

The Truth About 666
and the Story of the Great Apostasy

Three Volumes in One

Edwin de Kock

12916 Los Terrazos Boulevard
Edinburg, TX 78541
U.S.A.

The Truth About 666 and the Story of the Great Apostasy

Three volumes in one

by Edwin de Kock

12916 Los Terrazos Blvd., Edinburg, TX 78541, U.S.A.

Unless indicated otherwise, all Bible quotations are from the *Authorized Version* (also known as the *King James Bible*), first published in 1611.

“Scripture taken from the New King James Version (marked NKJV).
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”

Quotations from an Ecumenical Edition of the “Common Bible: Revised Standard Version [RSV] of the Bible, copyright 1973 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”

Other credits appear in the Acknowledgements and within the text.

Copyright © 2011 Edwin de Kock

All rights and all subsidiary rights reserved by the author

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, including Internet, e-book, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without the prior permission in writing of the Copyright owner, except for fair use by reviewers or in scholarly works.

All the aforementioned rights and restrictions also apply to translations into other languages.

Table of Contents

Dedication	3
Acknowledgements	7
From the Author to the Reader	10
Abbreviations	11
Preface by William H. Shea	12

Volume I

The Story of the Great Apostasy

INTRODUCTION

Enter the Beast	16
-----------------	----

PART 1

The Basics

1. An Early Expectation of the End	22
2. Biblical Parallels for 666	24
3. A Babylonian Parallel?	26
4. Letters of the Alphabet as Numbers	34
5. Helwig's Great Discovery	49
6. The Helwig Gap and Later Protestantism	66
7. Too Many Names and Other Confusions	78
8. Clarifying the Criteria	91

PART 2

The Ascent to Papal Power

9. The Mystery of Lawlessness	110
10. The Primacy of Peter?	135
11. Germanic Interlude	155
12. Clovis Converted	175
13. Justinian and the Reconquest	195
14. Visigothic Compromise	215
15. Celtic Christianity Liquidated	221

PART 3

The Pope Becomes a King

- 16. Prelude to the Donation 249
- 17. The Donation of Constantine 254
- 18. Forgery Upon Forgery 264
- 19. The Anatomy of Forgery and Fraud 269
- 20. Published Again and Again 276

Volume II

PART 4

The Further Witness of History

- 21. The Donation Casts a Long Medieval Shadow 284
- 22. The Donation and a Papacy in Decline 302
- 23. The Donation Contradicted and Debunked 316
- 24. In Catholic Countries, the Donation and Its
Title Endure 337
- 25. The Counter-Reformation,
a Reactionary and Bloody Response 342
- 26. The Donation and the Voyages of Discovery 349
- 27. Vicegerent of the Son of God 361
- 28. Papal Onslaught and Fiasco
in Africa and the Far East 367
- 29. France and Gallicanism 388
- 30. From the Grand Monarch
to the Little Corporal—and Beyond 410
- 31. Many, Mostly Catholic Voices
Just Before and in the Nineteenth Century 426

Volume III

PART 5

The Seventh-day Adventist Connection

- 32. Uriah Smith's Unique Contribution 454
- 33. Indignant Catholics Respond 469
- 34. Seventh-day Adventists Doubt and Adapt 495
- 35. Catholic Use of *Vicarius Filii Dei*
in the Twentieth Century 525
- 36. Majoring in Minors 536
- 37. Three Are Said to Have Seen It 538
- 38. Tiaras Galore, but Nary a One
with *Vicarius Filii Dei* 565
- 39. Numerology and Catch-All Idealism 575

- 40. More Non-Historicist Writers and Influences 588
- 41. Early Idealist Intrusions and Rebuttals 609
- 42. A Few Later Historicists Who Got It Wrong 623
- 43. Idealism More Boldly Invades
the Seventh-day Adventist Church 632
- 44. The Bastion Restored 654
- 45. A Resurgent Papacy 659

CONCLUSION

Exit the Beast 672

Notes 679

Appendix I:

About This Book
by the Author 770

Appendix II:

Catholic Documents 785

Appendix III:

*Mostly Protestant,
Non-Seventh-day Adventist
Publications* 788

Appendix IV:

Ingredients, Scope, and Structure of
The Great Controversy
by Ellen G. White 835

Appendix V:

Dissenters of the
Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries Opposing
the Historicist Equation
Vicarius Filii Dei = 666 847

Appendix VI:

Philosophy as Theology 851

**About the Author, Other Publications,
and Recommendations 862**

FROM THE AUTHOR TO THE READER

An inspired writer from long before the time of Christ made it clear that for the Most High, whose compassion passes understanding, a mere theological knowledge is not a passport to his kingdom. Further, he will take everybody's background into consideration: "I will mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. . . . The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Psalm 87:4, 6). And some will reach heaven without ever having heard that Jesus was their Saviour. In wonderment, many a so-called heathen will gaze on the marks of his crucifixion and ask him: "What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6).

When the Redeemer was dying on the cross, he promised eternal life to a repentant criminal who was crucified next to him (Luke 23:39-43). This man will be in heaven without ever having been baptized.

Am I saying, that neither doctrinal purity nor a rite that the Bible prescribes is important? Not so. As the apostle Paul said, when he was addressing the wise Athenians of the Areopagus: "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

Truth matters. Nevertheless, today—just as in pre-Christian and early Christian times—our Lord is ever compassionate and does not condemn those who have honestly not yet come to know the facts.

This is a Protestant book, though very much of it is based on Catholic sources. It does not presuppose that individual members of the Roman Church are "lost" or anything but good and conscientious Christians. Only they themselves and the Lord know what they think and feel in their hearts. I also do not presume to be judgmental about Muslims, or those who are not people of the Book—like Buddhists—whose convictions of what lies beyond this life do not coincide with my own. This work is anti-papal, but not anti-people.

I believe, moreover, that the writing of *The Truth About 666* was guided by Providence. Appendix I, entitled *About This Book* tells that tale and also mentions other important concerns.

INTRODUCTION

Enter the Beast

Just like the prophet Daniel six hundred years earlier, John, the beloved apostle—now an old man not far from his hundredth birthday—in vision gazed upon the Mediterranean. He also saw its surface heave, and then a huge, mysterious Beast came lumbering up from the depths.

It bore a strange yet striking resemblance to the four animals that Daniel had seen and written about in the seventh chapter of his book. Basically it was a giant leopard with seven heads, the paws of a bear, and a conspicuous lion mouth. It also had ten horns, each encircled with a royal crown.

It prospered amazingly, persecuting the saints for forty-two prophetic months or 1260 years (538–1798). At the end of this period, it received a deadly wound in one of its heads. This, however, healed up again, so that the Beast went on from strength to strength. Eventually “all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8).

The creature described in Rev. 13 is a composite of the fearsome four described by Dan. 7: the Babylonian lion, the Medo-Persian bear, the Grecian leopard, and the nondescript Roman-European Beast. The main features of that chapter all recur in the Apocalypse. C. Mervyn Maxwell pointed out that this also applied to the “seven heads and ten horns (The leopard had four heads, the other three had one each, and the fourth beast had ten horns).”¹ The only element of Dan. 7 not repeated in Rev. 13 is the Little Horn . . . because the Leopard-like Beast essentially *is* the Little Horn.

Two further features in Rev. 13 are the Beast’s notorious mark and 666, the numerical value of its name. Such are the issues that we shall be focusing on. Before doing so, however, let us briefly note the symbolic meaning of the lion, the bear, and the leopard. As discussed by several interpreters,² these animals represent the Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, and the Greeks.

But there is a difference: Rev. 13 reverses the order of their presentation. In comparison with Dan. 7, the Grecian element is now mentioned first; this is followed by Medo-Persian and finally by Babylonian imagery. This complete reversal of the symbolism must be significant.

The reason for it is a different vantage point in time. The prophet Daniel wrote when Belshazzar, the last king and co-ruler of Babylon, was still sharing his father’s throne. With its strict chronological sequence, the vision of Dan. 7 simply looks forward, down through the ages. But when John took up his pen some six centuries later, his lifetime as well as the opening stages of the Great Apostasy stood in the sign of the leopard. That is, it bore the impress of Greek thinking and theology.

This symbolism pinpoints the Antichrist historically as the product of a hybrid civilization. No less a historian than Arnold J. Toynbee characterized the empire of apostolic times and later as the culmination of Greek Society (“the Hellenic universal state”).³ C. H. King referred to it as the “Greco-Roman state,”⁴ while Hugh R. Trevor-Roper regarded it as a “cosmopolitan Greco-Roman culture.”⁵ Politically it was the Romans who ruled the ancient Mediterranean world, but the Greeks were still dominating its mind.

From his period, the apostle John also looked back to Medo-Persia and finally to Babylon. And this is why we have, in the thirteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, a different sequence from that of Daniel, which does not, however, seem to affect the order of the heads. For them, we assume a straightforward chronological order, to parallel Rev. 12:3 and Rev. 17:10.

As Bible readers have recognized through the ages, the Beast depicted in Rev. 13 is the historic Antichrist, which a vast array of authors (especially since the Protestant Reformation) have identified as the papacy. In the year 1600, Andreas Helwig, or Helwich (c. 1572–1643), a brilliant German scholar, demonstrated that a most significant pontifical title *vicarius Filii Dei* (Vicar of the Son of God) had a numerical value of 666. During the last part of the eighteenth and throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, very many Protestant as well as other non-Catholic writers have followed that example. Copious evidence of this fact is presented in Appendix III, which also demonstrates that such an identification did not originate with Seventh-day Adventists. Future chapters will delve into the issues surrounding that discovery.

Let us, however, also ask just why the Apocalypse lays such stress on the leopardlikeness of the Beast? After all, Catholicism has since its beginning had its headquarters in the city on the Tiber and has always been described as the Roman Church. Nevertheless, like the paganism which in its formative period surrounded it, it drew the most vital elements of its culture, philosophy, and religion from the Greeks.

Much of the Great Apostasy in the early Christian centuries had its roots in the Hellenic and Hellenistic world. Stephen M. Haskell, perhaps uniquely among Seventh-day Adventist prophetic writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, touches on this point:

“Through Greece, ‘the prince of the power of the air,’ the ‘old dragon,’ who was cast into the earth, attempted a new scheme for enslaving the truth. Greek culture and intellectual development carried men farther away from the simple truth of God’s Word than any form of religion, or any oppression from the government. The teachers of Greek philosophy followed in the wake of the Alexandrian conquests. The beauty and aesthetic nature of their learning deceived men as nothing else has ever done. The mixture of good and evil was divinely represented by the spotted leopard, and its universal acceptance, by the lithe form and agile movements.”⁶

This issue was partly dealt with in our former works,⁷ but also awaits treatment in a further book.

What here especially concerns us is that through the allegorizing methods of third-century theologians like Clement and Origen at Alexandria, Egypt, prophetic interpretation and eschatology—like other attempts at understanding the Bible—were perverted. Their mentors if not their boon companions had mostly been pagans, both Platonic and Neoplatonist. Allegorization, by which anything could be arbitrarily made to mean anything else,⁸ mutated into Idealism. All this prepared the way for Augustinian, Medieval ideas.⁹ With a few adjustments by Jesuits during the Counter-Reformation in the last part of the sixteenth century, such conceptions gave birth to Catholic Preterism and Futurism.¹⁰

Idealism apart, these schools do have one thing in common: the interpretation of prophecy by relating it to history. However, both Preterism and Futurism have gaps, for each of them omits the very long medieval period and even the past five hundred years that followed it. Only Historicism is gapless and continuistic, with an underlying premise made clear through Amos, well before our era: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Historicism therefore matches prophecy with all the main events of both the remote and recent past, especially in or near the Mediterranean world. This became the epicenter for the great controversy between the Saviour and Satan, as well as their representatives. What has happened in that region has greatly impacted on and continues to affect the planet as a whole.

For more than a hundred years, the largely Historicist Protestants ignored both Preterism and Futurism, recognizing them as attempts to create an intellectual fog for concealing the papacy, so that nobody could identify it as the Antichrist predicted in 2 Thess. 2, the Apocalypse, and other Scriptures. But from 1826 onward, they have allowed themselves to be seduced into these alternatives. Abandoning Historicism, Protestants have increasingly adopted Preterism or Futurism. The latter is nowadays mostly known as Dispensationalism.¹¹ At present, these schools predominate and greatly impede the comprehension of what Rev. 13:18 means with its reference to 666.

Today the only major bastion left standing for Historicism is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, though even this is now being undermined from within, by some of its own theologians. With regret, we will in its proper place be dealing with this phenomenon.

A cornerstone of Historicism is belief in the year-day principle. According to this, time in apocalyptic prophecies is not literal but symbolic, just like the rest of their contents. Therefore, a day in prophecy represents a calendar year. With this, Seventh-day Adventists think on the same wavelength as Protestant Historicists of the past. To their older

insights, present-day scholars have added considerably more, especially William H. Shea in his brilliant two-part study of more than forty pages.¹²

The two most prominent Bible passages that explicitly teach the year-day equivalence are Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6. But Shea has greatly elaborated on this and reviewed “in this study twenty-three biblical reasons validating the application of the year-day principle to the time periods in the apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.”¹³

Shea did not confine himself to Scriptural analysis, but also stepped outside the Bible by applying two pragmatic tests from history. First, he inquired whether, when the Historicist paradigm is applied, the actual events of the past fulfill the Bible’s predictions. For this, he found vindication by comparing Dan. 9:24-27 with what actually happened.¹⁴ He did so successfully without resorting to the peculiar gap theory propounded by Francisco Ribera in the sixteenth century and present-day Dispensationalists. Second, he asked whether Historicists had been able to foretell events of the future through the word of prophecy. The following example is compelling:

“In the year A.D. 1689 an English prophetic interpreter by the name of Drue Cressener (1638-1718) published his predicted date for the end of the 1260 days of Revelation 11-13. This particular time period is given in three different ways in these chapters: 1260 days/42 month/3½ times (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5). Beginning the prophetic period in the time of Justinian I in the sixth century A.D., and by applying the year-day principle of these 1260 days, Cressener came to the conclusion that ‘the time of the Beast does end about the Year 1800.’ He applied the symbol of the beast to the papacy, and the pope was indeed deposed in 1798”¹⁵—a mere two years before the date he had calculated!

Cressener wrote this more than a century before it happened. As Shea correctly concluded, “The extraordinary chronological accuracy with which Cressener’s prediction met its fulfillment lends support to the idea that he had indeed employed the correct hermeneutical tool with which to interpret this time prophecy, the year-day principle.”¹⁶

None of this can even remotely be matched by Preterism, Futurism, or Idealism. These schools, moreover, contain the blemish of omitting most events between the earliest church history and the Second Coming, as though the Almighty were not interested in what would happen in between.

That is most peculiar against the background of the Hebrew prophets. Their predictions appear throughout the Old Testament, continuously coordinated with the history of the Chosen People.

Historicism, also known as the continual historical school, is a necessary precondition for understanding the prophetic context of the number 666.

Chapter Seventeen
THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE

I

We now focus on the Donation of Constantine, together with its impact on events, both religious and secular. In Latin, this forgery is known as the *Constitutum donatio Constantini* or *Constitutum domini Constantini imperatoris* (the Donation of the emperor Constantine). The following pages will review its background, its text, its tremendous footprint in history, and its theological implications. Then we will need to inquire whether its being a fake invalidates the title contained in it.

The eighth-century Pope Stephen II (III) (reigned 752-757) not only headed the Roman Church but also ruled, to a limited extent, over part of Italy. This was a duchy that he held on behalf of the emperor in Constantinople, who was, however, effectively an absentee landlord. The Byzantines could not help when King Aistulf of the Lombards invaded Italy. Controlling large parts of it, he claimed sovereignty over the pontiff and the territories under him, demanding a poll tax of one gold *solidus* (1/72 of a pound or 4.5 grams) for every inhabitant.¹

To this, however, the pope was unwilling to agree, so he opened negotiations with Pepin/Pippin III (*d.* 768), the Short, the king of the Franks. He first secured that monarch's protection and then crossed the Alps, accompanied by two Frankish nobles,² together with some of his clerics. An anonymous chronicle, reviewed in the *Journal historique et littéraire* on 15 February 1784,³ describes how the pontiff—who was not well—began this journey on 14 October 753 and made his way over the Great Saint Bernard pass, which has an altitude of 8,100 feet (2,469 meters).⁴ He was welcomed by a sympathetic king, queen, princes, and the whole court, as well as thousands of people from all over France. They came on “having been informed that the successor of the Apostles, the *vicair du Fils de Dieu*, the high priest of the Christian world, afflicted with age and infirmities, pursued by his adversaries, had, during the rigors of winter, crossed the high Alps, to see (the first of all the Pontiffs since the foundation of the Christian faith) the territories of the Franks, and to ask their help for the defense of the tombs and patrimony of the Apostles”⁵

A critical reader will object that the use of that title by a writer who was obviously sympathetic to the papacy does not prove its existence prior to the Donation—the chronicler probably just projected it back into the past. With this we agree, but in any case here we also have another witness that the expression *vicarius Filii Dei*, or its translation into another language, was already familiar in 1784.

The upshot of the deliberations between Pope Stephen and King Pepin was that the latter came to the pontiff's aid in 754 or 755 and once again in 756.

Although formidable when facing Italian or Byzantine troops, the Lombards were no match for the Franks, who prevailed on the battlefield. Pepin did not, however, establish his own rule in Italy. Instead, he turned over the conquered territories to the *pope*, allegedly through a decree that is known as the Donation of Pepin. This is how, for the first time ever, the pontiff became a totally independent potentate, and the Papal States were created. Why did Pepin do such an unprecedented thing? For this, there were two reasons.

First, he was indebted to the Vatican for his crown, which he had obtained from Pope Zacharias (741-752), Stephen's predecessor. Pepin had not always been a monarch, but only the mayor of Paris. The real king was Childeric III, the last of Clovis's Merovingian line to hold that office. His house having waned in power, he was only a figurehead, the nominal ruler. The actual potentate was Pepin, who, however, was not content with being the power behind the throne; he also wanted to sit on it.

But as a son of the Catholic Church, he was well aware of the papacy's favorable disposition toward King Clovis and his descendants. Pope Zacharias, however, by the authority he claimed was vested in him, anointed Pepin to supplant Childeric—allegedly like the ancient prophet Samuel who had anointed David to succeed King Saul.⁶

Zacharias, however, was now dead, and his successor had become King Pepin's suppliant. It was by no means certain that mere gratitude, always a short-lived commodity, would suffice to secure for Pope Stephen the additional prize he was yearning for: extended temporal rule in Italy—without subordination to anyone. So on his way across the Alps, the pontiff carried with him a brand-new “ancient” document, the Donation of Constantine.

When and where did it originate? According to Nicolas Cheetham, it was “reputed to have been fabricated in the papal Chancery during the feverish weeks when Stephen was preparing to leave for France.”⁷ Dated 30 March 315, it was a letter purporting to have been written four centuries earlier by Constantine to Pope Sylvester I (314-335).

It allegedly “bestows upon the pope supremacy over the sees of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem and all the world's churches.” The emperor also “grants administrative rights to Sylvester and his successors over estates granted to churches throughout the empire. Most importantly, Constantine gives the pope control of the imperial palace in Rome and all the regions of the Western Empire; this effectively conveys the notion that the pope has the right to appoint secular rulers in the West.”⁸

Here are the crucial words. We quote them in the original Latin, together with Christopher B. Coleman's 1922 translation:

“Ut sicut B. Petrus in terris *vicarius Filii Dei* videtur constitutus, ita et Pontifices, qui ipsius principis apostolorum gerunt vices, principatus potestatem amplius, quam terrena imperialis nostrae serenitatis mansuetudo habere videtur” (emphasis added).

“As the blessed Peter is seen to have been constituted *vicar of the Son of God* on the earth, so the pontiffs who are the representatives of that same chief of the apostles, should obtain from us and our empire the power of a supremacy greater than the clemency of our earthly imperial serenity” (emphasis added).⁹

The Horst Fuhrmann Latin text of 1968 (reprinted 1984 and later) is practically identical, although it eliminates all capitals in the title—including *dei* (God), which we find curious. A 2007 translation based on it by Princeton’s erudite W. G. Bowersock is less literal than Coleman’s. Although it also has merit, we think it is not in all respects as satisfactory. For instance, *qui ipsius principis apostolorum gerunt vices* becomes “who hold the place of the Prince of the Apostles.”¹⁰ It is a crucial phrase, for which Coleman is more accurate.

When Pope Stephen persuaded Pepin to take Ravenna and other Italian towns from the Lombards, he told the king that these had previously belonged to the papacy, to which they should be restored.

That was a lie. It is true that for generations the church had been accumulating a vast acreage of real estate, and in the recent past the Byzantine emperor had confiscated its properties in Sicily, Sardinia, Calabria, and Corsica.¹¹ But this claim to even more extensive parts of Italy was a blatant fabrication, nor had the pope in any previous period been an independent ruler. Ravenna had never belonged to or been controlled by the pontiffs but was continuously ruled by or on behalf of the Roman emperors—whether in Italy or in Constantinople.

In that ignorant age, however, the precise details about the past were not widely known by Westerners beyond a limited circle of churchmen, who in any case monopolized the writing of the history books.

Under the pressure of the pope’s desperation, clerical effrontery was limited by neither respect for the truth nor common sense. Apart from the Donation, the pontiff’s spokesman also submitted to Pepin’s court and displayed a second document: an epistle—golden letters on beautiful vellum—allegedly written in heaven by the apostle Peter himself. This was an eloquent plea for Frankish intervention to save the Romans from their enemies, and offered in exchange a heavenly place with him hereafter.

It began with the words: “Peter, elected Apostle by Jesus Christ, to our favorite Son, the King Pepin, to his whole army, to all the bishops, abbesses, monks, and to the whole people.” The document was, or so the spokesman assured his astonished audience, in its author’s own handwriting. He even personally vouched for Peter’s signature!¹²

Now the Franks, though limited in formal education, were no fools and asked some pointed questions. Pepin wanted to know exactly how the letter had found its way from heaven to earth. But the papal spokesman had a ready answer for the king and his entourage: “The Blessed Peter in person had come down from Heaven and given the letter to his successor, the pope of Rome.”¹³

Although he was technically committing treason against his Byzantine overlord, Pope Stephen through these forgeries got his heart's desire: the Papal States. The armies from France became his tools. Their action was backed up by a further document, the Donation of Pepin.

Some scholars, however, have relegated the *Constitutum Constantini* to a later period.

Johannes Fried, a German academic and specialist in medieval history quoted by Bowersock, "sees Frankish opposition to the emperor Louis [778–840] the Pious as the background for the original fabrication."¹⁴ But Eamon Duffy, an Irish Catholic and History of Christianity professor at Cambridge University, put it differently:

"Nobody knows exactly when, where or why this document was assembled." After mentioning those who have supported the date against the background that we have described, he declared: "Other historians believe the document is a later creation, composed piecemeal as much as two generations after Pepin's reign, by clergy on the payroll of the Frankish royal family, and designed to justify the exercise of overlordship in Italy by Pepin and his successor Charlemagne, against the attacks of the Emperor in Constantinople."¹⁵

It is difficult to sustain this idea from either the facts of history or common sense.

Duffy himself remarked that Charlemagne restricted the role of Pope Leo III (795–816) to "saying his prayers and setting a good example by always sticking to the rules, while the King both defended the Church from its enemies, and oversaw the spread of the Catholic faith." Indeed, he reserved a good deal more for himself: ruling the roost as monarch and even, when it suited him, dabbling in theology. Despite the pontiff's strong disapproval, it was Charlemagne who insisted on adding the expression *Filioque* (and from the Son) to the Apostles' Creed.¹⁶ This is a point of doctrinal difference which has for hundreds of years bedeviled the relationship between Roman Catholicism and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

And if Charlemagne (c. 742–814), his son Louis I (778–840), his grandson Lothar/Lothair I (795–855), or his great-grandson Louis II (c. 822–875) really had clerics concoct the Donation for them to fend off claims of temporal sovereignty by the Emperor in Constantinople, why would they have allowed the churchmen to put in that bit about all western lands being subject to the pontiff? History clearly shows that these rulers made important arrangements about the administration of the empire without consulting him. Lothar at the outset of his reign went even further. "He issued the *Constitutio Romana* (824), affirming imperial sovereignty over Rome and demanding an oath of fealty" from Pope Paschal I (795–855).¹⁷

Obviously none of these lordly Carolingians would have tolerated any document that subordinated *his* empire to the pope.

Both Fried and the historians mentioned by Duffy blamed the Franks for forging the Donation. This exonerates the papacy of the criminality involved, although for very many centuries it kept on enjoying the benefits derived from it.

Such argumentation is intrinsically flawed. It was one of the reasons why Lorenzo Valla in 1440 rejected the Donation as a fraud. He pointed out sarcastically that Constantine would have had to be insane to give away, on the religious grounds described in the *Constitutum*, “Italy along with Rome,” as well as “the three Gauls, the two Spains, the Germans, the British—the whole western world—and to deprive himself of one of the two eyes of his empire.”¹⁸ Likewise, neither Charlemagne nor any of his imperial descendants was a fool or out of his mind.

Walter Ullmann, history professor emeritus of Syracuse University, NY, thought that the Paris manuscript (BN, 2777), the oldest copy of the Donation still extant (and of which we have photographic images), was “written before 792.” However, he also insisted: “The forgery was made not later than the early fifties of the eighth century, at any rate before Stephen II set out on his journey to Pippin” and: “That the place of the forgery was the papal chancery is indisputable.”¹⁹

A 753 dating for the Donation as well as the circumstances already described are more consistent with the earlier timeframe of that particular king and that pontiff.

II

Charlemagne (c. 742-814) virtually doubled the size of the Papal States. He did so on the strength of the original forgery after producing a donation of his own. This is how it happened.

After Pepin’s death, the political situation among the Franks had tempted the Lombards under King Desiderius (757–774) to reassert their power in Italy, threatening the papacy a second time. But Pope Adrian (Hadrian) I (d. 795), who reigned from 772 to 795, was not going to knuckle under to them, so he fortified Rome and urgently summoned the Franks to come to his rescue.

During the autumn of 773, Charlemagne with his army clambered over the Alps, descended into Italy, and in 774 crushed the Lombards, eliminating their kingdom definitively after the capture of Pavia, their capital—though further campaigning proved necessary to reestablish the Papal States.

Legally this was laid down in the *Donation of Charlemagne*, which as a Catholic Encyclopedia puts it became “for eleven centuries the Magna Charta of the temporal power of the popes.” It made Adrian “monarch of above two-thirds of the Italian peninsula.” For him and some of his successors, things were not, however, at first as simple as all that. Pope Adrian’s “sway was little more than nominal,”²⁰ especially while Charlemagne was still alive; for that Frankish monarch—who would on

Christmas day, 800, be crowned as Holy Roman Emperor—considered those former Lombard lands and Italy as part of his empire. In fact, he regarded himself as head of the Catholic Church.

But Adrian, whose pontificate lasted for twenty-three years and ten months, the longest reign until that of Pius VI a thousand years later, was a tactful man. He knew how to coexist with Charlemagne, well aware that even this powerful personality would one day die, and that the popes could wait for future developments to tighten their grip on the Papal States. In the meantime, he did what he could, as is evident from a flattering letter he wrote to Charlemagne in May 778:²¹

And as, in the times of Blessed Sylvester, the Roman pontiff, the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church was exalted by the most pious emperor of blessed memory, Constantine the Great, and power (potestas) was given to it in these Western parts, so in your and our most happy times may the Holy Church of God, i.e. of Blessed Peter the Apostle, exult . . . because a new most Christian emperor Constantine has arisen in these times, through whom God has deigned to bestow everything on his Holy Church of Blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Moreover, may there be restored in your day all the other things which have been granted to Blessed Peter and the Roman Church by divers emperors, patricians and other God-fearing men for the good of their souls and the pardon of their sins, in Tuscany, Spoleto, Beneventum, Corsica and the Sabine patrimony, and which have been in the course of time filched away by the unspeakable Lombards.²²

Adrian also asserted that he had historical documents which proved his claims to those territories: “We have sent for the satisfaction of your Most Christian Majesty, many of the donations which we have in our archives in the Lateran.”²³ From this, together with the expression “these Western parts,” it is clear that this pope was referring—whatever else he meant—to the Donation of Constantine.

According to William P. Barker, Adrian I “laid the foundation for the Papal States and the growth of the papacy’s temporal powers.”²⁴

His workmanship proved to be so enduring that René François Guettée (1816-1892), the French Catholic priest and historian who joined the Russian Orthodox Church and became Fr. Vladimir,²⁵ asserted that Adrian I was “in fact the first pope.”²⁶ Viewed superficially, such a declaration is, of course, absurd; but Guettée, who wrote an entire book about the papacy, meant something special. On a later page, he clarified: “Adrian is the true creator of the *modern Papacy*” (emphasis added).²⁷

He also argued persuasively that another set of forgeries, the *False Decretals*, were concocted between 775 and 785, “in Rome itself under the

pontificate of Adrian.” Pointing out that this pope knew they were spurious, Guettée wondered whether he also authorized their composition.²⁸

It is unclear when the False Decretals (also known as the *Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore*) were first made public. They were certainly foisted on the Council of Soissons about seventy years later, in 853. It was a collection of laws for the Roman Church pretending to be “the decrees of councils and decretals of popes (written replies on questions of ecclesiastical discipline) of the first seven centuries.”²⁹ Very cunningly, those documents blended genuine material with blatant falsehoods. One of the ingredients was the Donation of Constantine.

The False Decretals were an extremely corrupt compilation. According to Anthony Grafton, who made a special study of forgeries in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, it “contains some five hundred forged legal texts.”³⁰

The augmentation of falsehood by incorporating false documents with further frauds became a standard medieval practice.

We think Guettée’s suspicion of how the False Decretals were created was justified. In his letter to Charlemagne, cited above, Pope Adrian himself mentioned “many of the *donations* which we have in our archives in the Lateran” (emphasis added). This use of the plural is intriguing.

Ellen G. White, in “The Apostasy,” a chapter of her great epic work, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* (1888), surveyed the ever-deepening darkness which over centuries came to envelop the Western mind. Here are her comments on these particular fabrications:

“Notwithstanding that vice prevailed, even among the leaders of the Roman Church, her influence seemed steadily to increase. About the close of the eighth century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome had possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed. To establish this claim, some means must be employed to give it a show of authority; and this was readily suggested by the father of lies. Ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of the pope from the earliest times. And a church that had rejected the truth greedily accepted these deceptions.”³¹

Her phrase “about the close of the eighth century” harmonizes well with Guettée’s conclusion that these forgeries had originated between 775 and 785. He also said: “History reveals to us the Papacy, after several fruitless attempts, taking its birth from circumstances and establishing itself in the ninth century, with its double political and ecclesiastical character. Its real founder was Adrian I. Nicholas I. chiefly contributed to its development; Gregory VII. raised it to its loftiest pitch.”³²

Guettée’s “double political and ecclesiastical character” is what we also mean when we speak of the new, enduring doctrine established at that time. It is, in fact, a double doctrine, which emerged with the Donation and came to fruition in its aftermath.

Two centuries earlier than Ellen G. White or Guettée, John Milton (1608-1674), a great theologian whose epic *Paradise Lost* and other religious verse had made him the most famous English poet after William Shakespeare, expressed the same idea: "Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a twofold power, ecclesiastical and political, both usurped, and the one supporting the other."³³

This appeared in Milton's *Treatise of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and What Best Means May be Used Against the Growth of Popery* (1673). His last work, it was published just a year before his death.³⁴ He had observed that consequent to the 1630 restoration of the monarchy under King Charles II (1630-1685), a politically ambitious Catholicism was creeping back into Britain and might one day overwhelm it. "The object of Milton in this Tract was to form a general Protestant Union, by uniting Protestants of all denominations against the Church of Rome (which he styles 'the common adversary' of the Protestant religion,) . . ."³⁵

In 1860, William Elfe Tayler wrote an illuminating work, a *History of the Temporal Power of the Popes; Showing the Crimes by Which It Was Originally Acquired, and Afterwards Enlarged*. It maintains that the fraudulent Donation of Constantine became the basis for adding to the pontifical domain yet further territories. As if all this were not enough, some later pontiffs through their henchmen fabricated additional spurious documents. "In the prosecution of their determined purpose to rank amongst the monarchs of this world, no means seem to have been too base for the pretended *vicars of the Son of God*" (emphasis added). The papacy also created ". . . other forged documents of the Holy See, viz., the donation of Louis the Pious . . . and Otho I" (Tayler's own emphasis).³⁶

For more than a thousand years, the pontiffs kept on using the original Donation. "In fact, kingdoms were given away by these pretended masters of the world, on the strength of it—as Ireland to our Henry II, by Pope Adrian IV,"³⁷ an Englishman!

III

So far, we have been largely focusing on what has often been considered the most crucial part of the forgery, namely the sentences that made possible the fraudulent acquisition of real estate on a massive scale. But it is preceded by Constantine's preamble, purportedly written by that emperor to explain the background of his Donation; and this contains its theological undergirding.

It is the tale of how the Roman Pope, Sylvester I, allegedly healed the emperor's leprosy and baptized him. Constantine is made to say: "That same venerable father told to us most clearly how much power in Heaven and on earth He, our Saviour, conferred on his apostle St. Peter, when finding him faithful after questioning him He said: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock (petrani) shall I build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' Give heed ye powerful, and incline the ear of your hearts to that which the

good Lord and Master added to His disciple, saying: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in Heaven.’ This is very wonderful and glorious, to bind and loose on earth and to have it bound and loosed in heaven.”³⁸

The events portrayed are purely fictitious. Constantine never had leprosy and it was Bishop Eusebius, an Arian, who officiated at his baptism, which took place in Nicomedia, a city of western Asia Minor, just before the emperor’s death in A.D. 337. (Sylvester had already gone to his grave in 335.) But imbedded in that story are the words that it quotes from Matt. 16:18, 19. Their Catholic interpretation is the theological heart of the Donation. It is concerned with ecclesiastical primacy, power, and temporal dominion. This blending of Scripture with royal pretensions was a brand-new doctrine, which had not existed before Pope Stephen’s time.

After the famous passage containing *vicarius Filii Dei*, the emperor is quoted as adding: “And we ordain and decree that he shall have the supremacy as well over the four chief seats Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Jerusalem, as also over all the churches of God in the whole world.”³⁹ This, incidentally, was a clumsy mistake on the part of the forger. In 324, the phony date of the Donation, Constantinople (founded as New Rome and dedicated in May 330) did not yet exist. The emperor even was made to assert that he was still planning to build it, so as to vacate the city of old Rome for pontifical purposes.

This papist interpretation of Matt. 16:18, 19—amalgamated, that is to say, with royal dominion—remains to the present day the dogma which lies at the foundation of the pontificate. There is no other part of the Bible that Romanism takes so seriously, however much it deviates from the Scriptures in other ways. At his coronation, pope after pope is told: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam” (thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church). And all believers are taught about the celestial keys and the alleged papal ability to bind and loosen people’s guilt. Catholicism also continues to maintain that all the churches in the world are subject to the pope.

On 31 August 2002, John Paul II reemphasized these ideas in his address to the bishops from the southern region of Brazil: “The Successor of the Prince of the Apostles is called to be the rock upon which the Church is built, and to exercise the ministry belonging to the one to whom the keys of the Kingdom were given (cf. *Mt* 16:18–19).” About this audience we also read: “‘The Synod Fathers stressed that ‘the strengthening of the Petrine ministry is fundamental for the preservation of the Church’s unity’, and that ‘the full exercise of the primacy of Peter is fundamental for the Church’s identity and vitality in America.’”⁴⁰

Likewise, on 5 March 2008, the present pontiff, Benedict XVI, pursuing rapprochement between Roman Catholicism and the Eastern Orthodox Church, referred to this doctrine, with special reference to Pope Leo I (b. 4th century–461, reigned from 440). Petrine Primacy, he argued, was as “‘necessary’ today

as in the past.”” Benedict, citing Leo, “finally repeated: ‘what was communicated to all the apostles was entrusted to only one of them.’”⁴¹

This teaching is pure fiction, but does it actually derive from the alleged Donation of Constantine? Yes, it owes a great deal to that spurious document. It certainly did not originate with the Lord’s apostles or exist for the first half dozen centuries of our era.

Chapter Twenty-Six

THE DONATION AND THE VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY

I

On 2 January 1492, Islamic Granada in Andalusia fell to the forces commanded by King Ferdinand II of Aragon (1452–1516) and Queen Isabella I of Castile (1451–1504). After more than seven centuries, the Muslim presence on the Iberian Peninsula was at an end. On 3 August, also in 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed from Palos on the Tinto River with the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria*, to seek a western route to the Far East. A few days later, on 11 August, Rodrigo de Borja [Borgia] y Doms (1431–1503), a Spaniard, emerged from the conclave in Rome to be hailed as Pope Alexander VI (1431–1503, reigned from 1492).

The creation of both Spain as a united country and its empire was intertwined with the papacy in general, and this Borgia pope in particular. Moreover, that year became the door between the European Middle Ages and modern history, opening up a new era for the entire world. It ushered in changes that hinged on those events and four important people.

Isabella had been the most desirable heiress of Castile and destined for an important political marriage. She was to succeed Henry IV, her half-brother, who wanted her to wed Afonso V (1432–1481), the king of Portugal. But she preferred Ferdinand, crown prince of Aragon, whom she married in October 1469 at the age of eighteen. King Henry was furious and, on the ground that she had acted without his consent, decided to exclude her from the succession and nominated his own daughter, Joan. On his death, the offended Portuguese invaded Castile to deny Isabella the crown. The war lasted for five years until 1479. In that year, Isabella's husband Ferdinand became the king of Aragon. This was when Castile and Aragon united to create what today is known as Spain.¹

But it was no easy thing to merge those countries, each with its different history, traditions, and usages. Therefore, these monarchs needed all the support they could muster. Two uniting factors proved to be a common Iberian goal: completing the ages-long Reconquista—by finally driving the last Muslims out of Europe—and backing from the Roman Church.

The papal court, however, demanded its pound of flesh. In 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was established to ensure religious uniformity. One of the measures for doing so was to expel both Muslims and Jews, who included some of the most productive people in the country. While their Semitic cousins, the Arabs, dominated most of the country for close on eight hundred years, they could freely practice their religion and often flourished.

Now, however, their victorious Catholic majesties “decreed that by August 2, 1492, all the nation's Jews had either to convert to Christianity or leave Spain. The penalty for failure to comply was death.” That also happened to be the day before Columbus sailed. He therefore could not leave from Cádiz, the

country's most important harbor on the Atlantic; it was cluttered up with ships transporting Jews into exile. And so Columbus had to content himself with Palos, a much smaller seaport near the border with Portugal.²

Ecclesiastical influence was further strengthened by the pope's involvement in transatlantic affairs.

When Columbus triumphantly returned from his first voyage in 1493, it immediately became clear that a conflict of interest was bound to arise with Spain's competitive Iberian rival; for previously "the popes had given Portugal a monopoly on the sea route to India by way of the Cape of Good Hope."³ A French nobleman, Count Roselly de Lorgues (1805-1898), Columbus's enthusiastic nineteenth-century biographer, stated that the matter went a good deal further than that: the pontiffs had accorded special rights and privileges "to the King of Portugal, in 1438 and 1439."⁴ What now made the matter urgent was that already in 1488 Bartolomeu Dias (c. 1450-1500) had rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Therefore, the sea route to the Far East lay open for Portugal's experienced navigators, who might at any time also veer toward the West. And so, advised by Columbus,⁵ Isabella and Ferdinand asked their compatriot, Pope Alexander VI, to help them.

Obligingly, he "issued a bull granting Spain the exclusive right to explore the seas and claim all the New World lands lying west of a north-south line 100 leagues (about 320 miles) west of the Cape Verde Islands. Portugal was granted similar rights of exploration east of the demarcation line."⁶ This became known as the *Repartimiento*, the Bull of Partition.⁷

Alexander VI was the notorious and disreputable Borgia pope. Like every other pontiff, however, he could allegedly, while acting "in quality of inheritor of the primacy of Peter," commit no errors and yield to no frailties. From that viewpoint, none of his acts were therefore censurable.⁸

The court in Madrid was no doubt jubilant about this result, but the one in Lisbon did not share its joy. King John II "was dissatisfied because Portugal's rights in the New World were insufficiently affirmed, and the Portuguese would not even have sufficient room at sea for their African voyages." The upshot was a meeting at Tordesillas, in Northwestern Spain, in 1494. There the Spanish and Portuguese ambassadors "reaffirmed the papal division, but the line itself was moved to 370 leagues (1,185 miles) west of the Cape Verde Islands." This became known as the Treaty of Tordesillas. It was, however, only endorsed at the Vatican in 1506, by another pope, Julius II (1443-1513), who reigned from 1503 to 1513.⁹

We may well ask why it took so long to receive this endorsement and even why it was necessary at all.

To the latter question, Froome provided an answer: "This prerogative of assigning to these two nations the lands in the West was in accordance with the so-called gift or donation of Constantine to Pope Sylvester." Pope Alexander VI "forbade, under pain of excommunication, anyone to trade in that direction, threatening the indignation of Almighty God. It directed barbarous nations to be subdued, and no pains to be spared in reducing the

Indians to Christianity.” Froom added: “One cannot but ponder the thought that had Columbus landed on the continent of North America, a Spanish Catholic rather than an English population might have resulted.”¹⁰

So it was the Donation of Constantine by which the papacy tried to bring the entire New World under its dominion. According to that document, all authority over western lands and islands of the sea lay with the pontiff. Even though Julius II hated Pope Alexander VI so much that he “incited Charles VIII of France (1483–1498) to undertake the conquest of Naples,”¹¹ it was no light thing to set aside a decision made by a papal predecessor. In maintaining the rights spelled out by the Donation, Alexander had presumably been infallible—just like Julius himself.

It was events that suddenly forced the latter to make up his mind. In 1498, Vasco da Gama (c. 1460–1502), continuing Dias’s pioneering work, had with four ships reached India and begun to create an empire for Portugal, which was now on its way to becoming a world power.¹² In 1500, Pedro Álvares Cabral set out with thirteen ships to establish his country’s nascent empire more firmly. Following da Gama’s advice, he took a more westerly route to avoid the becalmed waters in the Gulf of Guinea, and rounded the bulge of Africa, driven—some say—by a strong wind. And then suddenly Cabral saw looming up before him the shore of South America, which at that point juts out far to the east. Landing on the beach of what was soon to be named Brazil, he annexed that land for his king.¹³ It was discoveries like this that compelled Pope Julius II to stop dithering and ratify the Treaty of Tordesillas.

The result was Brazilian exploration and settlement, subsequently even much further to the west than what the line of demarcation had stipulated.¹⁴ Today the largest country in Latin America speaks Portuguese instead of Spanish. This it owes to the Donation of Constantine.

II

In addition to the trade interests, even the rapacity of the Portuguese and especially the Spanish conquistadors, those voyages also had a religious motivation. This first becomes clear in Alexander VI’s *Repartimiento* as well as a book by Columbus himself: his *Libro de las profecías* (Book of the Prophecies). He wrote it just after his third voyage, which had ended with his replacement as governor and judge of Hispaniola, when he “was returned to Spain in chains in October, 1500.”¹⁵

Both the European colonists and the Native American Taino of that island had resented being ruled by Bartolomeo as well as Diego Columbus and lodged official complaints about their cruelty. Consequently Francisco de Bobadilla, Spanish chief justice, turned up with a royal commission to investigate. In a previous memorandum after his second voyage, Columbus had referred to “sickness, poor provisioning, recalcitrant natives, and undisciplined hidalgos (gentry).” But now the problems had intensified. Beside, “the Columbus family must be held at least partly responsible, intent as it was on enslaving the Taino and shipping them to Europe or forcing them

to mine gold on Hispaniola.” For such reasons, “de Bobadilla ruled against the Columbus family when he arrived in Hispaniola. He clapped Columbus and his two brothers in irons and sent them promptly back on the ship *La Gorda*, and they arrived at Cádiz in late October 1500.”¹⁶

While on his way back to Spain, Columbus wrote a letter to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. When he arrived, they ordered his release and acceded to his plea that he be allowed to undertake a fourth voyage. This began on 9 May 1502.¹⁷

During the preparations for that voyage, Columbus between September 1501 and March 1502 wrote his *Libro de las profecías* of approximately seventy pages. It “was evidently written in the convent of Las Cuevas, when he was for a time wearing the gray frock and knotted cord of the Franciscans.” In it, he included “a letter to the king and queen, a remarkable report, which reads almost like a theological treatise.”

Columbus had studied the prophecies of the Bible as well as their interpretation by various writers, and he had calculated that only another one hundred fifty-five years would pass before history would end. He based his time-setting on Augustine’s idea that the world would last for seven thousand years. Citing various Old Testament prophecies, especially the Psalms, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, Columbus “believed that the whole Gentile world must have the knowledge of the Lord, and many nations gather to Mount Zion, and Jerusalem come under the sway of the Redeemer.” To this he added that “he expressly believed the discovery of these lands, and the opening of these pagan countries to the teachings of the gospel, in which he had a part, was a direct fulfillment of prophecy.”¹⁸

At the same time as his *Libro de las Profecías*, he compiled his Book of Privileges, “which defends the titles and financial claims of the Columbus family.” He also “took to calling himself ‘Christbearer’ in his letters,” for he “seems to have been certain that his mission was divinely guided.” He apparently saw nothing incongruous in this juxtaposition of secular and religious concerns.¹⁹

Columbus then sailed from Cádiz to the West on 9 May 1502 on his fourth and last voyage, which did not, however, repair his fortunes.

III

As for the monarchs of the two Iberian nations, they—though thoroughly Catholic—set limits on what they would endure from the Vatican, and the popes knew it.

On Isabella’s part there was considerable resistance to allowing free play for the papacy, toward which “she could be both imperious and pertinacious,” although personally she was apparently a pious woman. Pope Alexander VI bestowed on both her and Ferdinand the title by which they came to be generally known: *los Reyes Católicos* (the Catholic monarchs). Nevertheless, she insisted on her royal prerogatives vis-à-vis the church. She particularly sought to control appointments to Castilian sees and had high standards for the

men who surrounded her throne. She was interested in intellectual as well as religious matters. Having by the age of thirty mastered Latin, she was in her way a patron of the arts.²⁰

An ideal man to meet her criteria and whom she greatly favored was Ambrosio Montesino (1444?–1514), a poet and intellectual, who belonged to the Franciscan Order. He proved to be most influential. By that crucial year of 1492, he was already installed at Ferdinand and Isabella's court, as a preacher and perhaps also as a confessor. In 1512, he was rewarded for his ecclesiastical services when Cardinal Cisneros (another of Isabella's choices) named him as the titular bishop of Sarda (Albania).²¹

An indication of the queen's regard for Montesino was the fact that she gave him many fine gifts. He in turn flattered both her and her husband Ferdinand, maintaining that their achievements bore the very imprint of Heaven. He eulogized the establishment of the Inquisition in Spain as well as their other religious acts. He considered the conquest of Granada as a victory in a holy war and interpreted the discovery of the New World from a religious point of view. Afterwards, Isabella having died in 1504, Montesino also greatly lauded Ferdinand. In an *Epistola-Prohemial* (Introductory Epistle), he called him an *hombre providencial* (a providential man), a gift of God to the country and Catholicism: ". . . all the unity of the church militant since its foundation, which is Christ, hangs on the life of your Highness, through the most loyal and complete obedience that you have always rendered toward the *vicarios del hijo de Dios*. . . ." ²²

The spirit that emanated from the Donation would overshadow the history of the Spanish Latin Empire for more than three hundred years. Of this, a number of examples remain on record. None of them is more spectacular than the one which concerns Francisco Pizarro (c. 1475-1541), the conquistador who overwhelmed the Incas in Peru.

Up to 1523, he had still been a man frustrated in his hopes. Of humble birth, he reputedly at one time even worked as a swineherd. In view of his character as it later manifested itself, this was surely not inappropriate. But he was inspired by dreams of wealth and worldly greatness. Before him, he especially had the shining example of Hernán Cortés, who in 1520-1521 conquered Mexico with a small, audacious force.

With the approval of Charles V, Pizarro—already forty-eight years of age—set out to conquer Peru. He had with him two companions: a soldier, Diego de Almagro, and a Dominican friar, Vincente de Valverde (c. 1490-1543). They had much in common, especially that blend of religion and greed which motivated most conquistadors. This would one day be very well expressed by Bernal Díaz, who was associated with Pizarro's hero, Cortés: "We went to America *para servir a Dios y hacernos ricos* (to serve God and to make ourselves rich)." ²³

At Cajamarca in the Peru of 1530, a contemptuous Atahualpa (c. 1502-1533), the Inca emperor, was waiting for them. Suddenly, the Spaniards found themselves surrounded by 30,000–40,000 of his retainers. And then

Atahualpa, with an escort of between 3,000 and 4,000 men, arrived, being borne into the city square on a litter. The cleric was sent to negotiate with him.

Now we will let Albert Réville (1826-1906), “a distinguished French Protestant theologian” and nineteenth-century President of the Section des Études Religieuses at the Sorbonne in Paris,²⁴ take up the tale:

“Pizarro’s almoner, Father Valverde, drew near to the Inca, a crucifix in one hand and a missal in the other, and by means of an interpreter delivered a regular discourse to him, in which he announced that Pope Alexander VI had given all the lands of America to the King of Spain, which he had a right to do as the successor of St. Peter, who was himself the *Vicar of the Son of God* [emphasis added].

...
“Atahualpa was literally stupefied. Much of the discourse, no doubt, he failed to follow, but what he did understand filled him with indignation. He answered that he reigned over his peoples by hereditary right, and could not see how a foreign priest could dispose of lands that were not his.”²⁵

De Valverde also offered the emperor a Bible, which he examined briefly. Then he “flung the book to the ground.” When the cleric reported this to Pizarro, he immediately ordered an attack. The Incas were shot and “cut down from all sides.” Pizarro personally seized Atahualpa, who was first held as a hostage until his followers filled the chamber with gold and silver. Thereupon the Inca emperor was accused of executing his brother Huascar, who had been a rival claimant to the throne, “and of plotting to overthrow the Spaniards.”²⁶

Despite the huge ransom, melted down to 24 tons of gold and silver, the conquistadors sentenced Atahualpa to death by burning. When he was already at the stake, Valverde made him another offer: to die by strangulation through the garrote if he converted to Christianity. At last the Indian emperor, quailing before the flames, became and died a Roman Catholic.²⁷

That was not quite the end of the story for the threesome who had set out for Peru and were at first such intimate friends. Within a little more than a decade, each of them would taste both triumph and bitterness, experiencing quite literally that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

After the death of Atahualpa, Pizarro set out for Cuzco, entering it on 15 November 1533. Again Vincente de Valverde was with him. By 23 March of the following year, a new church had been erected there. It later became Friar Valverde’s cathedral. “Pizarro also gave him a large native commandery.” Valverde accepted this, only to mistreat the Indians. Later in 1534 he went back to Spain, where he was made the bishop of Cuzco and Peru. By 1536, he was reappointed as “protector of the Natives and inquisitor.” With papal confirmation, he was back in Peru by 1538.²⁸

In the meantime, Diego de Almagro had also been sent to help with the conquest of Chile. While he was gone from Peru, the Indians rebelled, besieging Cuzco. He rushed back, “put down the insurrection, and then

imprisoned Pizarro's two brothers, Hernando and Alonso, for having refused to obey his orders during the fighting." For him, this was a death sentence written in his own blood, for Francisco Pizarro, his old friend with whom he had conquered Peru, returned to Cuzco, "where he defeated Almagro's army, captured Almagro, and put him to death in the first of several internecine wars between the Spanish captains in the new colony." The date was 1538.²⁹

For his last two years, Pizarro was in Lima, which he had founded in 1535. His enemies were also there: Almagro's former followers, who were now "grouped around Almagro's son." Pizarro had them watched very closely. Nevertheless, on 26 June 1541, they boldly attacked his palace. "Pizarro died that day a protracted death, drawing a cross of his own blood on the ground, kissing it, and crying 'Jesus' as he fell."³⁰

De Valverde, who had so rapidly risen from being an ordinary friar to heading a bishopric, survived him for only four more months. He was forced to flee from Peru. While heading toward Panama, he stopped over for a brief stay on the Island of Puná, near Guayaquil in Ecuador. There rebellious Indians killed him on 31 October 1541. According to some sources, after capturing him, they poured molten gold down his throat as a punishment for greed.³¹

IV

Not all the Catholic overlords who went to the Americas were cruel or nasty. A magnificent exception was Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), who began as one of the conquerors but later joined the Dominican Order. He became bishop of Chiapas in Guatemala from 1545 to 1547. But notwithstanding his impact on the Spanish king and efforts at reform, he "failed to stay the progressive enslavement of the indigenous races of Latin America." Indeed, he acquired a great opponent at the court, who proved to be increasingly influential: the learned Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. In his *Democrates II* ("Concerning the just cause of the war against the Indians"), this scholar—on the basis of Aristotelian principles—argued that the Indians "are inferior to the Spaniards just as children are to adults, women to men, and, indeed, one might even say, as apes are to men." Las Casas is now best remembered for his writing, continued until he was 90 years old, just two years before his death. His greatest work is *Historia de las Indias* (History of the Indies), which was printed posthumously. He foretold the Lord's judgment on Spain for its heartless treatment of the indigenous people in its Western Empire. Eventually his letters helped to inspire Simón Bolívar, the great liberator who led the wars of independence for Latin America.³²

The Spanish Empire created by the conquistadors kept on using the Donation as a pretext for exploiting the Indians in cruel ways. In the eighteenth-century writings of the Ecuadorian Dr. Francisco Javier Eugenio Santa Cruz y Espejo (1717-1795), native reaction is strikingly reflected. This man's mother was an Indian. By adopting the name *Espejo* (mirror), he made an abiding statement of what he was seeking to do with his compositions,

which historian Roberto Andrade discussed. Espejo, a revolutionary thinker, analyzed the terrible injustices of the Spanish Empire, maintaining that all people, including natives and women, were entitled to freedom and equality.³³

One of Espejo's actions, related by Andrade, was to compose a sermon for his brother, an Indian priest, to preach in Riobamba, a city inhabited by Spaniards and their descendants. These people all owned legions of indigenous slaves whose labor enriched them while receiving no remuneration except ill-treatment. Delivering the sermon composed by Espejo, his brother exhorted his hearers to look at Saint Peter and his good example. Then he exclaimed: "Oh, if only all those who succeeded him had imitated him, if the reality was not so many foul pontificates!" He asked how that could be, and answered his own question: "Was the basis of the Church of Jesus, Saint Peter, privileged in this way, among those who propagated his divine precepts, and held by the faithful to be the *vicario del Hijo de Dios*, not subverted to justify tyranny, advising servitude for their brothers?" Ironically he added: "Honor the king, he says: you servants, remain submissive with fear to your masters, not only the good and humane ones, but also to those of a harsh disposition."³⁴

Espejo's reward was imprisonment on more than one occasion. At last, he died in jail. His writings, however, directly inspired the revolution of 10 August 1809 and the first declaration of independence in Latin America.³⁵

It started a chain reaction of uprisings, which within a few years destroyed the overlordship that Spain had established three hundred years earlier. Henceforth its former colonies could become independent countries, with their own identities and history.

V

Participating in the conquistadors' triumph over those three centuries and also sharing in their spoils, the Roman Church as a religion, educator, judicial entity, and landowner of vast estates, could not contemplate these Latin American revolutions with equanimity. The Vatican was undoubtedly worried. It therefore viewed with interest a curious aftermath concerning Columbus, who had begun it all: the efforts spearheaded by Count Roselly de Lorgues to have the great navigator canonized. He, "and other prominent Church leaders 'hailed Columbus as a Catholic Hero and demanded that his name should be included in the calendar of saints' (Jane 1988:xviii)."³⁶

In *The Life of Christopher Columbus*, de Lorgues extravagantly praised Columbus for his holiness. He called him "a man of perfect virtue, of an entire purity of heart, whose moral grandeur surpasses the most celebrated types of antiquity, and who is not inferior to the noblest of those of the heroes formed by the Gospel."³⁷ Columbus, he maintained, "was the precursor of the missionaries, the herald of Catholicity, and the tacit mandatory of the Papacy." Stressing his hero's connections with ecclesiastics like the Dominicans, the Carthusians, and the Hieronymites, he especially pointed out: "A Tertiary, or member of the Third Order of St.

Francis, he lived as a true religious not raised to the priesthood.” Indeed, “evidently God chose Christopher Columbus as a Messenger of Salvation.”³⁸

And so, as the fourth centennial of America’s discovery was approaching, a movement arose, encouraged by Pius IX, to have the famous navigator canonized. In 1877, the pontiff designated Roselly de Lorgues to be the official postulant for this purpose, even though he was a layman. But the next year Pope Pius died,³⁹ which was a very serious setback.

Although this attempt to canonize Columbus ended in failure, it excited indignation on the part of at least one Protestant writer, Anna Howard Shaw (1847–1919), “a leading United States civil rights leader; a physician; and the first Methodist minister in the United States.”⁴⁰ This brilliant woman, who vigorously opposed the papacy, instantly grasped the implications. In her *Fate of Republics* (1880), she first detailed many dreadful persecutions conducted over the centuries by the Roman Church and then said:

The plea is now put forth that the United States of America, by legal right, belong [*sic*] to the Pope. “Columbus,” says De Lorgues, a distinguished French Catholic, “gave the name of the Blessed Virgin to his ship, lifted the cross in her, departed on Friday, and commanded the sails to be unfurled in the name of Jesus Christ. It is in the name of Jesus Christ that he took possession of the lands he discovered. It was to honor the Redeemer that he erected the cross everywhere he landed.” What follows? This: that these territorial titles of the Church of Rome, obtained through the discoveries of Columbus, antedate all other rights and titles. Hence, therefore, the Pope simply bides his time to claim, politically, what is his own. Leading Papists confidently predict that the day is not distant when our *de facto* claims and titles must yield to the *de jure* domination of the Church of Rome.⁴¹

That is, through the Treaty of Tordisillas based on the Donation, even the United States in a legal sense allegedly belongs to the Vatican, and at some future time the pontiff will reassert his original rights to this country and after all those centuries reclaim it for himself.

Besides, in one spot the Spanish did create the oldest, continuously inhabited city that still exists and thrives in this country: Saint Augustine, Florida, founded on 28 August 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés⁴² (1519–1574).

He was “a classic example of the conquistador—intrepid, energetic, loyal, and brutal.” He had arrived from Spain “with 11 ships and about 2,000 men,” expedited by King Philip II with a specific objective: Huguenots having successfully settled in that area, they had to be eliminated. Therefore, on 20 September 1565, Menéndez de Avilés and his

men “took the nearby French Colony of Fort Caroline and massacred the entire population.”⁴³

The killing did not stop there, as is made clear in *The History of Saint Augustine, Florida* (1881) by William W. Dewhurst, who based his narrative on Spanish, French, and English sources, mentioned in his Preface.⁴⁴ Fort Caroline was on the St. John’s River, while other Huguenots were on the French ships supporting their enterprise. They hovered near the coast under Captain Ribault. But lashed and driven westward by storms, these also were compelled to land. Their presence in two places were promptly reported to Menéndez de Avilés by Native Americans, whereupon he drove his men to undertake a further two marches. The first company of Frenchmen whom they found was persuaded to surrender. Of these, the few Catholics among them were spared, but he had all the Huguenots slaughtered, including noblemen whose ransom he refused. The second company fought back, though unsuccessfully. Most of the survivors agreed to surrender, trusting Menéndez de Avilés’s word, which he kept. But those who continued to resist were captured and also killed.⁴⁵ A few hundred Huguenots seem to have perished.

Dewhurst made it perfectly clear just why the king of Spain had sent this dreadful man to found Saint Augustine: it was to uproot the Huguenots: “Philip II. determined not to allow any encroachment on the territory, which he claimed by the right of his subjects’ former expeditions of discovery and by gift from the Holy See. Not only was he unwilling to see Florida occupied by foreigners, but of all persons none were more objectionable than Protestants, upon whom he looked as upon those without the pale of Christianity, who only lived as enemies of God, to disseminate a wicked creed, and war upon His holy faith.”⁴⁶ The words “by gift from the Holy See” no doubt refer to the Treaty of Tordesillas arranged at the Vatican in 1506 under Pope Julius II.

As for “his subjects’ former expeditions of discovery,” we find that this claim has not yet been abandoned. A *Catholic Encyclopedia* mentions several Spanish captains who previously sailed their ships around that peninsula. It also says that on April 1513 Juan Ponce de León (1460-1521) actually landed there, naming it Florida, “in honour of the Easter festival, set up a stone cross with an inscription, and impressed with the hostile character of the natives, returned after six months’ exploration to Porto Rico.” Seven years later, in 1521, he even tried to establish a colony, although it “was doomed to speedy failure.” Because of these events, Florida supposedly “belonged by right of discovery to Catholic Spain.”⁴⁷

If so, at least Canada and possibly the whole of North America belongs by right of discovery to Norway; for Leif Erickson set foot there a few years after 1000!⁴⁸ “According to the Sagas of Icelanders, he established a Norse settlement at Vinland, which has been tentatively identified with the

L'Anse aux Meadows Norse site on the northern tip of the island of Newfoundland."⁴⁹

The key fact is that more than forty years before the British settled in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, and also before the Spaniard Menéndez de Avilés founded Saint Augustine in 1565, Protestant Huguenots from France established themselves at Fort Caroline. Martyrs to their faith and our first European immigrants, they were remorselessly hunted down and butchered like cattle; but their blood soaked into this soil of what eventually became the United States of America. They were here first.

VI

But we return to the tale of Columbus. Attempts to canonize him did not die out with the nineteenth century. On 20 October 1952, *Time Magazine* contained the following item: "From Vatican City came a report that talk of sainthood for Christopher Columbus is still going on. The movement began, said the New York Herald Tribune, more than 100 years ago, when a study of Columbus, published by Count Roselly de Lorgues, attracted the attention of Pope Pius IX. The Archbishop of Bordeaux later petitioned the Pope to begin the process of beatification of Columbus on the basis of his 'humility, obedience, gentleness, resignation, charity, conformity to the divine will' and other virtues."⁵⁰

There were two main reasons why nineteenth-century as well as later attempts to declare Columbus a saint have not yet succeeded.

Ecclesiastically, Columbus was after his death accused of living with an unmarried woman and fathering a child by her. This was rather awkward. John A. Hardon, a twentieth-century Jesuit priest, dismissed this charge as false. According to him, Columbus during the autumn of 1487 married the aristocratic Donna Beatrix Enriques, their only child, Fernando, being born in August of the next year. Hardon stressed Columbus's link with the Franciscans and his strong religious motivation for his voyages of discovery, concluding: "Everything we know about the life Columbus witnesses to his life long practice of continence and chastity."⁵¹

Another strong defendant of the navigator's reputation was Douglas T. Peck. This sailor with a passion for history actually sailed Columbus's routes and spent time throughout all the Caribbean areas which the great man had frequented. Peck's in "The Controversial Historical Image of Columbus from the Sixteenth Century to Modern Times" focused on the second and, we think, more serious reason for the failure to canonize him. It was the "Black Legend," a Protestant and largely North American emphasis on the cruelties of Spanish colonization.

New World Explorers, hosting the article by Peck, asserted that the Black Legend died out in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century, "when it became apparent that the indigenous natives in Spanish colonies fared as well or better from a humanitarian and legal rights standpoint as those

in many of the other European colonies.”⁵² Peck said the image of Columbus “as a heroic, virtuous, and nearly divine figure extended from the sixteenth century well into the twentieth century” but “late in the twentieth century” new authors revived the Black Legend. Peck was at some pains to refute them, especially on one sore point: “Columbus’ practice of taking slaves. Inanely he asked: “Was this in conflict with his stated primary interest in converting the Indians to Christianity?”⁵³

He thought not, for such a practice was based on “the then current legal and accepted European system of *repartamiento* [*sic*, share-out] which was adopted in the Middle Ages by Spain in the Moorish reconquest campaigns and well before Columbus’ voyage.” What was this about? “*Repartamiento* [*sic*] provided that once the ownership of a conquered land was established, whether it was in Spain on lands occupied by the Moor, or on foreign soil (Africa, Canaries, or Columbus’ Espanola) the occupants of the land automatically became bonded vassals (or by common usage, slaves) of the occupiers.”⁵⁴ Because the navigator had not invented this system but only brought it with him to the New World, it was, according to Peck, so very wrong of historians to hold him responsible for it!

VII

But down to the present, the people of Latin America still remember their former overlords with burning resentment. This also became evident when Pope Benedict XVI visited Brazil in May 2007 and had to face the South Americans’ “standard view that Spanish and Portuguese colonizers forced the conversion of natives by making them choose between ‘the cross and the sword.’” In Ecuador, where Espejo had written and suffered, one indigenous group asserted that “representatives of the Catholic Church of those times, with honorable exceptions, were accomplices, deceivers and beneficiaries of one of the most horrific genocides of all humanity.” On returning to Rome, the pontiff rather feebly tried to mollify them by admitting that it was, of course, impossible to forget the suffering and injustice inflicted by the colonizers on the Indians. Nevertheless, he “repeated his claim that Catholicism in South America had favorably ‘shaped their culture for 500 years.’”⁵⁵

CONCLUSION

Exit the Beast

I

Twenty-six hundred years ago, the prophet Daniel in vision saw the “four winds of heaven” striving on “the great sea” (Dan.7:2), an ancient name for the Mediterranean. From its depths, he saw four strange animals emerge and was especially perplexed by the last of them, a terrible ten-horned Beast. As a heavenly being explained, it would wage war on and seek to destroy the saints of the Most High. According to Rev. 13, several centuries later, John the Beloved saw a similar creature climbing up out of the water.

This time, however, it had not only ten horns but also seven heads, which shows its affinity with the dragon introduced in the preceding chapter. The Bible makes it clear that the sea Beast derives its spurious authority and seat of power from this Satanic and pagan Roman source, not from the Son of God as it would claim.

This Beast, like the one that Daniel had seen, was also destined to afflict and maul the people of God. A comparison of Scripture with Scripture shows that this entity is the mystery of lawlessness which the apostle Paul had warned about. He said that in his day it was already stirring into life. The historic Antichrist would sit in the temple of God, the church, and assume divine status, enduring until the Second Coming.

Unlike those men, we are not prophets, but living in the end time we are able to compare their predictions with history, seeing clearly the very features that God through them declared would over the ages characterize the Beast.

We have noted that the actions of the pontificate over almost two millennia most remarkably fulfilled those prophecies. It did indeed persecute and often for long periods devastate the saints of the Most High, being the very entity that Daniel, Paul, and John had foretold. The heyday of its power filled up 1260 prophetic year-days, 42 months, or 3½ years, that is, from A.D. 538 to 1798. Then it suffered an almost fatal head wound, when General Berthier, representing the French Revolution, deprived Pope Pius VI of his Italian territories, the Papal States, and sent him into exile, where he died.

II

History has a threefold bearing on Bible prophecy and especially the book of Revelation. First, it validates the claim of the Apocalypse itself that it foretells the future (Rev. 1:1; 4:1; 22:6), by actual events unfolding through the ages. Second, such fulfillment contradicts and dismisses the Idealistic view that the book is really a series of homilies, sermons that have nothing to do with time. Third, for the same reason, it upholds Historicism, also known as the Historical-Continuistic method of interpretation, and dismisses Preterism as well as Futurism. Both of these display or imply immense chronological gaps, a vast silence about events between John's time and the Second Coming.

Only Historicism accounts satisfactorily for the prophecy of Rev. 13, with which we have been chiefly concerned, together with related passages from elsewhere in the Bible. This we will now demonstrate.

III

The prophecies of Daniel, in chapters 2 and 7 of his book, provide the master key to Bible prophecy. To a considerable extent, they unlock the meaning of Rev. 13. This was not the work of a moment, a day, or even a year; but of centuries. Let us take a backward look at this.

The basics for understanding Daniel were already fully present in the writings of Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 235), an early Christian bishop who lived only two hundred years after the birth of our Lord. He seems to have been the bishop of Porto, the ancient Portus Romanus, a harbor town about fifteen miles from Rome, on the northern side of the Tiber estuary.¹

A learned scholar and ante-Nicene theologian, he wrote a number of works which dealt with prophetic interpretation, including a substantial commentary on Daniel,² a largely lost treatise on the Apocalypse, and his *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*.³ The last mentioned contains an astounding passage quoted in translations from the Greek original by several writers. The following is from a Catholic website:

“The golden head of the image and the lioness denoted the Babylonians; the shoulders and arms of silver, and the bear, represented the Persians and Medes; the belly and thighs of brass, and the leopard, meant the Greeks, who held the sovereignty from Alexander’s time; the legs of iron, and the beast dreadful and terrible, expressed the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet which were part clay and part iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ.”⁴

The most remarkable point about this passage is its time of writing, more than 1750 years ago. Rome was still ruled by pagans; Constantine had not yet accepted Christianity; and the breakup of the Western empire lay more than two centuries in the future. Hippolytus did, however, live in a very unstable period, which historians call the Troubled Century. Numerous assassinations plagued the throne of the Caesars, while the barbarians invaded the empire repeatedly.

In passing, let us salute the courage of this learned man, for he knew that by expressing himself in such clear terms, he was exposing himself to martyrdom,⁵ which he ultimately could not escape. The capital was only fifteen miles away from his home, and it was treason to foretell the end of Roman domination, precisely because at that time this seemed quite plausible.

Simply on the basis of the Bible’s prophecies, Hippolytus boldly declared “the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to

rise;" and, indeed, the prophecy does say the beasts represent kings or *kingdoms* (cf. vv. 17 and 23). The ten horns symbolized the European powers of his future. Hippolytus also stated that the Antichrist would appear "in their midst." He knew these different states would survive to the end, the Second Coming of Christ. It is almost uncanny how closely events have borne out his interpretation.

Being well versed in the Scriptures, he would certainly have known that the last apostle had written: "As ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists" (1 John 2:18). He would therefore have recognized that this word could be applied to more than one apostate system. The aged John's preoccupation had been Gnosticism, but Hippolytus—like most believers through the ages—also knew that Bible prophecy focused specially on one particular Antichrist.

Even before Hippolytus, Jewish rabbis had made an identification similar to his. Following the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and his legions in A.D. 70, as well as the failure of Bar Kokhba's rebellion sixty years later, "Roman rule was regarded with little enthusiasm, the 'reign of Esau' or Daniel's Fourth Beast, and prayers for its ending were offered in the synagogues."⁶

Hippolytus's North African contemporary, Tertullian (c.160-240), made an identical interpretation: "The Roman state, the falling away of which, by being scattered into ten, shall introduce Antichrist."⁷ This was also the idea of Lactantius (c. 250-c. 330), a generation later.⁸

Among pre-Constantinian Christians, these had become widely held interpretations of what the future would bring. And did the events that followed their time not vindicate their views? They certainly did. The Western Roman Empire broke up into ten Germanic states, symbolized by ten horns. These were then violently reduced to seven. First Odovacar's kingdom in Italy was eliminated. Later Vandal power in North Africa was demolished. After that, the Ostrogothic domination of Italy was destroyed. In all three cases, the greatest beneficiary was the papacy, the Little Horn that came up in their midst. (Dan. 7:7-8, 20-21)

Whether in relation to the Beast or its additional horn, some medieval Christians began to identify the Antichrist with the Roman pontiffs. These interpreters included the Albigenses of southern France.⁹

Over the centuries, from an early period, powerful voices also went up within Catholicism to equate the Antichrist with wicked pontiffs.

A striking example was Arnulf, bishop of Orleans. During a council meeting arranged by the French king in 991, he attacked the degenerate popes who were then disgracing the Vatican. Arnulf said the reigning pontiff, "clad in purple and gold, was 'Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God.'"¹¹

Two hundred fifty years later, another prominent Catholic that made this identification was Eberhardt II (d. 1246), Archbishop of Salzburg. In support of his emperor, the famous Frederick II, this cleric distanced himself from the

Roman pontiff and at the Council of Regensburg in 1240 roundly declared that the papacy was the Little Horn.¹²

Henry Charles Lea (1825-1909), a multitalented writer of several books about the Middle Ages and the Inquisition, said that Eberhardt II had, like other Germans, contemptuously ignored Pope Gregory IX, who wanted them to elect another emperor to replace Frederick II, who had rebelled against him. For this reason, Eberhardt II died in 1246 “under excommunication.” His body “lay at Radstadt until 1288,” for 42 years, “when it was finally brought to Salzburg and magnificently interred.”¹³ That was thirteen popes later. The temper of the times had changed, and Gregory IX was no more.

This was not an isolated case, nor was the topic confined to theological writings. In the High Middle Ages, several Catholic poets—including some of the greatest that have ever lived—portrayed specific popes as Antichrist. Among them were Jean de Meun (c. 1275), the Frenchman that finished the *Romance of the Rose*, a vastly popular work in those days, and two great Italian writers, Jacopone da Todi (c. 1230-1306) and Dante Alighieri (1265-1321).¹⁴

Were these men right by interpreting the Apocalypse in such ways? A candid review of papal history can leave no real doubt that they were.

Let us now consider the year-day principle in interpreting prophecy. It was Jewish scholars who first invoked it to explain the seventy weeks of Dan. 9 and afterwards to interpret all of Daniel’s longer time periods.¹⁵

As far as we know, the earliest Christian writer who applied it to the 1260 years was the twelfth-century Joachim of Floris (c. 1135-1202), one-time abbot of the Cistercian Abbey at Corazzo, Italy. Following him, two centuries later, Walter Brute of England in the fourteenth century also explained the 1290 and 1335 days of Dan. 12 as literal years. Then, in about 1440, Nicholas (Krebs) of Cusa (1401-1464), was the first to apply the year-day principle to the longer 2300 days of Daniel 8:14.¹⁶ Both men were good Catholics and became very famous. The polymath Nicholas of Cusa was a Cardinal.¹⁷

Walter Brute (flourished 1391-1393), however, was a Reformer, a learned Welsh layman educated at Oxford University. There “he became acquainted with [John] Wickliff, with whom he formed an intimacy, and fully entered into his views respecting the reformation of the church.” He returned to his native Wales, where he was tried for heresy by Dr. John Trevnant, Bishop of Hereford. Brute presented a written testimonial. “In this defence, he also took opportunity to prove that the pope was Antichrist spoken of in Scripture; and that the Roman church was Babylon the Great, whose fall he described and proved in a lucid manner.” The judges dismissed him “without examination,” for some unknown reason, “perhaps for fear of violence from his followers.”¹⁸

Regarding the prophetic year-days, we note, however, that these Medieval men did not, like many Protestants of a later period, teach that the 1260 days would extend from 538 to 1798. For instance, Joachim of Floris “identified the 1,260 days with the period between the advent of Christ and 1260 A.D.,” and Walter Brute “said the 1,260 and 1,290 days of prophecy were so many

years, to be reckoned from the Hadrian desolation of Jerusalem to his own day.”¹⁹ But an important point is that they espoused the year-day principle and were Historicists.

Such, too, were the Reformers of the sixteenth century and later, into the early nineteenth century, as well as the Seventh-day Adventist Church which succeeded them.

The papacy did not perish in 1798, though the French Revolution inflicted on it a deadly, apparently mortal wound. It recovered, gradually at first but since 1929 to a most remarkable extent. Today the Roman Church claims to have a billion members and is also accumulating vast possessions and power. Already the world is “wondering” after the Beast, exactly as Rev. 13:3 predicted. In fact, the papacy is well on its way toward world domination.

Historicist Seventh-day Adventists have in their interpretation of Rev. 13, been expecting such developments since the middle of the nineteenth century. Most tellingly, we read of them in Ellen G. White’s “Aims of the Papacy,” a chapter of *The Great Controversy*. Amongst other things, she wrote:

“The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation for a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and to undo all that Protestantism has done. Catholicism is gaining ground upon every side. See the increasing number of her churches and chapels in Protestant countries. Look at the popularity of her colleges and seminaries in America, so widely patronized by Protestants.”²⁰

She also said America, symbolized by the two-horned beast depicted in the last part of Rev. 13, would yet through Sunday legislation support the Roman Church. “But in this homage to the papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion is still far from being destroyed. And prophecy foretells a restoration of her power. ‘I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.’ Verse 3.”²¹

When did she write these words? She completed the book containing them in 1888, with slight revisions in 1911, and died in 1915. But when did the papacy sign its agreements with Mussolini? Fourteen years later, in 1929. And only after that date has the world been witnessing the amazing resurgence of papal power, which we have already described.

Of course, the Vatican has not yet been able to achieve the goal of world domination, nor has America helped it do so by creating for it a Protestant look-alike, which prophecy calls the image of the Beast. The United States will not only institute this new order of things at home but also influence or compel the rest of the world to do the same. That time is still future.

Meanwhile, Heaven anticipated such wickedness by raising up beforehand a church to speak out against it. Rev. 12 depicts the people of God through the centuries as a glorious woman clad with the sun. The devil, after failing to destroy the Saviour, turned his attention to her. But the true church survived

his onslaughts by fleeing into the wilderness beyond the reach of Rome. There she remained for 1260 prophetic days or “a time, and times, and half a time,” or 3½ prophetic years.

After that period had elapsed in 1798, Satan “went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). These enemies of the great red dragon also feature in Rev. 14:12, where we read: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Now the context is the three angels’ messages mentioned in the preceding verses. The last of them concerns the end-time refuseniks, who resolutely will not worship the image of the Beast and spurn its mark, the Sunday sabbath. A great burden of the third angel’s message is to warn the world loudly and in no uncertain terms:

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb . . .” (Rev. 14:9-10).

An evil confederacy will yet decree death for those who refuse submission to legislation aimed at compelling their conscience. But to this, the Lord on high responds with the most fearsome threat contained in the Bible. And eventually after Jesus has repossessed this blood-bought world, the Beast and the False Prophet (the Two-horned Beast), together with the Dragon, will meet their end in that terrible lake of fire (Rev. 20). Tormented with them will be those who have joined in persecuting the commandment-keeping people of God and worshipped the Beast or his image, receiving on their hands or foreheads the mark that brings damnation.

IV

The baleful number 666 is also part of the Bible’s dire warning and end-time scenario. Like Uriah Smith and many others before him, we believe that it stands for *vicarius Filii Dei*, a papal title fraught with dark pontifical power.

This identification has likewise been strikingly validated by history. Together with the ecclesiastical and secular pretensions that it represents, this title has been much in evidence for more than 1200 years, as amply demonstrated in this book.

It still remains tremendously important, for those who at the end of time want to be among the Lord’s redeemed must gain the victory over this number as well to avoid the seven last plagues and inherit the kingdom. John wrote:

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God” (Rev. 15:2).

On the other hand, there is no support in either the Scriptures or common sense for the Idealist numerology that our previous chapters have dealt with. By confusing people, it detracts from what God has to say about the matter. We especially need to discard the myth that there are three 6's in 666. In the original Greek of Rev. 13:18, the number does not appear in that form. Therefore, if three characters are really required, the reader needs to remember the three-lettered truth about

ⲭϥϚ'.

In passing, we note that when Ranko Stefanovic revised his *Revelation of Jesus Christ* (2009), he still clung to the contrary viewpoint. Perhaps to rebut Kenneth Jørgensen's 2006 critique, which we have already discussed, he wrote about the notorious number of Rev. 13:18: "It consists of the triple six clearly expressed in Greek: *hexakosioi hexēkonta hex*."²² This would mean that because *hexakosioi*, like its English equivalent *six hundred*, contains the word *six*, it is equal to *six*. Likewise *sixty* is equal to *six*. And so, of course, is *six* itself. That is to say, 600 = 6, 60 = 6, and 6 = 6, which leads to the interesting conclusion that 600, 60, and 6 are all one and the same number! Really?

If Bible prophecy foretells the future, as it claims to do, Historicism is a much better paradigm than Idealism or Preterism and Futurism. As this affects Rev. 13, including the interpretation of 666, we always need to remember the vital principle of contextuality, details of which we finally here repeat.

Three dimensions of context are meant. The first is *intratextual*, that is, verse 18 is studied as part of and within Rev. 13 as a whole. The second is *intertextual*, which concerns the fact that elements of that chapter demonstrably allude to other Scriptures. The third is *extratextual*: the words and symbols of Scripture reach out beyond themselves toward the actual events of history.

About the last mentioned, we also need to note that more is involved than intellectual persuasion; our personal salvation and eternal survival are at stake.

When Sabbathkeepers are turned away at the gasoline station or arrested and jailed for disloyalty to the government because they dare to speak out against the national Sunday law, the end of human probation will be very near. That may well, dear reader, be your last chance to avoid the perdition awaiting those who obey a human ordinance rather than God. But afterwards a death decree will follow for those who remain loyal to him by fully obeying his commandments. Then it will be, alas, too late; for this will be the sign that the door of mercy has closed, when our Saviour is to say:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (Rev. 22:11-12)

Notes

Volume I

The Story of the Great Apostasy

INTRODUCTION

Enter the Beast

1. C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. II: *The Message of Revelation for You and Your Family* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), p. 325.
2. Edwin de Kock, *Christ and Antichrist in Prophecy and History*, Vol. I (Edinburg, TX: The Author, 2001) and revised CD edition, 2009. Also Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1944), or any later edition; Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. II: *The Message of Revelation for You and Your Family*; Froom, PFF.
3. Arnold Joseph Toynbee, *A Study of History*. One vol. ed. (Singapore: Thames, 1979), p. 267.
4. C.H. King, *A History of Civilization, the Story of Our Heritage: Earliest Times to the Mid-Seventeenth Century* (New York: Scribner's, 1956), p. 237.
5. Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Rise of Christian Europe* (Norwich, Eng.: Thames, 1965), p. 51.
6. Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of the Seer of Patmos* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905), p. 227.
7. Edwin de Kock, *Christ and Antichrist in Prophecy and History* (2001) as well as *The Use and Abuse of Prophecy: History, Methodology, and Myth* (2007), published by author at Edinburg, Texas.
8. "1.1 From Jesus to the Middle Ages," *The Use and Abuse of Prophecy*, pp. 13-17.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
10. *Ibid.*, "1.2 From the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century," pp. 24-26.
11. *Ibid.*, "1.4 From the Later Nineteenth Century to the Present" pp. 38-48.
12. William H. Shea, "Year-Day Principle," *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, Vol. I, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992), pp. 67-110.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 102. 14. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101. 15. *Ibid.*, p. 101. 16. *Ibid.*

PART 1

The Basics

1. An Early Expectation of the End

No notes.

2. Biblical Parallels for 666

1. Roy Allan Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, Revised, (1953, 1961. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1974), p. 134.

25. Andrew Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007), p. 14.

17. The Donation of Constantine

1. Nicolas Cheetham, *A History of the Popes. Orig. Keepers of the Keys* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1982), p. 58.

2. Ibid.

3. Anon., *Journal Historique et Littéraire*, (Luxemburg: Les Héritiers d'André Chevalier, 15 February 1784).

4. EB 07, s.v. "Great Saint Bernard Pass."

5. Anon., "Voïage en France," 15 February 1784, *Journal Historique et Littéraire*, p. 247.

6. R.H.C. Davis, *A History of Medieval Europe: From Constantine to Saint Louis*. 1957 (London: Longman, 1970), p. 132.

7. Cheetham, *A History of the Popes*, p. 59.

8. EB 09, s.v. "Donation of Constantine."

9. "The Donation of Constantine," in Lorenzo Valla, *Discourse on the Forgery of the Alleged Donation of Constantine*, in Latin and English, trans. by Christopher B. Coleman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), Hanover Historical Texts Project, Scanned and proofread by Jonathan Perry, Feb. 2001.

10. "The Donation of Constantine" in Latin and English, Appendix to G.W. Bowersock, trans. and ed., *Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine*. The I Tatti Renaissance Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007), pp. 172–173.

11. Avro Manhattan, *The Vatican Billions: Two Thousand Years of Wealth Accumulation from Caesar to the Space Age* (Chino, CA: Chick Publications, 1983), p. 28.

12. Ibid., pp. 29–30. 13. Ibid., p. 30.

14. G.W. Bowersock, Introduction to "The Donation of Constantine," p. xii.

15. Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*. 1997 (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2006), p. 89.

16. Ibid., pp. 93–97.

17. EB 08, s.v. "Lothar I."

18. Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, trans. by G.W. Bowersock. The I Tatti Renaissance Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007), p. 11.

19. Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages: A Study in the Ideological Relation of Clerical to Lay Power*, 1955 (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1965), p. 74 and footnote 2.

20. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, s.v. "Pope Adrian I" (New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1907), www.newadvent.org, downloaded 09/02/07.

21. "Hadrianus I papa Carolum regem," *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanarum: Monumenta Carolina*, Vol. 4, ed. Philippus Jaffé (Berolini, apud Weidmannos, 1867), pp. 197–201.

22. Trans. from Horace Kinder Mann, Johannes Hollnsteiner, *The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages* London: Kegan Paul, Trech, Trübner & Do, 1903), pp. 468–469.

23. Ibid.

24. William P. Barker, *Who's Who in Church History*, s.v. "Adrian I," 1977 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977).

25. "Orthodox America: A Roman Catholic Abbé Who Became an Orthodox Priest," www.roca.org, downloaded 08/13/07.
26. Abbé René François Guettée, *The Papacy; Its Historic Origin and Primitive Relations with the Eastern Churches* (New York: Carleton, Publisher, 1867), p. 22.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 261. 28. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-262.
29. EB 08, s.v. "False Decretals."
30. Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (London, UK: Collins & Brown Ltd., 1990), pp. 24-25. First published in 1990 by Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.
31. GC, 1888 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950), p. 56.
32. Guettée, *The Papacy*, p. 22.
33. John Milton, *Protestant Union. A Treatise of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and What Best Means May be Used Against the Growth of Popery. To Which Is Prefixed, A Preface on Milton's Religious Principles, and Unimpeachable Sincerity*, by Thomas Burgess, D.D. F.R.S. F.A.S. P.R.S.L., Bishop of Salisbury (London, UK: F. and C. Rivington, Waterloo Place; and J. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly, 1826), pp. 15-16.
34. *Ibid.*, p. x.
35. Thomas Burgess, Bishop of Salisbury, "A Preface on Milton's Religious Principles, and Unimpeachable Sincerity," *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
36. W[illiam] Elfe Tayler, *History of the Temporal Power of the Popes, Showing the Crimes by Which It Was Originally Acquired, and Afterwards Enlarged* (London: Werthkim, Macintosh, and Hunt/Bristol: W. Hack, 1860), pp. 26-27.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
38. Ernest F. Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages* (London: George Bell, 1910), pp. 319-329. Trans. from Zeumer's ed. "Die Constantinische Schenkungsurkunde," Berlin, 1888. Paul Halsall, Jan. 1996 (updated 11/23/96), www.fordham.ed/halsall, downloaded 05/31/07.
39. *Ibid.*
40. "Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America* of the Holy Father John Paul II to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, Men and Women Religious, and All the Lay Faithful on the Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: The Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America." Address of John Paul II to the Bishops of Brazil's Southern Region II on Their 'Ad Limina' Visit, Saturday, 31 August 2002.
41. Vatican, www.AsiaNews.it, downloaded 03/15/08.

18. Forgery Upon Forgery

1. Avro Manhattan, *The Vatican Billions: Two Thousand Years of Wealth Accumulation from Caesar to the Space Age* (Chino, CA: Chick Publications, 1983), p. 69.
2. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Council of Florence," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 07/28/07.
3. Col. George Frederick Young, C.B., *The Medici* (New York: The Modern Library, 1910), pp. 59-60.
4. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Council of Florence."
5. J.-P. [Jacques-Paul] Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Patrologiae Graecae*, Vol. 159 (Paris, Fr.: J.-P. Migne, 1866), pp.1315, col. A-1318, col. B.

martyrs persecuted and put to death for the truth of the Gospel, from the time of the apostles to the present] (1619), new ed. with intro. and notes by Daniel Benoit (Toulouse, France: Société des Livres Religieux, 1885), pp. 469–470.

15. Merle D'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*, Vol. VIII, p. 126.

16. Ibid. 17. Ibid.

18. John E. Longhurst, "Juan Diaz," Chapter Five, *Luther's Ghost in Spain (1517-1546)* (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1964/The Library of Iberian Resources Online), www.libro.uca.edu/longhurst, downloaded 03/07/07.

19. Ibid., footnote on p. 73: *Historia de la muerte de Juan Diaz, par determinacion tomada en Roma, le hizo malar su hermano Alfonso Diaz, en la madrugada del sabado 27 iim [sic] del ano 1546* vol. xx of *Reformistas antiguos espanoles*).

20. Longhurst, p. 74. 21. Ibid., pp. 78-81.

22. Juan Evsebio Nieremberg, *De la devocion y patrocinio de San Miguel, principe de los angeles, antigvo tvtelar de los godos, y protector de España* (Madrid: Franciseo de Robles, 1643), pp.69-70.

23. SDABD, pp. 736-737.

26. The Donation and the Voyages of Discovery

1. EB 07, s.v. "Isabella I."

2. Stephen C. Dodge, *Christopher Columbus and the First Voyages to the New World* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1991), pp. 14–16.

3. Edgar Prestage, "Portugal," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 302, qtd. in LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation* (4 vols. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946–1954), Vol. 2, pp. 165-166.

4. J. J. Barry, M.D., compiled from the French of Roselly De Lorgues, *The Life of Christopher Columbus. From Authentic Spanish and Italian Documents* (Boston: Patrick Donahoe; New York: Catholic Publication Society; Baltimore: John Murphy & Co, 1870), p. 245.

5. Ibid.

6. EB 07, s.v. "Alexander VI."

7. Barry, *The Life of Christopher Columbus*, p. 245.

8. Ibid., pp. 140-141.

9. EB 07, s.v. "Tordesillas, Treaty of."

10. Froom, PFF, Vol. II, pp. 169–170.

11. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Pope Julius II," downloaded 05/12/07.

12. EB 07, s.v. "Gama, Vasco da, 1st Conde (1st count) Da Vidigueira."

13. EB 07, s.v. "Cabral, Pedro Álvares."

14. EB 07, s.v. "Tordesillas, Treaty of."

15. Froom, PFF, Vol. II, pp. 166–167.

16. EB 08, s.v. "Columbus, Christopher."

17. EB 08, s.v. "Columbus, Christopher."

18. Froom, PFF, Vol. II, pp. 171–174.

19. EB 08, s.v. "Columbus, Christopher."

20. EB 07, s.v. "Isabella I."

21. Spanish *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Ambrosio Montesino," www.es.wikipedia.org, downloaded 05/08/07.

22. Ambrosio Montesino, in Ana M. Alvarez Pellitero, *La Obra Lingüística y Literaria de Fray Ambrosio Montesino* [the Linguistic and Literary Work of Friar Ambrosio Montesino] (Valladolid, Spain: Departamento de Lengua y Literatura Españolas, Universidad de Valladolid, 1976), p. 25.
23. Bernal Díaz, cited in Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Rise of Christian Europe* (Norwich, Eng.: Thames, 1965), p. 129.
24. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Albert Reville," downloaded 03/07/07.
25. Albert Réville, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Native Religions of Mexico and Peru, Delivered at Oxford and London in April and May 1884* (London and Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1884), pp. 174-175, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed. The title page also states: "The Hibbert Lectures, 1884."
26. EB 07, s.v. "Pizarro, Francisco"
27. EB 07, s.v. "Atahualpa."
28. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Vincente de Valverde," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 12/21/07..
29. EB 07, s.v. "Almagro, Diego de."
30. EB 07, s.v. "Pizarro, Francisco."
31. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Vincente de Valverde," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 12/21/07.
32. *Ibid.*, s.v. "Las Casas, Bartolomé de," accessed 5/15/07.
33. Spanish *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Eugenio Espejo," www.es.wikipedia.org, downloaded 05/06/07.
34. Roberto Andrade, "Capítulo II: Espejo y sus obras," *Historia del Ecuador* (Guayaquil? Reed & Reed, 1934), pp. 147-149.
35. Spanish *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Eugenio Espejo," www.es.wikipedia.org, downloaded 05/06/07.
36. Douglas T. Peck, "The Controversial Historical Image of Columbus from the Sixteenth Century to Modern Times," Note. 2, New World Explorers, Inc. web page, www.newworldexplorersinc.org, downloaded 12/09/07.
37. Barry, compiled from the French of Roselly De Lorgues, *The Life of Christopher Columbus*, p. 569.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 571-573.
39. Daniel Fabre, "Christophe Colomb, l'impossible héros" [Christopher Columbus, the impossible hero], *Terrain: Revue d'ethnologie de l'Europe*, 30 March 1998, www.terrain.revues.org, pp. 1-5.
40. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Anna Howard Shaw," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 12/09/07.
41. [Anna Howard Shaw], *Fate of Republics* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1880), pp. 186-187.
42. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Florida," www.newadvent.org, downloaded 12/05/08.
43. EB 08, s.v. "Menéndez de Avilés, Pedro."
44. William W. Dewhurst, "Preface," *The History of Saint Augustine, Florida, with an Introductory Account of the Early Spanish and French Attempts at Exploration and Settlement in the Territory of Florida, Together with Sketches of Events and Objects of Interest Connected with the Oldest Town in the United States, to Which is Added a Short Description of the Climate and Advantages of Saint Augustine as a Health Resort* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1881).
45. "Chapter VIII: Shipwreck of Ribault's Fleet.—Massacre by Menendez," *Ibid.*, pp. 47-50.

46. "Chapter VII: The Unfortunate Expedition under Ribault. Founding of St. Augustine by Menendez, 1565. Attack upon the French Settlement on the St. John's River," *Ibid.*, p. 38.

47. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Florida."

48. EB 08, s.v. "Leif Eriksson the Lucky."

49. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Leif Ericson," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 12/06/08.

50. "Names make news. Last week, these names made this news," *Time*, 20 October 1952, www.time.com, downloaded 12/11/07.

51. John A. Hardon, S.J., "Christopher Columbus, The Catholic," Talk 2 (Presented 4/24/92 at St. John Vianney in Northlake, Illinois), The Real Presence Association, www.therealpresence.org, downloaded 12/09/07.

52. "Rethinking the Spanish 'Black Legend' and the Controversial Historical Image of Columbus," New World Explorers, Inc., www.newworldexplorers.org, downloaded 12/09/07.

53. Douglas T. Peck, "The Controversial Historical Image of Columbus from the Sixteenth Century to Modern Times," New World Explorers.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Ian Fisher, "Pope Softens Remarks on Conversion of Natives," *The New York Times*, 23 May 2007, www.nytimes.com, downloaded 05/23/07.

27. Vicegerent of the Son of God

1. DA, 1898 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1940), pp. 129-30.

2. GC, 1888 (Deland, FL: Laymen for Religious Liberty, Inc., 1990), p. 53.

3. James Duchal, Sermon VII: "Observations upon the Apostle Paul's Description of the Man of Sin," *Presumptive Arguments for the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Religion; in Ten Sermons* (London: A. Millar, 1753), p. 294.

4. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Reginald Cardinal Pole," downloaded 01/22/07.

5. [Thomas Phillips,] *The History of the Life of Reginald Pole* (1764. London: Sold by T. Payne, W. Johnston, S. Bladon, W. Nichol, W. Flexney, 1767), pp. 396, 397.

6. Edward Stone, *Remarks upon the History of the Life of Reginald Pole*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: W. Jackson, 1766), p. 28.

7. Edward Irving, *The Church and State Responsible to Christ, and to One Another: A Series of Discourses on Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts* (London: James Nisbet, 1829), pp. 232-237.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

9. John Dowling, Chapter 4: "Profligate popes and clergy of this period," Book 4, *The History of Romanism: From the Earliest Corruptions of Christianity to the Present Time*, 4th ed. (New York: Edward Walker, 1845), p. 222.

10. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VI (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909), s.v. "William Gahan," www.newadvent.org, downloaded 02/17/08.

11. Dowling, *The History of Romanism*, p. 221.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 223. 13. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

14. EB 08, s.v. "Benedict IX."

15. EB 08, s.v. "Sylvester III."

16. EB 08, s.v. "Benedict IX."

17. EB 08, s.v. "Clement II."

18. EB 08, s.v. "Benedict IX."

30. Martin, *Rich Church, Poor Church*, p. 77.
31. Standridge, *What's Happening in the Roman Church?*, p. 10.
32. Shirley Temple Black, *Child Star: An Autobiography*. 1988 (New York: Warner Books, 1989), p. 18.
33. Eric Francis Hodgins, qtd. in W. A. Swanberg, *Luce and His Empire* (New York: Scribner's, 1972), p. 82.
34. Thomas A. Bailey, *Probing America's Past: A Critical Examination of Major Myths and Misconceptions*. Vol. 2 (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1973), p. 634.
35. J. Paul Getty, *How to Be Rich* (London, Eng.: Allen, 1976), pp. 22, 50, 155.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 155.
37. "Religion: God's Mammon," *Time*, in Partnership with CNN, 11/08/71, www.time.com, downloaded 07/28/10.
38. Martin, *Rich Church, Poor Church*, pp. 41-42.
39. Francis Cardinal Spellman, qtd. in David A. Yallop, 1984. *In God's Name: An Investigation into the Murder of Pope John Paul I* (Toronto, Can.: Bantam, 1985), p. 112.
40. "A Short Biography of Baron Avro Manhattan," www.reformation.org, downloaded 07/28/10.
41. Avro Manhattan, *The Vatican Billions: Two Thousand Years of Wealth Accumulation from Caesar to the Space Age* (Chino, CA: Chick Publications, 1983), pp. 188-189.
42. Ferdinand Lundberg, *The Rich and the Super-Rich: A Study in the Power of Money Today*. Literary Guild, 1968 (New York: Bantam Books, 1973), p. 73.
43. Manhattan, *The Vatican Billions*, p. 184.
44. Martin, *Rich Church, Poor Church*, dust-cover.
45. Manhattan, *Vatican Billions*, p. 294.
46. Paul L. Williams, *The Vatican Exposed: Money, Murder, and the Mafia* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2003).
47. "Current News summary," the Editors of *Religion Today*, downloaded 01/08/01.
48. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Nancy Patricia D'Alesandro Pelosi," www.wikipedia.org, 07/27/10, downloaded 07/28/10.
49. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "John Roberts," www.wikipedia.org, downloaded 06/16/07.
50. "Alito sworn in as nation's 110th Supreme Court justice," www.cnn.com, downloaded 06/16/07.
51. Jeremiah J. Crowley, Chapter 2, "The Parochial School and Catholic Clerical Hostility Toward the Public School," *The Parochial School, a Curse to the Church, a Menace to the Nation* (Chicago: Published by Author, 1905) in www.reformation.org/father_crowley.html, downloaded 06/09/07.

CONCLUSION

Exit the Beast

1. Froom, PFF, Vol. I, p. 268.
2. John McManners, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford, Eng.: UP, 1990), p. 48.
3. Froom, PFF, Vol. I, pp. 268-271.
4. Hippolytus, *On Christ and Antichrist*, New Advent, www.newadvent.org/fathers, downloaded 12/10/10.
5. Froom, PFF, Vol. I, p. 273.

6. Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Knopf, 1989), p. 429.
7. Tertullian, qtd. in Froom, PFF, Vol. I, p. 258.
8. Lactantius, qtd. in Froom, PFF, Vol. I, p. 356.
9. Friedrich Otto, *The End of the World* (New York: International Publishing, 1986), p. 70.
10. Froom, PFF, Vol. II, p. 245.
11. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* 4: 290, qtd. in C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. I, *The Message of Daniel for You and Your Family* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), p. 123.
12. Eberhardt II, *Annales Boiorum* (Annals of Bavaria) by Aventinus, qtd. in Froom, *Finding the Lost Prophetic Witnesses*, pp. 37, 38.
13. Henry C[harles] Lea, "Abuse of Excommunication," *Studies in Church History: The Rise of the Temporal Power.—Benefit of Clergy.—Excommunication.—The Early Church and Slavery* (Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea's Son & Co., 1883), pp. 423-424.
14. Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1994), pp. 167-170.
15. LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Finding the Lost Prophetic Witnesses* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), p. 30.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
17. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Nicholas of Cusa," www.en.wikipedia.org, downloaded 12/11/10.
18. J[onathan] Davis, "Part II," *History of the Welsh Baptists, From the Year Sixty-Three to the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy* (Pittsburgh: D. M. Hogan, 1835), pp. 22-24.
19. Douglas E. Cox, "Theories about the 1,260 Days," www.vinyl2.sentex.net, downloaded 12/11/10.
20. GC, 1888 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950), pp. 565-566.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 579.
22. Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*. 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 209), p. 426.

About the Author



Edwin de Kock (1930-) also wrote *Christ and Antichrist in Prophecy and History* (2001) as well as *The Use and Abuse of Prophecy* (2007). These have both been well accepted in the United States and elsewhere, used by evangelists, and prescribed a few times for Seminary classes. Scholars as well as ordinary readers have delighted in his pleasant style, blended with research ranging over centuries. He displays a grasp of history, contemporary world affairs, and polyglot culture that is unusual among writers on prophecy. He has also published in Afrikaans and Esperanto, the International Language. In the latter, he is one of its most famous original poets. A good deal of his poetry has been translated into other languages, including English.

De Kock's fascination with prophecy and history is virtually as old as his Adventism, beginning in his native South Africa more than seven decades ago. It culminated in almost twenty years of intensive research, which is still continuing. He has qualifications in theology, literature, education, and speech. In Israel, on Crete, and in Europe, he visited great museums, cathedrals, art galleries, and important sites connected with the contents of his books.

He has lectured internationally and been interviewed on radio and television in several countries, including the Esperanto service of Radio Vatican. The last mentioned was about his Adventism.

Professionally he was an educator for more than thirty-five years, in South Africa, South Korea, and the United States, especially as a college teacher. He finished this career as a writing professor at the University of Texas, Pan American, in 2000. His wife Ria, whom he married in 1954, does the same kind of work. Their sons and their families also live in America.

Other Publications

I

Christ and Antichrist in Prophecy and History (2001). Sold out.*
The Use and Abuse of Prophecy (2007).
Seven Heads and Ten Horns (in preparation).

CD Publication (all the following and more items on one disk):

*1. 2007 Revision of *Christ and Antichrist in Prophecy and History*.

2. "Prophecy Validated by Events," ADVENTISTS AFFIRM, Fall 2005.

This article validates the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the two-horned beast described in Rev. 13:11-17 within its historical context, showing how ridiculous it must have seemed during the nineteenth century, even as late as the first World War (1914-1918), and yet how feasible it is today.

3. "A Dispensationalist Calculation Error," *Ministry*, August 2002.

Amongst other things, this article demonstrates that Futurism is arithmetically wrong in claiming that the 1260 days, 42 months, and 3½ years of Daniel and Revelation are literal time. That is, the math for fitting this period into Dan. 9:27 is wrong.

4. *Africa and the Bible* (2006).

Israel first became a nation in Africa and was partly Egyptian. That ancient continent is also where the first Bible writer was born and the infant Jesus found shelter. Blacks have played a significant role in salvation history. An uplifting read for people of African origin everywhere in the world.

U.S.A. prices (postage included): *The Use and Abuse of Prophecy* \$17.55.
CD \$14.00. Checks and money orders only. No credit cards.

For details concerning other countries, special offers, discounts on multiple copies, etc., please write to Edwin de Kock at

edwdekock@yahoo.com or

12916 Los Terrazos Blvd.,
Edinburg, TX 78541, U.S.A.

Recommendations

With this trilogy on the enigmatic number 666 in the Book of Revelation, Edwin de Kock has presented us with the most exhaustive study on the subject currently available from the Historicist perspective.

William H. Shea, M.D., Ph.D.,

Retired professor of Old Testament, Andrews University, Former Associate Director, Biblical Research Institute.

The Truth about 666 is the most extensive treatment of the Historicist prophetic interpretation of 666. It brings out abundant evidence for the view of *Vicarius Filii Dei* as the best interpretation of Revelation 13:18 and exposes the problems with the Preterist and Idealist interpretations. The book should be required reading for anyone studying the end-time prophecies of the Bible.

P. Gerard Damsteegt, Dr. Theol.

Associate Professor, Church History Department, Seminary, Andrews University

With *The Truth About 666 and the Story of the Great Apostasy*, Edwin de Kock has both recovered and magnificently delineated a precious mine of Historicist truth. He provides by far the most comprehensive treatment of the notorious apocalyptic number and its prophetic corollaries ever produced. As such, de Kock's magnum opus is destined to become the unparalleled standard on this subject.

Jerry A. Stevens, English major and two master's degrees in education

Author, *Vicarius Filii Dei*

Former editor, ADVENTISTS AFFIRM

In its capacity as a state, the Roman Catholic church-state of the Middle Ages will have needed a constitution. If it ever had one, it was the Donation of Constantine, where we first find the papal title *Vicarius Filii Dei* (Vicar of the Son of God). If this is not an official title of the papacy, no such title exists. De Kock has explored the history of *Vicarius Filii Dei* in perhaps more detail than anyone ever will, but if the day comes when someone extends his researches further, I predict they will only find more evidence for his positions.

Frank W. Hardy, Ph.D.

Doctorate in Linguistics and graduate degree in Old Testament studies

Former editor of *Historicism*

The Truth About 666 and the Story of the Great Apostasy is largely based on colossal amounts of recently discovered information. Much of it is history. A significant part of it is religious history. The reader will find that sure evidence points to the correct understanding of the Sea Beast in Revelation 13, its name and number. De Kock's presentation is a thorough, frank, factual, eye-opener history of one of Christendom's greatest apostates, its character and career.

Harold Erickson, Ed.D.

Taught Church History and Daniel and Revelation classes at Spicer Memorial College for eighteen years. Now conducts prophetic seminars (since 1987)

Like everything else in the book, your documentation and historical approach are impeccable.

Douglas E. LaPrade, Ph.D.

Author in English and Spanish. Two Fulbright scholarships
Tenured English professor, University of Texas–Pan American

Synopsis

Ranging over the entire Christian era, *The Truth About 666* is a penetrating 900-page book in three volumes for both scholars and lay people concerned about past, present, and future events. This is the most comprehensive work on prophecy and history ever produced by a Seventh-day Adventist, with the assistance of excellent researchers and scholars. About the earliest Christian centuries, it agrees with and defends Ellen G. White's *Great Controversy* as well as Uriah Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation*, but it adds much that neither of them dealt with.

For instance, the Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths were not really Arians but ancient Sabbathkeepers, who stood in the way of papal supremacy. Therefore, they had to be eliminated. The popes were supported by the kings and emperors of Europe in persecuting those who opposed the Roman Church, yet for centuries they also struggled to dominate them.

With amazing new discoveries in Latin as well as five other languages, this book vindicates Uriah Smith's conclusion that the 666 in Rev. 13:18 really refers to *vicarius Filii Dei* (the vicar of the Son of God). This title first appeared during 753 in a document known as the Donation of Constantine, which was forged by the papacy to claim ecclesiastic supremacy as well as secular domination. The narrative of *The Truth About 666* is enlivened by many fascinating episodes. For instance, it shows that the people of Brazil, the largest country in Latin America, speak Portuguese, while the others speak Spanish, due to a papal decision based on that fraudulent manuscript.

This book is a storehouse of brand-new discoveries. One of its treasures is an Appendix with material quoted from more than eighty non-Seventh-day Adventist writers, mostly Protestants who lived and labored before Uriah Smith. They testified to the fact that *vicarius Filii Dei* was indeed a papal title. Most of them also showed that it had a number value of 666.

Very many Catholic writers also bore witness to the fact that the popes have for more than a thousand years been called the vicars of the Son of God, in Latin as well as the other leading languages of Western Europe.

In its third volume, this book discusses the problem of some Seventh-day Adventist scholars who now say that 666 does not refer to the pope but only means human sinfulness or imperfection. Some of them also claim that the number, the name, and the mark of the Beast are one and the same thing. By implication, there will therefore be no Sunday laws, nor will America cooperate with the papacy in its pursuit of world domination. Such ideas undermine the third angel's message, suggesting that Seventh-day Adventists are not really the Remnant Church of prophecy. As *The Truth About 666* demonstrates, these Seventh-day Adventist scholars have most unfortunately been influenced by writers from outside their church: Sundaykeepers, Protestants and Catholics, as well as others, including Spiritualists.

Availability

Due to a lack of funds, this work cannot yet be printed. It is, however, already available on a CD for only \$19.95, shipping and handling included. Please mail a U.S. check or money order to Edwin de Kock, 12916 Los Terrazos Blvd., Edinburg, TX 78541. For further details, please e-mail edwdekock@yahoo.com.