by the renewing of their minds (*Romans 12:2-3*).

This interpretation does seem to fit in with other passages of Scripture that speak of the believer being "*Marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.*" In his letters to the churches Paul writes:

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

(Ephesians 1:13-15)

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption.

(Ephesians 4:30)

But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first instalment.

(2 Corinthians 1:21-23)

In his commentary on Ephesians the renowned historian F.F. Bruce gives a good insight into Paul's usage of the words *mark with a seal* when he wrote:

An owner seals his property with his signet to mark it as his; if at a later time he comes to claim it and his right to it is questioned, his seal is sufficient evidence and puts an end to such questioning. So, the fact that believers are endowed with the Spirit is the token that they belong in a special sense to God...

Other seals, literal or figurative, (like circumcision, the seal of the Covenant with Abraham), were affixed externally, the seal of the New Covenant is imprinted in the believing heart.

You may be wondering what this all has to do with the LGBT Rainbow Flag. I would need to invest pages to inform you of the anti-Christian persecutions prevalent in Western Society today regarding this issue. Businesses and individuals all over the world are being reviled, fired, fined and sanctioned for refusing to celebrate, endorse or promote the Gay Agenda, by decorating their windows or products with the Pride Flag.

They refuse to allow the LGBT activists to dictate to them what they believe or do, but at the same time have had their commercial activities terminated. In addition, faithful Christians are finding it extremely difficult to find companies and stores that do not show solidarity or promote the LGBT Movement, and that has not taken their symbol on their products.

Help for the Tribulation Saints

The Book of Revelation was written in the Greek language which was the commonly used language throughout the Roman world in the days of Christ. Greek was introduced when Alexander the Great conquered the known world from Italy to India in 320 B.C. and established the Greek culture and language everywhere. Although the Romans and their legal system usually used Latin, most educated people, even in Rome, wrote and discussed intellectual matters in the Greek language.

One of the particular features of the Greek, and even Hebrew, language is that they do not use the Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3. Instead, they express numbers by assigning a letter from their alphabet, a practice known to the Jews as *Geometria* or *Gimetria*.

This transition from number to letter, or from letter to number, is similar to the way Roman numerals use letters to designate numbers. For example, in the Roman numerals the letter X stood for 10 and M for 1000.

But the Greeks used every letter of their alphabet. For example, the letter a stood for 1 and the letter b for 2. When John recorded the number of the beast, he wrote it in the original manuscript using three Greek letters that represented the number 666. These letters were translated in our English Bible as six hundred and sixty-six.

Bible prophecy scholar Grant Geffrey pointed out that the number 666 indicates that the letters in the Greek name of the Antichrist

will add up to 666. Geffrey said it is also possible that his name will equal 666 in the Hebrew language also, since he might be a Jew. This number system does not work in any other language so it is futile to consider names in other languages. Neither is this puzzle intended to point the finger at some unknown person. Instead, it is intended to confirm to the followers of Christ a person already suspected as being the Antichrist.

Geffrey believes the purpose of predicting the future world dictator will possess a name that has a numeric value equal to 666 is to provide the tribulation saints, both Jews and Gentiles, with the means to determine his true identity.

Without the knowledge that the Antichrist's name will be equal to this number, the saints could be deceived into taking the mark and worshipping him. Those who live through the tribulation will recognize the Antichrist based on his fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

Implications for Christians Today

Dear friend, the modern technologies and current trends listed above and elsewhere in this book reveal that many systems are now available to fulfil the predictions made by the Prophets thousands of years ago.

While it is true that the terrifying events described in Revelation 13 take place at the mid-point of the seven-year tribulation, it is also true that these events will not just suddenly begin to happen at that point; they will actually have been building momentum during the preceding years and will have disturbing implications for Christians.

Yet whether we are pressured by political correctness, anti-biblical government laws, or ecumenicalism, we cannot allow ourselves to waver or give in. When fear or rejection keep us from defending

our beliefs in biblical truths, our failure to take a stand for Christ becomes a decision to stand with Satan.

There is no neutrality in the Kingdom of God. In Jesus' own words: "*Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters*" (Matthew 12:30). As believers, we must continue to be God's people in the world, holding up *His* standards and obeying *His* will, no matter what the cost.

The Price for Receiving and Refusing

When a person decides to worship the Image of the Beast and take the Mark, that person is making a decision to renounce Jesus Christ as Lord and God and actually worship the devil. The Bible warns us that there is a price to pay for those who will do such a thing. So very severe a price that God in His mercy will send an Angel to warn mankind against doing it:

Then another angel, a third, followed them, crying with a loud voice, "Those who worship the beast and its image, and receive a mark on their foreheads or on their hands, they will also drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into a cup of his anger, and they will be tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image and for anyone who receives the mark of its name."

(Revelation 14:9-12)

While the tribulation advances, it appears that the wicked followers of the Antichrist are getting safety and protection, while the followers of Christ, who refuse to bow to Satan and take his number, are being persecuted and killed.

However, the bearers of Satan's mark prosper only as long as the Antichrist is in control. Eventually they will face God's terrible judgement and be cast into the lake of fire along with the Antichrist and the False Prophet. For those saints who refused to take the mark:

Then I saw thrones, and those who were seated upon them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

(Revelation 20:4-5)

These faithful children of God who suffered martyrdom for refusing to worship the satanic trinity were following the wise words of their Master when He said:

Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

(Matthew 10:28-29)

19

WHO IS BABYLON THE GREAT?

In Revelation chapter seventeen and eighteen John suspends once again his chronological story of future history to give a description of the great force behind the rise of the Antichrist and the revived Roman Empire to world dominion. Many of the symbols used elsewhere in the Book of Revelation and in the Book of Daniel are understood in light of these passages. To make the most of the prophetic material given in these two chapters I suggest we read all of it through before examining it in detail:

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgement of the great whore who is seated on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk."

So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman 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. When I saw her, I was greatly amazed. But the angel said to me, "Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her.

The beast that you saw, was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the

inhabitants of the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

This calls for a mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated, also, they are seven kings, of whom five have fallen, one is living, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain only a little while.

As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eight but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. They are united in yielding their power and authority to the beast; they will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

And he said to me, “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, they and the beast will hate the whore; they will make her desolate and naked, they will devour her flesh and burn her 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 17:1-18)

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendour. He called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul bird, a haunt of every foul and hateful beast.

For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxury.”

Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part 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.”

And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning, they will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, “Alas, alas, the great city, Babylon, the mighty city! For in one hour your judgement has come.”

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, cargo of gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, all articles of ivory, all articles of costly wood, bronze, iron, marble, cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, choice flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, slaves – and human lives. “The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your dainties and your splendour are lost to you, never to be found again!”

The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, “Alas, alas, the great city, clothed in fine

linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels and with pearls! For in one hour all this wealth has been laid waste!”

And all shipmasters and seafarers, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, “What city was like the great city?” And they threw dust on their heads, as they wept and mourned, crying out, “Alas, alas, the great city, where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in one hour she has been laid waste.” Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints and apostles and prophets! For God has given judgement for you against her.

Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “With such violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and will be found no more; and the sound of harpists and minstrels and of flutists and trumpeters will be heard in you no more; and an artisan of any trade will be found in you no more; and the sound of the millstone will be found in you no more; and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more; and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more; for your merchants were the magnates of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. And in you was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered on earth.”

(Revelation 18:1-24)

Many Bible scholars disagree on the fine points of the exact meaning and timing of these two chapters, but there is much that is clear. The system that John reveals as “*Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth’s abominations,*” will be the most powerful force in the world in the last days. Her influence over the world will come from her complete dominance in two major areas – religion and commerce.

When John saw the vision of this woman, the epitome of evil and ungodliness, and of the beast that carries her, he was both amazed and repulsed. The most appalling thing about her was that she was drunk with the blood of believers in Christ. Even more appalling, this whore has intoxicated the majority of people on Earth with the “*wine of her fornication*” or adulteries. When the Apostle says that she sits on many waters, he means she has control over vast numbers of peoples whom she has seduced in some way.

Her luxurious external appearance of jewels and royal clothes indicates she will appeal to the sensual nature of man, and her gold cup filled with abominations represents her corrupt and perverse doctrines. The whore’s drunkenness with the blood of the saints reveals how she successfully eliminates all who oppose her.

Why Call Her a Whore?

In the Bible the term *whore*, *harlot* and *adulterer* are frequently used to symbolize a spiritual departure from God and His Laws by an individual, a city or an entire nation. The Old Testament Prophets continually rebuked the nation of Israel for indulging in the false religion of her neighbours. Ezekiel and Hosea lament:

I spread the edge of my cloak over you, and covered your nakedness: I pledged myself to you and entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord God, and you became mine...

You grew exceedingly beautiful, fit to be a queen. Your fame spread among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of my splendour that I had bestowed on you, says the Lord God. But you trusted in your beauty, and played the whore because of your fame, and lavished your whorings on any passer-by.

(Ezekiel 16:8b-9, 13c-16)

Do not rejoice, O Israel! Do not exult as other nations do; for you have played the whore departing from your God. You have loved a prostitute's pay on all threshing floors.

(Hosea 9:1-2)

During the Tribulation Period, and in the years leading up to it, it will not be just a few nations practicing this type of spiritual adultery, but the entire world.

In the Book of Nahum the word whore is also connected with the practice of witchcraft. The word whore is also used to describe a religion that is counterfeit. Concerning the City of Jerusalem, the Prophet Isaiah cried: "*How the faithful city has become a whore*" (*Isaiah 1:21*).

So it is with this woman on a beast that John sees in his vision. She symbolizes an enormous pagan religious system that is so attractive and appealing to the senses and appetites of man that she will be able to seduce and gain control over all the Earth, both small and great, with her deceptions.

Her Abominable Doctrines

But what kind of religious system can we expect under this great whore? And how can it possibly bring together atheists, Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and cultural, but unbelieving, Christians? Many interpreters of this chapter have simply updated the thinking of the Protestant Reformers, who believed that the pope would be the Antichrist and the Roman Catholic Church the Whore of Babylon. Could there be some truth in this interpretation?

The name written on her forehead gives us a clue. What is it about the ancient city of Babylon that this great end-time false religious-economic system will emulate? A rule for interpreting symbols in the Bible is to examine their first usage in Scripture and every

successive occurrence therein. When we follow this rule, the meaning of Babylon is both clear and amazing.

We saw in chapter nine that the history of Babylon began on the plains of Shinar, where Nimrod (which means we will revolt) set about to establish a new world order in defiance of God Almighty. According to some ancient historians and archaeological discoveries, Nimrod intended to become the leader of both the government and the idolatrous religion that he and his wife Semiramis set up.

According to Josephus, in building the Tower of Babel Nimrod excited his subjects to display contempt for God. He persuaded them not to ascribe their strength to God, as if it were through *His* means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness. “He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on *his* power.”

Nimrod’s wife gave birth to a son, named Tammuz, who she claimed was a divine saviour and the fulfilment of *Genesis 3:15*, where God promised the “*seed of the woman*” would bring great blessing to humanity. This high-priestess of the world’s first organized idolatrous religious system made herself and her son the object of worship.

The symbol of this false religion was called the mother-child cult, with the mother holding her child in her arms. Many ancient artifacts have survived with the familiar motif of the mother Semiramis holding the saviour infant Tammuz.

The mother-child cult spread to Phoenicia, to Pergamon, where Satan had his throne, to Asia Minor and also to Israel. From Pergamon it spread to Rome and from there to the whole world, where it is practiced to this very day.

Baal was the local Canaanite name for the Babylonian Tammuz. The Prophet Ezekiel condemned the ceremony of weeping for Tammuz. Semiramis adopted the title queen of heaven. The Prophet Jeremiah mentions the practice of making cakes for the queen of heaven (*Jeremiah 7:18*) and of offering incense to her (*Jeremiah 44:17-19, 25*).

Historical documents reveal she taught that salvation came through her by means of the sprinkling of water and ceremonial cleansing. There was also a purgatorial cleansing after death. She also created temple virgins (today called nuns), who were told to fast forty days (now called Lent), and at the end of the fast they exchanged coloured eggs to celebrate the feast of Ishtar (now called Easter).

Other practices of the Babylonian religion included black magic, astrology and witchcraft. Many centuries later God pronounced judgement on Babylon, saying she had laboured with sorceries and astrology from her youth (*Isaiah 47:12-14*), indicating that these were practiced in Babylon from her very beginning. We also see evidence of this in the opening chapters of the Book of Daniel.

When the Angel of God told John that he would tell him the “*Mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her,*” he meant that this whore – the false religious system – would have as her main teaching the same practices as ancient Babylon; although the list above is not complete.

Now we know that the ancient city of Babylon was ruled and dominated by this religious influence, though not many people are aware that the religion of Babylon passed from empire to empire until the days of ancient Rome, when John wrote Revelation. Let us take a look.

Identity of the Seven Heads

In Chapter seventeen of Revelation we learn that the “*seven heads*” on the beast represent two things – “*seven mountains*” and “*seven kings*” or kingdoms. Many commentators associate the seven mountains to the seven hills of the city of Rome. Rome has been associated with her seven hills throughout Roman literature and on the coins of her day.

God’s Angel was revealing to John that the Babylonian religious system was influencing the Rome of John’s day, and was also synonymous with the city itself. This is clearly explained in the same chapter with this explanation: “*The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 17:18). Notice the use of the present tense here.

The reason John used this kind of biblical symbol is obvious. If he had clearly revealed some of the things he wrote that were against the Roman Empire – even though he was writing of its revived form in the last days – the government would have branded it as a seditious book inciting the overthrow of the Empire.

John tells us that the “*seven heads*” on the beast also represent “*seven kings*” or kingdoms, of which “*five have fallen, one is now, and the other is still to come.*” This is considered one of the more difficult passages in the Book of Revelation. Some explain these “*seven kings*” to be the succession of Roman emperors in John’s era, although there are many historical difficulties with this interpretation.

I agree they refer to those great world empires from the time of the original Babylon of Nimrod’s day that were dominated by the pagan religion of Babylon. They were Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo–Persia and Greece. When John speaks of the five kingdoms that have fallen, he refers to the five I have just mentioned above. But then he says, “*One is living,*” which can only be a reference to

Rome, the great empire of John's day which was filled with the very same beliefs and abominable practices that had originated on the plains of Shinar in ancient Babylon. This was the sixth kingdom in John's vision.

Then John looks to the future when he says of the seventh head: "*The other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain only a little while.*" As we have laboured to demonstrate in other chapters, this unquestionably refers to the revived form of ancient Rome, most likely the European Union, which is destined to bloom into the last great world empire.

The mystery John was seeking to unveil for his readers was that the Babylonian religion, which had passed from empire to empire until the days of ancient Rome, would rise again to control the great world power in the last days.

This religion will be an amalgamation of all the world's religions. By this I mean the convergence of religion and morality centred around the following few beliefs: Every practice must be permitted; every belief must be respected and every form of experience allowed, for we must not judge, be bigoted towards or censor anyone. However, there is an important exception to each of these principles. The word *anyone* excludes Born Again Bible believing Christians!

Friends, as stated elsewhere, this great New Age religious system is already revived, or, should I say, revealed, and in our midst. And on the basis of the latest current events, it is indeed bringing together Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, cultural Christians from every denomination, and the like.

This raises an important question: "When the Antichrist destroys the woman, does he destroy the location from which she rules?" Obviously not, since that would mean destroying his own capital. It is more likely that he will destroy her hierarchy and confiscate all

the wealth and world-wide businesses of this economic, religious system, and make himself God.

A Closer Look at the Beast

After the mighty Angel had given John a description of all the past world powers and their seduction by the Whore of Babylon, he now focuses his attention on the beast in its final form. While the beast in chapter seventeen has only seven heads, John tells us that the beast itself is “*an eight but it belongs to the seven,*” (an outgrowth of the seventh) – the revived Roman Empire – and will go to destruction. I believe this beast refers to both the revived Roman Empire and to the person who will eventually control it, the Antichrist.

Babylon’s Economic Aspect

As a religious system Babylon will dominate the spiritual life of the peoples of the Earth, as a commercial system it will determine their prosperity, making her the most powerful force in the world. The prophecy in Revelation chapter 18 makes it clear this Babylon will be the world’s centre of commerce, finance, trade and industry during the last days and the heads of nations and great corporations will be seduced by her in every way possible.

Her commercial system will be so vital to the economic and cultural life of the nations that when she is destroyed they will mourn her destruction. The long list in Revelation 18 includes the various material possessions that men and women have laboured and schemed for, and become enslaved to, throughout history, giving us an idea of man’s priorities and constant pursuit of wealth.

In addition to the economic commodities for which Babylon will become the world trade centre, it will also include “*slaves and human lives,*” or “*the souls of men*” in some translations.

As our world descends further into wickedness, slavery to material wealth will certainly reach its high in the last days. Therefore, this passage could mean that men and women will be seduced and drawn under the power of demons to sell their souls to Satan in exchange for his favour. By receiving the Mark of the Beast, they will give him total control over their lives, including their eternal destiny.

It is also possible that this passage refers to the trafficking of men and women caught up in forced prostitution, or organ trafficking, which will be part of Babylon’s activity and prosperity.

Babylon will also be responsible for the martyrdom of the Prophets and saints of God, “*and of all who have been slaughtered on earth.*” The extent of this charge indicates the destruction of this great city will not only be the physical city of Rome, but the whole evil world system under her control.

In his description, the Apostle John appears to indicate that religious Babylon will be destroyed by the Antichrist and the ten leaders (*Revelation 17:16*) at the mid-point of the Great Tribulation and the commercial aspect by God Himself at the end of that period. When the mighty Angel declares, “*Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great,*” he uses a phrase that describes an instantaneous action. It tells us that the destruction of the city, and indeed the system of Babylon, will not be gradual, but instantaneous. The Book of Revelation emphasizes continually this fact:

Her plagues will come in a single day (18:8)

For in one hour all this wealth has been laid waste (18:17)

For in one hour she has been laid waste (18:19)

Notice in particular verse seventeen; it tells us that whatever else Babylon's destruction means, it will certainly include an economic crash. Her prosperity will attract merchants from all over the globe, people whose wealth and influence will classify them as the great men of the world – the international bankers and financial institutions and so on.

In one hour their dreams will be dashed to the ground. No other economic crash in history will come close to what the Bible says about the economic destruction prepared for Babylon in the last days.

The “*kings of the earth,*” “*the merchants,*” “*the shipmasters*” and your average person are all going to mourn their financial loss when the great capital city of the beast's financial empire is destroyed. Globalism will have created such a web of interconnectivity and dependence that, when it fails, will pull the whole world down along with it.

Her Geographic Location Debated

Some scholars believe that the Babylon mentioned in Revelation chapter eighteen will not be Rome, but a rebuilt city on ancient Babylon, which first appears in Genesis chapter ten and eleven. One of the reasons for this view comes from the detailed description of the ultimate destruction of Babylon in several key passages in the Book of Isaiah:

*The oracle concerning Babylon that Isaiah son of Amoz saw.
Listen, a tumult on the mountains as of a great multitude!
Listen, an uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathering together!
The Lord of hosts is mustering an army for battle. They come
from a distant land, from the end of the heavens, the Lord and
the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole earth.*

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty!

Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every human heart will melt, and they will be dismayed. Pangs and agony will seize them, they will be in anguish like a woman in labour. They will look agast at one another; their faces will be aflame. See, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the earth a desolation, and to destroy its sinners from it.

(Isaiah 13:1,4-10)

Isaiah clearly states that Babylon will be destroyed by a host of nations. Was the Prophet speaking of the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes in 539 B.C., or was he looking to the future and a final destruction of Babylon in the last days? The rest of Isaiah's prophecy provides some very significant indications to help us answer these questions.

First, he gives us an indication of the time of the event, for he says it will occur in "*the day of the Lord.*" This phrase occurs many times in the Bible and refers to any time that God intervenes in a dramatic way in human affairs to bring judgement or blessing. However, the phrase is mostly used to describe the Lord's judgement at the end of the age.

It is also obvious from the context of Isaiah above that the destruction of Babylon mentioned will be during the last days for a little further on he says:

For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

(Isaiah 13:10-11)

It is argued that nothing similar to these events described above have ever happened in history. These cosmic disturbances and

supernatural signs in the heavens are described elsewhere in Scripture and always refer to the period prior to the Second Advent of Christ to Earth (see *Joel 3:14-16; Matthew 24:27-30*).

Finally, Babylon was never completely destroyed and uninhabited as Isaiah prophesied it would be further on in chapter thirteen (a theme repeated by the Prophet Jeremiah *51:24-26, 61-64*):

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendour and pride of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations.

(Isaiah 13:19-20)

When King Cyrus the Persian captured Babylon, he did so by craft, not by military destruction, and made it the secondary capital of the Persian Empire. Centuries later when the Greeks conquered the Persians, Alexander the Great made Babylon his Eastern capital and eventually died there. Babylon still exists today in central Iraq as the province of Babil, an area of 5,603 square kilometres containing eight cities with a combined population of 1,651,600.

Since Babylon in its long history has never been destroyed but disintegrated over the centuries, some scholars believe the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah refer to a future destruction of Babylon that has not yet occurred in history. And since the city has not existed historically since the days of Alexander the Great, it would have to rise again and be rebuilt in order for these prophecies to be fulfilled. As we shall see, this is not just the idle topic of scholarly books.

Plans Already Underway

When Saddam Hussein rose to power in Iraq, he spent an absolute fortune on a project to rebuild the ancient city of Babylon on the

Euphrates River. He promised that Babylon's grand palaces and legendary Hanging Gardens – one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world – would be restored again to its former glory. Despite Hussein's removal from power and subsequent execution by the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, the work to restore Babylon continues today.

Obviously, some of the financial resources for the construction come from the exportation of oil. Iraq sits on at least the second largest known crude oil reserves in the world. Although oil is not the only source of funds for the construction of ancient Babylon. The United States, despite its enormous budget deficit, continues to donate reconstruction money into Iraq.

One source tells us, "In the year 2009 the U.S. State Department issued a media note announcing a \$700,000 pledge to *The Future of Babylon Project*, explaining that, 'Babylon stands out among Iraq's rich contributions to humanity.'"

Not so long ago the United Nation's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also provided millions of dollars for her. With the help of private donors, the UN hopes to turn Babylon into a thriving centre of commerce and tourism. If all goes according to plan, Babylon will be a cultural centre with shopping centres, hotels and even a theme park!

In January 2009, the largest and most expensive (\$474 million) U.S. Embassy in the world was opened in Bagdad, not far from ancient Babylon. This extremely large building complex, situated on the banks of the Tigris River, includes over six hundred apartments for personnel, a number of exclusive restaurants, basketball courts and a large indoor swimming pool. This embassy, known as Embassy Bagdad, exceeds U.S. embassies elsewhere, has its own defence force and is designed to be entirely self-sufficient.

We can see by these moves toward rebuilding Babylon that the city has a special interest in the eyes of the powers of the world.

A Capital for the Beast?

In light of the many interesting factors that indicate a rebuilt Babylon as the city described by John in Revelation 18, other Bible scholars see its use quite differently. They believe the ancient city on the plains of Shinar will be rebuilt; not as the commercial and economic centre of the world, but as a secondary capital for the Antichrist. And that according to the prophetic scheme outlined in Scripture, when the Antichrist takes control of the world, his government will function out of three major cities – Rome, Jerusalem and Babylon.

Certainly, there could be no better place than Babylon for a world dictator to have as a capital. Not only is it in the fertile Tigris-Euphrates plain; it is near some of the world's richest oil reserves, in addition to its own. It is also within navigable distance to the Persian Gulf, and is at the crossroads of the three great continents of Europe, Asia and Africa.

The symbolism of such a move would have very serious implications: The Antichrist could put his Eastern capital there just as Alexander the Great attempted to do, emphasizing his power over the world economy by controlling the main oil fields of the world.

The fact that the Prophet Isaiah calls the Antichrist the “*King of Babylon*” (*Isaiah 14:4*), is considered another indication that ancient Babylon will be one of the centres of his political and economic power in the last days. The title, “*The Assyrian*,” also found in *Isaiah 10:24-27*, is believed to be a reference to the Antichrist's exercise of political and military power over the area of the world that was previously under the control of the armies of ancient Assyria, Israel's enemy.

A Home for the Woman?

There are still other biblical prophecy experts who believe that ancient Babylon will become the centre of the corrupt religious system of Revelation 17, at least for a short period. This line of reasoning comes from a prophecy by the Prophet Zechariah concerning the last days. He speaks of a temple being built in the land of Shinar, which is the name for Babylon, in these terms:

Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is coming out." I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is a basket coming out." And he said, "This is their iniquity in all the land." Then a leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, "This is Wickedness."

So he thrust her back into the basket, and pressed the leaden weight down on its mouth. Then I looked up and saw two women coming forward. The wind was in their wings; they had wings like the wings of a stork and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky.

Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they taking the basket?" He said to me, "To the land of Shinar to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on a base."

(Zechariah 5:5-11)

In this prophecy the woman Zechariah speaks of is said to be the corrupt worldwide religious system that had its beginnings in the occult religion of ancient Babylon. It is believed the *basket* or *ephah* in which she sits refers prophetically to the whole ungodly world system, including all of its worship of luxury and pleasure that comes through economic success.

Intriguingly, in ancient Hebrew an ephah was a symbol of commerce. It was a unit of dry measure, equivalent to the bath,

which symbolized commercial and economic affairs. Also, the symbol of two winged women holding an ephah and a balanced scale has been the recognized symbol of commerce for centuries. It is still possible to find medallions with this picture on it and many chambers of commerce still use the symbol.

In the prophecy above the woman is picked up while still in the ephah and transported by two women to the land of Shinar, the site of ancient Babylon, where a temple was to be built for her.

For a while this false religious system was happy to dwell in Rome, but at the middle of the Tribulation Period, realizing she is no longer popular or needed by the Antichrist, she flees to Babylon with the wealth that she accumulated during her stay within the “*ephah*.”

Yet because the Antichrist no longer needs the whore, and because this false religious system is a direct obstacle to his schemes to be the central figure in the economy, religion and government of the world, he destroys her. If this interpretation is correct, it is possible the Antichrist may even destroy the rebuilt Babylon at the same time.

A Move to Fill the Void

Once the Antichrist has eliminated the Babylonian religious system, he will move quickly to fill that void with his own system. His first step will be to provide a replacement worldwide religion, and some scholars believe a newly built Third Temple in Jerusalem will play an important role.

Whatever the case, for the last three and a half years he will reign on Earth, killing believers and coercing men to worship him through the Mark of the Beast system. Then his great capital city, which many strongly believe to be Rome in modern Italy, will be destroyed by the true God. The King of kings and Lord of lords will engineer its final faith (see *Revelation 16:10-12*).

It is inconceivable to think that any city other than Rome could be the capital of the revived Roman Empire And it is even more inconceivable to think that any city other than Rome could be this great political, economic and religious centre described as Babylon the Great; as it has since its foundation to this very day been synonymous with all the evil, pride, corruption, oppression, perversion, rebellion, sorceries and seductions of ancient Babylon.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Dear reader, as the contents of this book powerfully demonstrate, the many current events and trends happening in our world today indicate two very important things. For one, they indicate that a new global economic, political and religious order is on the horizon.

We as individuals cannot stop its approach, but we can do our part in our generation for our family and friends. Therefore, I would strongly encourage Christians to refrain from supporting any political or religious efforts that work for the uniting of nations and world religions.

As demonstrated, the plan to consolidate nations and political power is a satanic agenda in total opposition to God's intent for mankind. Such a global union will also give the Antichrist the political and religious framework he needs to deceive and inflict his horrors on the world.

I would also encourage Christians not to support or put hope in any efforts of world unity, because the unity they plan to create could never produce world peace; as the heart of man remains sinful and unregenerate and, consequently, could never come to an agreement on truth. The Prophet Jeremiah lamented:

The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse, who can understand it?

(Jeremiah 17:9)

To obtain true unity among people there must be a oneness of heart and spirit and this can only come through the New Birth; when we receive the Prince of Peace into our heart. The Bible encourages us to have the unity of the Spirit, not to be caught up in a spirit of unity. There is a big difference.

Certainly, unity can be imposed by an external force, suppressing people's actions, true beliefs and convictions, but it lacks the power to bind and unite hearts and will therefore end in utter failure.

This does not mean that Christians should despair of world peace and unity ever coming to this Earth. God's Word anticipates such a time. This biblical New World Order is commonly referred to as the Millennium in Scripture, and will come about *after* the glorious Second Coming. Neither does it mean we should not do anything to bring peace to our world. We certainly should, but we must do it God's way.

Second, as we pointed out in the opening lines of this book, all the terrible things happening in our world today are a clear indication that the return of our Blessed Saviour is drawing near, and therefore a cause to rejoice and not despair. Jesus Himself promises:

When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

(Luke 21:28)

In light of such a hope, I would strongly urge believers to be active in prayer and Bible study, so you will have the strength and wisdom to take a stand against the dangerous heart attitudes of ignorance, arrogance, pride and greed that make the deception the Bible warns about possible.

There is no doubt that these are probably the most destructive forces behind many of our spiritual and economic crisis. When people become dissatisfied with their possessions, their craving and lust for more distract them from what is important, and often drives them beyond their means. The biblical counsel concerning these things, whether material or spiritual, is very simple and to the point:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world – the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches – comes not from the Father but from the world.

(John 2:15-17)

When John speaks of the world, he is speaking of the world system; the organised system of world pursuits, beliefs, attitudes and institutions that dismiss God and ignore His ways and Laws.

The way to deal with these “*works of the flesh*” is simply to flee from them and fill your heart with godly attributes; “*Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness,*” that will replace the need to validate your worth in society by the accumulation of wealth and power.

Note, however, that being rich, successful or influential is not the problem. The problem is the inordinate desire for these things, the lusting after them, instead of desiring and seeking the Lord.

I speak now to my readers who have not yet found faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In light of the indisputable evidence at hand, I urge you to seriously consider the words of the Apostles and Prophets when they speak concerning the necessity to believe the Gospel and repent. In the Book of Acts we read:

While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

(Acts 17:30-32)

And in the Gospel of John we read these amazing words:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have

eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

(John 3:16-18)

This is the most beautiful gift imaginable; **Eternal Life** to anyone who believes in Jesus. Yet that same offer has serious consequences for anyone who refuses to believe:

Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

(John 3:18-19)

These declarations are in stark contrast to today's philosophy that if you are a sincere and good person, God will allow you into heaven regardless of what you believe. Do not believe it. Such teaching is part of the harlot's seduction mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

Friend, eternal life is not only living forever but knowing "*You, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*" This means a personal and intimately close relationship with God the Father this very moment.

If you are willing and ready to place your faith and trust in Him right now, it is as simple as just saying the following prayer with your whole heart, and you will be instantly born again, a new creature, translated from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's Glorious Son.

Father I come to you through your Son Jesus Christ just as I am. I believe that Jesus came to Earth and died for my sins on the Cross. I repent of all my sin and

rebellion and ask you to forgive and transform me and
I now accept you as my Lord and Saviour.

Table A

Acts 9:13, 32, 41, 26:10;

Romans 1:7, 8:27, 12:13, 15:25, 31, 16:2, 15

1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:1, 14:33, 16:1, 15

2 Corinthians 1:1, 8:4, 9:1, 12, 13:13

Ephesians 1:1, 15, 18, 2:19, 3:8, 18, 1:14, 5:3, 6:18

Philippians 1:1, 4:22

Colossians 1:2, 4, 12, 26

1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10

1 Timothy 5:10; Jude 1:3, 14

Hebrews 6:10, 13:24

Table B

Romans 1:16-18, 3:20-29, 4:1-25, 6:14, 23, 10:9-14

Galatians 1:8-10, 2:15-21, 3:1-6, 3:10-12, 23, 5:5-7

John 3:14-19, 5:24, 6:40; Ephesians 2:4-10, 3:10-13

Acts 10:43, 13:38-40; 1 Corinthians 1:21-24

1 Peter 1:3-6; 1 John 4:13-16

2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9

Joel 2:32; Mark 16:16; Genesis 15:6

Hebrews 11:7; Titus 3:5

Table C

Romans 6:13-22; 1 John 4:13

Ephesians 1:18-20, 2:10, 3:16-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 13:5

1 Corinthians 2:12, 6:17; 2 Timothy 1:6; Ezekiel 36:26