

The Deadly Wound: A Key to Unlocking Revelation 17¹

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INTRODUCTION

Not long ago, within a generation or two, many Seventh-day Adventists were taught that “the deadly wound” to the papal power referred to in Revelation 13:3,² was healed on February 11, 1929, with the signing of the Lateran Pact. On that day, civil power and national sovereignty were restored to the Papacy, once more reuniting church and state. The Papacy itself declared in 1929 that the restoration of its civil power marked the beginning of “a new order”.³

This once prevalent Adventist understanding, however, has been replaced by the general and somewhat vague modern contention that the “wound is being healed”, and “will be healed at some point in the future”, but “is not healed yet”. Some disagreement exists amongst those who teach this view as to what precise event may eventually constitute the healing of the wound, but it is often asserted either that this will occur when Sunday laws are enforced by the civil power, or when the Papacy recovers persecuting dominion.

As a result of assertions that the healing of the wound is still future, many have accepted the idea that some development involving a restoration of full power and authority for the Roman Catholic Papacy is yet to take place as an indicator for end time events to begin. One result, unsurprisingly, has been a general conclusion amongst many that there is little reason to be concerned about the imminent nearness of Christ’s return until the healing of the wound has been declared by someone in authority to have actually occurred.

This paper proposes that the deadly wound is already healed, that a close analysis of the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the 1260-year period foretold by Bible prophecy in Daniel and Revelation⁴ support this position, and that a key to Revelation 17 is made evident in the result.

¹ This paper assumes general biblical and historical knowledge of the reader.

² Revelation 13:3 “And 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.”

³ *Quinquagesimo Ante*: On His Sacred Jubilee, Pope Pius XI - 1929

<https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius11/p11quinq.htm>. Speaking of the signing of the Lateran Pact, Pope Pius XI stated that Catholics were aware “a new era and a new order were about to rise.”

⁴ See Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7, Revelation 11:2, Revelation 11:3, Revelation 12:6, Revelation 12:14, Revelation 13:5.

1. The Importance of the 1260 Year Period

The Bible declares that the Papacy would hold dominant and oppressive power over the Christian world for 1260 years.⁵ This specific time period is reiterated and emphasized by God more than any other in Bible prophecy, and our church's historicist approach to this time period remains dominant despite attempts to "post modernize" it away with so-called higher criticism.⁶

In the 1888 version of the Great Controversy, Ellen White wrote:

The periods here mentioned—"forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days"—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy **began with the establishment of the papacy in A. D. 538**, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome, and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed.⁷

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ See for example, <https://spectrummagazine.org/views/case-by-casebolt-the-1260-year-prophecy-problem/> "The Bible does not provide straightforward information with which to determine a clear beginning point for a purported 1260-year period." Also see, <https://spectrummagazine.org/views/timeout-1260-days-and-smoke-signals-flyover-country/>

⁷ GC88 266.2. The 1911 version of the Great Controversy substitutes the word, "supremacy" as opposed to "establishment" in this paragraph, but it is proposed that these ideas can and should be seen harmoniously. Ellen White intended to highlight the church/state union of the papacy commencing in 538 AD which formally and legally combined church and state contrary to the words of our Lord which make a separation between church and state in Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, and Luke 20:25.

See also, A. T. Jones comments on these verses as follows:

It is evident from the facts stated that there never can be any conflict between legitimate civil authority and the claims of the divine law. And yet the fact remains that there have been many and serious conflicts. Civil governments have frequently required of their subjects that which the divine law forbids, and have forbidden that which the divine law requires. Why is this? The answer is that those in power have either wilfully or ignorantly exceeded their legitimate authority. Were this not true, it would have been the duty of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to have fallen down and worshiped the great image set up by Nebuchadnezzar in the plain of Dura, and God would not have delivered them out of the furnace into which they were cast. It would likewise have been Daniel's duty to have refrained from asking any petition of any God or man for thirty days,

Ellen White's statement that the 1260-year period commenced with "the **establishment of the papacy in A.D. 538**" **refers to the union of civil and religious power in the office of the Bishop of Rome in that year.** This must be so since the office of the Bishop of Rome had existed for some centuries prior, and the 1260 years had not commenced. According to the pen of Inspiration, then, the catalyst for the commencement of the time period, and the long persecution of God's people, was the legislated union of church and state.⁸ This point is significant.

save of the king only, when so commanded by his earthly sovereign; and God would not have sent an angel and closed the mouths of the lions into whose den he was cast for his disregard of civil authority. But God did deliver Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and he did vindicate Daniel's course, thus declaring in an unmistakable manner, and in thunder tones, that he alone is Sovereign of the conscience, that to him alone is unqualified allegiance due, and that he alone is the moral Governor of the universe.

Nor are these instances cited isolated cases in which the devoted servants of God have, in the face of death, chosen to obey God rather than men. The Bible and the history of the Christian Church are full of such cases. This principle was well understood and was fearlessly announced by the apostles who had received it from the Lord himself, couched in these matchless words, "Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." And when commanded by the civil rulers to refrain from doing something which Jesus had commanded, "Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And again, "Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." **And such must be the Christian's answer to-day to any and every demand that conscience be subordinated to civil authority. The Christian can go to prison or to death, but he cannot disobey God even at the behest of the greatest of civil powers. His invariable answer must be, "We ought to obey God rather than men."** *The Limits of Civil Authority*, p. 4.

⁸ In discussing the origins of the Papacy, A. T. Jones writes that it was the union of church and state which created the Papacy, and states that the seed was sown when Constantine granted ecclesiastical judges power to make binding civil judgments under certain circumstances such as the consent of the parties in the dispute, and, at that time, subject to appeal to civil magistrates. These conditions were obliterated by the eventual union of church and state. See *The Great Empires of Bible Prophecy*, 560.3.

Also see A. T. Jones, *Ecclesiastical Empire*:

63. Therefore, the year A. D. 538, which marks the conquest of Italy, the deliverance of Rome, and the destruction of the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, is the true date which marks the establishment of the temporal authority of the papacy, and the exercise of that authority as a world-power. All that was ever done later in this connection was but to enlarge by additional usurpations and donations, the territories which the bishop of Rome at this point possessed, and over which he asserted civil jurisdiction. ECE 207.3

2. The Healing of the Deadly Wound Explained by the 1260 Year Period

It is not a new idea that a specific event marked the commencement of the 1260 year time period, and a known historic event marked the conclusion of it.⁹

In brief summary, in 538 A.D., the Bishop of Rome assumed civil power pursuant to an enactment of Emperor Justinian issued in 534 A.D. Church and state were united for the first time in the Bishop of Rome. The Justinian Code had sought to transfer civil power four years earlier in 534 A.D., but a delay occurred until the invading Ostrogoths were defeated and it was possible for the Bishop of Rome to assume civil governance.¹⁰

Incredibly, history records that papal civil power was again central to the dispute that led Napoleon¹¹ and the Directory to send General Berthier to Rome in 1798.

Napoleon ordered the Pope to renounce civil power over the papal states and make way for the establishment of a French Republic throughout Europe. Napoleon was agreeable that Pius VI remain head of the Catholic Church and retain his religious authority, but he

⁹ Attorney Nicholas Miller notes the following in a 2019 article, for example:

A careful study of Daniel 7:24-26 and some related prophetic passages reveals that the decisive events of the terminal moments of the 1,260 years should be understood **primarily legally**, rather than militarily. Once this legal framework is understood and given its due weight it becomes clearer how the 538 event relates to the 1798 event. In a nutshell, the Justinian Code, which was completed in 534, “enacted orthodox Christianity into law,” placed the pope as the formal head of Christendom, “ordered all Christian groups to submit to [his] authority,” and gave him **civil power** of life and death over heretics. [emphasis added]

This code, however, did not become legally promulgated and enacted on the ground until the siege of Rome was lifted in 538. Justinian’s general, Belisarius, had entered Rome unopposed at the end of 536, but shortly thereafter the Ostrogoths came and laid siege to Rome. After about a year the siege was broken, and Belisarius had control of Rome and its environs. It was then that the provisions of the code elevating the Papacy could actually be implemented by Belisarius beyond the borders of Rome itself. The Gothic Wars continued, with the Ostrogoths being finally driven out in 553. [citations omitted]

¹⁰ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Rome_\(537%E2%80%93538\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Rome_(537%E2%80%93538))

¹¹ “However, Napoleon and the Directory in Paris were not content to leave the Papal States alone. They used the riot in Rome and the ensuing death of the French General Duphot as a reason to invade the Papal States. With the approval of the Directory, General Louis Berthier and his troops entered Rome in February 1798, and soon announced the creation of the Roman Republic. Pope Pius VI was taken as prisoner by the French troops, thereby ending his temporal power. He was imprisoned in northern Italy before he was taken to southern France in 1799 where he was kept under house arrest. He died six weeks after his arrival at Valence on August 29, 1799. He was succeeded by the more conciliatory Pius VII in 1800.”

<https://amazingbibletimeline.com/blog/end-of-temporal-power-of-the-pope-1798/#:~:text=With%20the%20approval%20of%20the%20Directory%2C%20General,French%20troops%2C%20thereby%20ending%20his%20temporal%20power.>

demanded that civil authority be renounced to the French.¹² When Pius VI refused he was arrested by General Berthier and sent to prison in Valence, France, where he died a short time later.

A careful review of history demonstrates that the assumption of civil power combining church and state marked the commencement of the 1260 years, and the severing of civil power from the papacy in 1798 constituted the deadly wound marking the conclusion of the 1260 year period.

There were many attempts to re-establish civil power for the Bishop of Rome from 1798 to 1929, sometimes with partial success that later unravelled. In fact, Napoleon took captive not one but two popes, for he took Pius VII captive also over a disagreement regarding temporal power and Napoleon's appointment of bishops that would prove loyal to the French Republic.¹³ In the course of this disagreement, Pius VII issued a papal bull excommunicating Napoleon.¹⁴

Some decades thereafter, in 1870, when Rome was reacquired by the Kingdom of Italy, Pope Pius IX declared himself a "prisoner of the Vatican" and refused to acknowledge the new Italian state. He remained within Vatican City, effectively under house arrest, for the rest of his life. This commenced decades of attempts to resolve what became known as "the Roman Question".¹⁵ The spat resulted in the issuance of a papal bull of excommunication of the Italian monarch at the time, King Victor Emmanuel II, and anyone else who had attempted to undermine the Pope's civil power.¹⁶

¹² "When, in 1797, Pope Pius VI fell grievously ill, Napoleon gave orders that in the event of his death no successor should be elected to his office, and that the papacy should be discontinued. "But the Pope recovered; the peace was soon broken; Berthier entered Rome on 19th February 1798, and proclaimed a Republic. The aged Pontiff refused to violate his oath by recognizing it, and was hurried from prison into France. Broken with fatigue and sorrows, he died . . . [in] August 1799, in the French fortress of Valence, aged 82 years. No wonder that half of Europe thought Napoleon's veto would be obeyed, and that with the Pope the Papacy was dead."—Joseph Rickaby, *The Modern Papacy*, in *Lectures on the History of Religions*, Vol. 3, Lecture 24, p. 1 (1910).

¹³ <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/2021/06/14/when-the-pope-was-in-prison/> Pius VII was taken captive, transported while very ill through Italy in the dead of night, and eventually agreed to sign a new concordat with Napoleon in which the Papacy once more agreed to give up any right to the papal states.

¹⁴

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_and_the_Catholic_Church#:~:text=Napoleon%20and%20the%20Catholic%20Church%20remained%20on,in%20his%20excommunication%20by%20Pope%20Pius%20VII.

¹⁵

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prisoner_in_the_Vatican#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20even%20after%20the%20Law%20of%20Guarantees%2C,excommunicated%20the%20Italian%20king%20Victor%20Emmanuel%20II

¹⁶ *Ibid*. Also see, for example,

The bull of excommunication as printed by the New York Times on April 24, 1860,¹⁷ reads, in part, as follows:

As the Catholic Church, founded and established by the Lord Christ for the everlasting salvation of mankind, has acquired the form of a perfect society by its divine character, it ought, therefore, in fulfillment of its sacred ministry, to possess that freedom **by which it may not be subject to any civil Power.** And furthermore, in order to obtain that, the Church required those guarantees which were in accordance with the conditions and necessity of the times. It was, therefore, in accordance with Divine Providence, that after the fall of the Roman Empire and its consecutive division into several kingdoms, **the Romish Pope, whom Christ has established as the chief and the centre of his whole Church, obtained temporal power.** Therefore, it has been ordered by God in the wisest manner, that as such a great number and variety of princes exist, the Holy Pope should enjoy that **political liberty** which is so much wanted **in order to exercise his spiritual power, authority and jurisdiction in the whole world, without any impediments.**

...

The whole world knows already how, during these sad times, the adversaries of the Catholic and Apostolic See have made themselves detestable by their attempts, which were characterized by their lying hypocrisy, **in trying to deprive the Holy See of its secular power.**

...

It might have been expected that the originators of these violations would, in consequence of our repeated admonitions, abstain from their unjust projects, especially as all the chiefs of our Holy Church, as well as the faithful believers of every rank, dignity and class joined their own protests to ours, in order to defend unanimously the rights of the Holy See, and of the Church in general, as they very well understood **how much the temporal power,** which is made questionable on this occasion, is **necessary** for the maintenance of the Papal Power.¹⁸

It should be apparent from the foregoing that civil power is not only important for the Papacy, it is vehemently claimed to be a divine right.

¹⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/1860/04/24/archives/italy-the-popes-bull-of-excommunication-apostolic-lettfr-of-our.html>

¹⁸ This is a reference to the Justinian Code!!! The Papacy is saying – we have temporal and religious authority, that’s why we wanted legal guarantees!

3. The Deadly Wound Healed

History records that civil power was assumed by the Bishop of Rome in 538 A.D., lost in 1798, and then, momentarily, fully restored to the Papacy in 1929. On February 11, 1929, the Lateran Pact was signed between the respective representatives of Pope Pius XI and King Victor Emmanuel III,¹⁹ formally restoring full autonomous sovereignty to the Papacy and its newly established geographic territory, paying damages for the “spoliation” of the papal states, and ending the separation of church and state in Vatican City.²⁰

February 11, 1929, is a yearly national holiday in Vatican City and has been declared to be the equivalent of the American holiday of Independence Day.

In consequence of the signing of the Lateran Pact on February 11, 1929, Pope Pius XI became king of Vatican City, the governing power of which is formally known as The Holy See. Today, the Pope is the head of state, and the only fully sovereign monarch in western Europe.²¹ The Holy See is recognized in international law as a sovereign juridical power.²² It mints its own Euros and stamps, issues its own passports, **but most importantly, has formal diplomatic relations with 184 countries around the world.**²³ It is able to establish diplomatic relations because it is a sovereign civil power. Papal ambassadors, known as “nuncios”, travel the world influencing global affairs and advancing the goals of the Pope.

In 1929, Seventh-day Adventists trumpeted the healing of the deadly wound as foretold by Bible prophecy.

In an article in the April 1929 InterAmerican Division Messenger,²⁴ we find the following:

The sure word of prophecy declares “his deadly wound was healed”. The wound inflicted in 1798 and again in 1870 resulted in the complete loss of the temporal power of the papacy. **The healing of the wound will be the restoration of that which was lost when the wound was inflicted – her temporal power.**

February 12, 1929. The following report appeared in the star and Harold Panama, R. P.: The Roman question was solved today with the exchange of signatures between two noteworthy plenipotentiaries in the historic palace of the Lateran,

¹⁹ The Lateran Pact was signed utilizing a Papal and an Italian delegate, Cardinal Gaspari and Prime Minister Mussolini, respectively.

²⁰ The actual geography formally governed by the Holy See is limited, and far less than the vast papal states that the Bishop of Rome had civil authority over. But the Holy See’s extensive influence is not contingent on the size of the geographic area on this planet that it formally governs. It is a mistake to think that it is.

²¹ <https://www.history.com/articles/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-vatican>

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_See

²³ <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2024-01/holy-see-diplomatic-relations-2023-overview.html>

²⁴ Inter-American Division Messenger, Volume VI, No. 5, *Healing the Deadly Wound*. Emphasis added.

Cardinal Gasparri for the pope and premier Mussolini for the king of Italy, the signature of these autographs to the memorable document **aimed to heal the wound which had been festering since 1870.**

It is further reported that Pius today referred to the signing of the treaties as assuring him of real proper and absolute sovereignty, one which was to him for divine reasons, and by divine mandate, cannot be subject to any temporal power.

...

For any mortal man, claiming to be the special representative of the Son of God, the visible head of Christ's church on earth, **to accept temporal sovereignty is to demonstrate that he has yielded to the temptation presented by the prince of this world to our Savior in the wilderness** when the devil takes Him up into an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and said unto Him, "all these things will I give thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." In reply Jesus said unto him, "get thee hence, Satan." Matthew 4:8-10

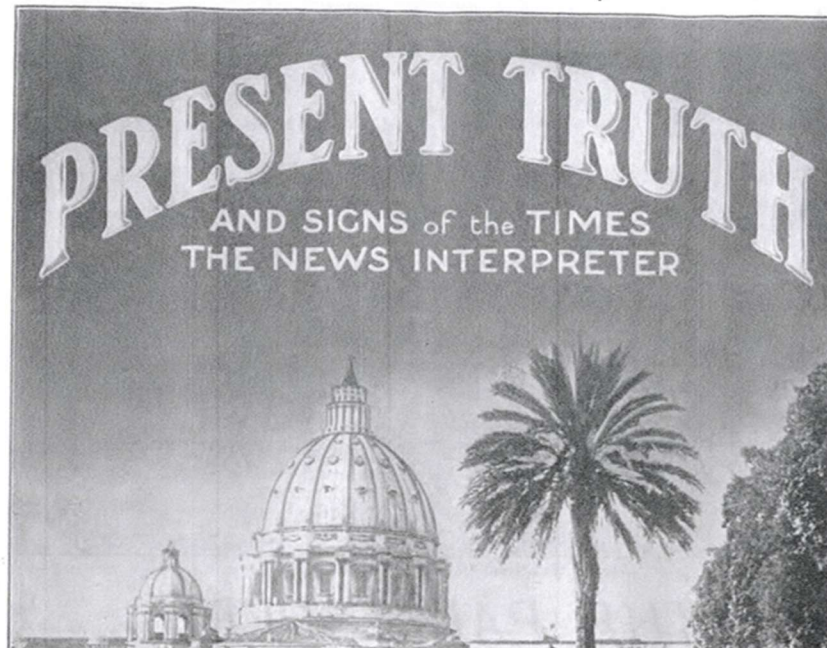
Jesus came from that battlefield a conqueror, while the one who boasts of being his successor on earth eagerly accepts the diadem of earthly glory and cheerfully falls down at worships the giver. **In accepting earthly dominion, he demonstrates the fact that he is the antichrist of the Scriptures**, that man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalt himself above all that is called God that is worshiped so that he has God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

...

It can be seen from the foregoing that our predecessors recognized the assumption of civil power by the papacy as **demonstrable proof that he is anti-Christ, since Christ refused civil power and the Bishop of Rome eagerly grasps it.**

Below are only two of a great many Adventist periodicals from this time period which contain similar content re the healing of the deadly wound.²⁵ Many more examples could easily be provided.

²⁵ To be sure, not every single one of the periodicals from 1929 declare that the deadly wound is healed. Some of them state that the wound is being healed, demonstrating the same disagreement in that day which exists today.



By THE EDITOR

The *Universe* of February 15th stated that it was with "inexpressible thankfulness and gratification" that it announced the settlement.

"The Vatican ceases," it said, "to be the prison of a Pope whose rights have been violated. It resumes its full glories as the palace of the Vicar of Christ."

Protestants are alarmed. They

Berthier, "all Europe thought that, with the Pope, the Papacy was dead." But not so. Another Pope was soon set upon "Peter's chair." With vacillating fortunes the Papacy continued till 1870, when again the Vatican precincts were invaded and the "deadly wound" re-opened. Some doubted whether it could ever recover.

But to-day the wound is healed. Again the Pope is king. Fulfilling the prophecy of Revelation 18, where this power is represented as a fallen woman, it can say, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Rev. 18:7. "All the world wonders" after him. He is the centre of the thought of five continents. Soon he will speak to them over the ether waves.

has played and will still play an important part in deciding the genuineness of man's protestations of loyalty to the Creator of the universe. None but the Christian who has entered into the spiritual rest found only in the Lord Jesus can fully appreciate the privileges of the visit of the day He has so signally blessed. To him it becomes a day of special delight, giving in its freedom from the ordinary duties and cares of life, special opportunities of communion, of reviving spirituality, and of entering more fully into that rest which typifies the union of the disciple with his blessed Lord throughout a glorious eternity.

From "Prisoner" to Monarch

(Continued from page 8)

displaced by dictators, spies and informers abound, and freedom of speech and freedom of the press have been abolished.

Would it matter if that happened in all British countries?

Yet that is the aim of the Papacy. The words of Cardinal

death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Rev. 13: 3.

THE PAPAL FORTUNES REVIVED

HEALED! Could words be more plain? Surely here we have a prophetic picture of the revival of the papal fortunes. A hundred years ago, when Pius VI was taken prisoner by the French armies under General Berthier, "all Europe thought that, with the pope, the Papacy was dead." But not so. Another pope was soon set upon "Peter's chair." With vacillating fortunes the Papacy continued till 1871, when again the Vatican precincts were invaded and the "deadly wound" reopened. Some doubted whether it could ever recover.

But today the wound is healed. Again the pope is king. Fulfilling the prophecy of Revelation 18, where this power is represented as a fallen woman, it can say, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Rev. 18: 7. "All the world wonders" after him. He is the centre of the thought of

In more modern times, Kenneth Cox on 3 ABN in the 1990s taught that the deadly wound was healed on February 11, 1929, and for the same reason expressed by Adventists at that time.²⁶

As stated earlier, this paper is hardly unique in advancing the notion that the deadly wound has already been healed. But, there ought not to be anything novel in observing that the

²⁶ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, with Kenneth Cox, Ep. 16. Starting minute 23:45.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-OX2Fzr1IU&list=PL7VrpLK5CgLAMH9smxJs4pk-rnAAUSgtZ&index=5>

world is *already* “wondering after the beast” in fulfilment of Bible prophecy!²⁷ Examples of the enormous influence of the papacy are so numerous one hardly knows where to begin.

An evangelical commentator recently opined on the influence the Vatican has with the media:

My impression as a spectator is the same now in 2025 as it was in 2013: the **journalists sent to Rome act more like admirers than reporters**. After many days reviewing the life of Pope Francis, the Spanish public radio and television (RTVE) announced that it was “going all out” during the conclave with “the most extensive live coverage with our teams and special correspondents”. The set and presenters of the evening news Telediario were relocated to St. Peter’s Square.

There was barely concealed enthusiasm and nervousness as they reported on the *fumata bianca* [white smoke]. It felt like the football World Cup or Eurovision, except that these were journalists who otherwise approach current affairs with seriousness, rigour and critical thinking.

Six days later, another anomaly in journalism. Some **4,000 correspondents from major media outlets around the world (and a number of influencers)** attended

²⁷ According to Ellen White, there was significant wondering after the beast in her day. See, for example, the following quotes:

Satan is busily laying his plans for the last mighty conflict, when all will take sides. After the gospel has been proclaimed in the world for nearly two thousand years, Satan still presents to men and women the same scene that he presented to Christ. In a wonderful manner he causes the kingdoms of the world in their glory to pass before them. These he promises to all who will fall down and worship him. Thus he seeks to bring men under his dominion.

Satan is working to the utmost to make himself as God and to destroy all who oppose his power. And today the world is bowing before him. His power is received as the power of God. **The prophecy of the Revelation is being fulfilled, that “all the world wondered after the beast.” Revelation 13:3.** Men in their blindness boast of wonderful progress and enlightenment; but to the eye of Omniscience are revealed the inward guilt and depravity. The heavenly watchers see the earth filled with violence and crime. Wealth is obtained by every species of robbery, not robbery of men only, but of God. Men are using His means to gratify their selfishness. Everything they can grasp is made to minister to their greed. Avarice and sensuality prevail. Men cherish the attributes of the first great deceiver. They have accepted him as God, and have become imbued with his spirit. 6T 14.2-6T 14.4 [Emphasis added]

...

We are living in a momentous period of this earth’s history. The great conflict is just before us. We see the world corrupted under the inhabitants thereof. The man of sin has worked with a marvelous perseverance to exalt the spurious sabbath, **and the disloyal Protestant world has wondered after the beast, and has called obedience to the Sabbath instituted by Jehovah disloyalty to the laws of the nations**. Kingdoms have confederated to sustain a false sabbath institution, which has not a word of authority in the oracles of God - The Review and Herald, February 6, 1900. [Emphasis added]

the pope's first audience. It was not a press conference. They were not going to ask questions.

Organised by the Vatican, the journalists waited seated in the Paul VI Hall and burst into a standing ovation when the "Holy Father" appeared, as he was introduced by broadcaster Vatican News. Cheers could be heard as dozens of smartphones captured every step of Leo XIV towards the centre of the huge auditorium.

...this charming effect that the Vatican exerts over journalists from all over the world is very striking.

What other political or religious figure of global reach is cheered by journalists? How often do the media enthusiastically attend an event where they will not be allowed to ask a single question? And why does the change in leadership of a religion completely disrupt the programming of the world's major media outlets for weeks?²⁸

4. Papal Statement on the Significance of the Restoration of Civil Power in 1929

We wish to make one more important point before moving on to the application of these factors to Revelation 17, and that is the paramount importance that the Papacy itself placed on the Lateran Pact and the restoration of civil power to the Vatican.

In his December 1929 encyclical, *Quinquagesimo Ante* - On his Sacred Jubilee, Pope Pius XI wrote the following regarding the absolute necessity of the restoration of civil dominion:

Settlement of Roman Question

4. Let Us begin with those things that seem more important because they have closer relation to the Holy See and to the government of the Church entrusted by Providence to the Supreme Pontiff. It seems especially opportune in this connection to recall some passages of Our first Encyclical, "Ubi Arcana." In this letter We made the following complaint: "It is scarcely necessary to say with how much pain and grief We see Italy outside this friendly harmony of so many States. For Italy is Our own country, the country in which the overruling hand of God placed and fixed the See of His Vicar on earth. **He placed it here in Rome**, which had been the capital of that marvelous, yet limited empire, **thus making it capital of**

²⁸<https://evangelicalfocus.com/news-desk/31121/new-pope-the-media-and-the-strange-charm-of-the-vatican>

the entire world. For thus it became the seat of a sovereignty that surpasses all national and political boundaries, that embraces all men and all peoples, like the sovereignty of Christ Himself, whom it represents and whose office it fills. The origin and character of this sovereignty, no less than the inviolable rights of conscience of millions of the Faithful throughout the world, require that it should be, in fact and in appearance, **independent and free from every human authority and law...**

...

7. Thus we have seen the end of that condition which the Holy See had suffered up to then.

It was a condition intolerable and unjust, for, in addition to the absolute denial of the **necessity** of civil sovereignty, its actual continuance was interrupted in such a way that the rightful independence of the Roman Pontiff was no longer apparent.

...

And all Catholics, whether Italians or foreigners, realized that **a new era and a new order were about to rise.** For these conventions were concluded in the **seventy-fifth year after the definition of the Immaculate Conception.** They were signed **on the exact day on which, a few years later, the Blessed Virgin appeared in the grotto at Lourdes. They seemed, therefore, to be taken under the special protection of the Mother of God.**²⁹

While Christians and unfortunately, not a few Seventh-day Adventists, dismiss the significance of the restoration of civil power to the Vatican, the Papacy is unambiguous about the importance of its temporal authority. The Papacy claims it is accountable to no government on earth, in fact that it is intended to rule all governments, and strenuously asserts this is a mandate it has received from Jesus Christ Himself.

It is the nature of the Papacy to do everything it can to assert that it is both lord and king, and subject to none. A. T. Jones notes the following regarding the title of “papa”, father:

7. Yet in the nature of things it was inevitable, and only a question of time, that the bishop of Rome should assert, as a matter of right, his supremacy over all others. And when this should be accomplished, the matter of the supremacy would then lie between him and the emperor alone, which would open the way for the bishop of Rome to encroach upon the civil and imperial authority. This spirit showed itself in the action of the bishop of Rome in studiously avoiding the title of “patriarch,” “as placing him on a level with other patriarchs.” He always preferred the title of “papa,” or “pope”

²⁹ <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius11/p11quinq.htm>

(Schaff 3); and this because “patriarch” bespeaks an oligarchical church government, that is, government by a few; whereas “pope” bespeaks a monarchical church government, that is, government by one.³⁰

5. APPLICATION TO REVELATION 17

A. Identifying the Scarlet Beast

The angel who instructed the prophet Daniel provided a code to understand the symbols in both the book of Daniel and the Revelation.

According to the book of Daniel, a beast represents a kingdom. We are informed that the lion beast with wings in Daniel 7 is Babylon. Babylon is followed by the lopsided bear with three ribs, representing Medo-Persia (the Persians were the stronger part of the confederacy). The leopard with the four heads and wings is Greece. The terrible beast with iron teeth who stamps the residue is Rome.³¹

This rule of interpretation is properly applied to Revelation also, beginning with the red dragon in Revelation 12, which is a symbol of pagan Rome. The first beast shown to the prophet Daniel, a Hebrew captive of the Babylonians, is the lion, symbolizing the nation he is living under the jurisdiction of. Likewise, the first beast the Apostle John sees is the beast symbolizing the power that he lives under, namely the Pagan Roman Empire.

In Revelation 13, we see the next beast to take prominence historically, and that is the leopard-like beast, symbolizing papal Rome. The prophecy that “the dragon gave him his power, seat and great authority – Revelation 13:2 – was fulfilled in two stages, first with the moving of the capital from Rome to Constantinople by Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D., and later when the Roman Emperor Justinian transferred civil authority to the Bishop of Rome in 538 A.D. This beast would exist for a time period of 1260 years as a civil power, whereupon it would be mortally wounded and die.

In Revelation 13, the next beast we encounter is the Lamb-Like Beast with Two Horns, which was rising into prominence around the time of the French Revolution. From history and from the Spirit of Prophecy, we know this power to be the nation of the United States of America. It rises from the earth, not the water, as America rises in the New World, not the waters of the old world powers.

³⁰ The Great Empires of Prophecy, 559.3

³¹ See Daniel 7, as well as DAR Uriah Smith Chapter 7, also see The Great Empires of Prophecy, A. T. Jones, chapters 2-27.

Each of the preceding beasts is a nation. One beast = one nation. The beast in Revelation 17 must also be a nation or the painstaking manner the Lord has attempted to teach Bible prophecy to us is cast aside. Further, it is a nation that will meet the following criteria:

1. It existed in the past, but for a time it ceased to exist. The angel utilizes unmistakable “deadly wound” language to describe the Scarlet Beast: it was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit” – Revelation 17:8.
2. It received its death wound in the French Revolution, the ideological “bottomless pit” of symbolic Egypt and Sodom described in Revelation 11, and will emerge from it. We will return to this important point in a discussion of the 8th king.
3. This nation is the mount for the Whore of Revelation 17. It carries her, elevates her, and transports her to her appointments of fornication with the kings of the earth. She has a party to attend, and she is bringing the wine. She is all dressed up for her harlotry, but she needs a ride to get there.

What nation fits these criteria? It is contended there can be only one. The Scarlet Beast is believed to be the new civil kingdom created in 1929 by the Lateran Pact, the civil kingdom of Vatican City formally known as the Holy See. The civil power not only provides the Harlot with temporal autonomy and diplomatic immunity, it transports the religious power to her liaisons with the nations, a tight fit for the prophecy.

Let us examine closer and consider the following points in the text.

First, Revelation 13:3 declares that the leopard beast was “**slain to death**” [Greek - **ἐσφαγμένην** esphagmenēn **εἰς** Eis **θάνατον** thanaton] at the conclusion of the 1260 years. It’s not a flesh wound. It’s not just a bad wound. It was a mortal wound, a deadly, fatal wound. The leopard-like beast as a symbol does not show up anywhere after Revelation 13 because that beast died, and is confined to the annals of history.

In a new iteration, however, the restored civil papal power does return, for we know the “wound of death of it was healed” – Revelation 13:3 [Greek - **καὶ** kai **ἡ** hē **πληγὴ** plēgē **τοῦ** tou **θανάτου** thanatou **αὐτοῦ** autou **ἐθεραπεύθη** etherapeuthē]. **When it returns once more it steps onto the world stage with a new appearance to help the world forget the tarnished pages of its prior iteration.**

Commenting on the comprehensive damage of 1798, George Trevor, Canon of York said,

The Papacy was extinct: not a vestige of its existence remained; and among all the Roman Catholic powers, not a finger was stirred in its defense. The Eternal City had no longer Prince or Pontiff; it’s bishop was a dying captive in foreign lands; and the decree was already announced that no successor would be allowed in its place.³²

³² *Rome and its Papal Rulers*, p. 440, quoted by Taylor Bunch in volume 77, no 13 of *The Signs of the Times*, April 4, 1950, *The Deadly Wound Healed*.

Second, many incorrectly believe the deadly wound was to the Papal Church, as distinct from the Papal State. But Revelation 17 indicates that it was **the beast** who received the deadly wound, and for a time “is not”, not the woman – verse 8. The woman was stranded for a time, but she herself did not sustain a deadly wound.

B. The Identity of the Harlot Woman, Mystery Babylon and Mother of Harlots

The gold and jewels, the purple and scarlet, the golden cup of the wine of abominations that is presented to the world, the pride, the intoxication on the blood of martyrs... the symbols are too clear to be confused. Mystery Babylon is that apostate religion taught and enforced by the Roman Catholic Papacy. A woman in Bible prophecy is a church – 5:25-33. A pure woman is a pure church. An impure woman is an impure church. The harlot woman of Revelation 17 is in illicit relations with the kings of the earth, and she is the mother of the daughters she has doctrinally “begotten”. She is clearly the papal religious power.

Ellen White states the following on this point:

The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as “arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:... and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots.” Says the prophet: “I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Babylon is further declared to be “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Revelation 17:4-6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet color, the gold and precious stones and pearls, **vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared “drunken with the blood of the saints” as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. Babylon is also charged with the sin of unlawful connection with “the kings of the earth.”** It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation. GC 382.2

And again she writes,

So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications.” [Verses 1-4.]

Thus is represented the papal power, which with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by outside attraction and gorgeous display, deceives all nations, promising them, as did Satan our first parents, all good to those who receive its mark, and all harm to those who oppose its fallacies. The power which has the deepest inward corruption will make the greatest display, and will clothe itself with the most elaborate signs of power. The Bible plainly declares that this covers a corrupt and deceiving wickedness. “Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” [Verse 5.] 14LtMs, Lt 232, 1899, par. 20-14LtMs, Lt 232, 1899, par. 21

C. The Identity of the Seven Mountains

The angel identifies what the seven mountains are, we are not left to speculation. They are stated to be “the seven mountains on which the woman sits” – Revelation 17:9. It is a clear geographic identifier that ought not to be rejected simply because it is straightforward.

Some argue thus: “Well, Rome is known as the city of seven hills”, not “the seven mountains”. But if one examines the description of the “hills” that Rome is built on, they will note that they are described as, “Mons Palatinus, Mons Capitolinus, Mons Quirinalis, Mons Viminalis, etc, and *mons* literally means “mountains” in Latin.

Below is a picture of a coin minted by Emperor Vespasian in 70 A.D. depicting the Roman goddess sitting on the seven mountains. If one looks carefully, one will also see a lion or tiger advancing toward a bound and hapless martyr.



It should be noted that apostate Protestantism in the form of the New Apostolic Reformation declares it has a “Seven Mountain Mandate” from Jesus Christ to rule the world. They intend to seize the “seven mountains of societal influence, namely, family, religion, education, media, arts and entertainment, business, and government.”³³ They believe that once this is accomplished Christ will return to this earth.

It is remarkable that the New Apostolic Reformation specifically declares the mountains in Revelation 17 as the objective to be taken.³⁴ Their invocation of this passage has interesting implications for the study of Revelation 17, as the seven mountains the Protestants say they want are the very same “seven mountains on which the woman sits” – Revelation 17:9. In other words, the Papacy has something the Protestants want, and that is temporal power. We know they will come together into alignment.

D. The Identity of the Seven Kings

First, many pages could be written discussing why the seven kings described in Revelation 17:10 are **not** seven kingdoms. Instead of doing this, here are a few objections, succinctly stated, directly from Uriah Smith. Smith was unequivocal in his criticism of the “new view”, i.e. that the seven heads are seven kingdoms beginning in the distant past with Babylon or Egypt. He said it was a mistake. With all due respect to those who think otherwise, Smith’s reasons are compelling.

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Mountain_Mandate

³⁴ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/seven-mountain-mandate/>

The following are all taken from Smith's little-known book on Revelation 17 entitled, "The Seven Heads of Revelation 12, 13 and 17".

1. "...the new view is a departure from this "natural method." According to this view, contrary to all precedent, the scope of this vision was retroactive, going back not merely to the beginning of the history of the then current government, but away outside of its limits, to take in the great governments of the earth, which had been already symbolized in prophecy, some of them three times over, and which had passed away centuries before, never again to appear or to have any influence among men. Such kingdoms as these, it is contended, are included among the heads of the dragon, the new enumeration being given as follows: 1. Babylon; 2. Medo-Persia; 3. Grecia; 4. Rome pagan; 5. Rome papal; 6. United Italy; 7. A future head yet unknown; 8. The papacy restored."³⁵
2. "The objection to such an application is that already intimated - it is contrary to all precedent. No prophecy can be found dealing with subjects in that way: that is, introducing new symbols to represent old governments which had had their day, and passed away, never again to appear among men. What conceivable reason could there be for prophecy thus to deal with them? Prophecy relates to the future from the time it is given not to the past. It only goes back far enough into the past to show the grounds for the future events which it predicts, and to identify the symbols which it introduces... to suppose that the symbol goes outside of Rome, to buried nations which never had any connection with Rome, is to suppose that the prophecy brings in a lot of effete and dead matter, useless lumber, lifeless members, which had no connection and never had had any connection with the government then reigning, and passing under review when this vision was given to John. Such an application is thus shown to be **unnatural** as well as **unscriptural**."³⁶
3. "But if one of these heads represents Babylon, another Medo-Persia, and another Grecia, the ten horns would pertain as much to them as to any other heads. But this was not the case. These ancient empires were never any part of the kingdom out of which the ten horns arose. Therefore it is impossible that those heads can have any refer to any of those preceding kingdoms, out of which the ten kingdoms did not arise. In view of such facts, it must be evident that the seven heads cannot be applied outside the Roman Empire."³⁷
4. "The action of the dragon in reference to the following or leopard beast, still further shows that the dragon, as a symbol, is confined to pagan Rome. The dragon gives to the papal beast, his seat, his power, and great authority. His seat was Rome,

³⁵ SHR 4.1

³⁶ SHR 5.1 – 5.3, excerpts.

³⁷ SHR 7.1

which has been occupied by the popes ever since it was abandoned by the emperors. This as a matter of history was a transaction wholly between pagan and papal Rome, and as a matter of prophecy, wholly between the dragon and the leopard beast. The dragon, therefore, represents Pagan Rome, and the beast, papal Rome. Neither Babylon, Medo-Persia, nor Grecia had anything whatever to do with this transfer to the papacy, as they must have had, if they constituted three of the heads of the dragon. Therefore the conclusion again follows that the seven heads of the dragon cannot take in those ancient empires.”³⁸

5. “And against this danger, in the view of the writer, a most solemn voice of warning should be raised. First-day Adventists have largely fallen into this practise, till with some of them, even the 2300 days are all thrown over into the future. If we are yet to wait for two more heads to be developed and run their career before the end, the inevitable tendency is to put off the coming of the Lord. It thrusts in between ourselves and that event, other movements to which the mind will be attracted, curiosity excited, and the spirit of speculation let loose, and thus the attention be diverted from a proper sense of the nearness of the end.”³⁹

To the above objections of Uriah Smith, each of which is ought to be carefully considered, the following three objections are added:

1. The angel does not say that the seven heads are seven “kingdoms”, or that the seven kings are seven kingdoms. The context of the chapter points to the time of the end – our day. Our urgent, pressing, day. We do not have centuries for the rise of new kingdoms, and the contention that we do, as Uriah Smith points out, is to “put off the coming of the Lord”.
2. If the Bible is to be its own interpreter, the Bible should say who the seven kings are, but it does not. This is because the language is not symbolic language, and this is evident since no corresponding symbol is given. The Bible student who believes that the Bible interprets itself must consider the possibility that the kings are not symbols at all, but are rather simply statements that there are seven kings from the time of the healing of the wound. This understanding is not without precedent, for no one would look at Daniel 11:2, for example, and conclude that each of the four kings mentioned in that verse constitute a separate kingdom. They are clearly intended to be understood as four successive kings:

And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia – Daniel 11:2 KJV.

³⁸ SHR 10.1

³⁹ SHR 13.1

3. The idea that the “kings” of Revelation 17:10 are really “kingdoms” appears to have been popularized by the Douay Rheims version of the Bible, where it appears in the margin.⁴⁰ It is possible that the source of the contention for the 7 kingdoms is a near relative of the floating gap year proposal for Daniel 9, with its modern dispensationalist rabbit hole. Certainly, this would provide an explanation for the endless arguing over who constitutes the seven “kingdoms”.

The view proposed by this paper is that the seven kings are likely the first seven sovereigns of Vatican City from the signing of the Lateran Pact on February 11, 1929. The Lateran Pact reunited church and state with profound implications for the international order. On that day, Pius XI became king number one of Vatican City. Pius XI, followed by the next four successive monarchs make up the list of the five who are fallen – Revelation 17:10.

If the heads of the Scarlet Beast are seven kings, then the general rule for the heads of the leopard beast in Daniel 7 ought to be applied. The heads of the leopard beast in Daniel 7 are the four generals which succeed the key character responsible for the rising of the Greek Empire - Alexander the Great. The heads do not precede Alexander. They are not four kingdoms that came before the Greek Empire. Such a contention would be absurd. The relevant difference between the leopard beast of Daniel 7 and the Scarlet Beast of Revelation 17 is that the four heads are all contemporaneous with each other in Daniel 7, whereas the angel makes it clear that the seven kings in Revelation 17 are successive, arising one after the other.

It is proposed that the angel of Revelation 17 draws special attention to the sixth, seventh and eighth kings because of not only the relevance and global prominence of John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, but because of their explicit adoption and promotion of key teachings from the French Revolution.

First, that these three men had massive global influence is undeniable. In a 1929 edition of *Signs of the Times*, it was opined that “Freedom to travel will bring the pope himself to the capitals of all the great powers.”⁴¹ That prediction proved prescient. Pope John Paul II visited 129 countries during his pontificate. Pope Benedict XVI visited 25 during his short tenure as the pope/king. Pope Francis, whose pontificate lasted less than half as long as John Paul II, visited 68 countries according to Vatican press, a torrid diplomatic travel pace that would have had him eclipse John Paul II had he lived long enough.⁴²

⁴⁰ <https://www.drbo.org/chapter/73013.htm> See tabs on website on Rev 13 and 17.

⁴¹ *Supra*, note iv. page 14.

⁴² <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-04/pope-francis-pilgrim-apostolic-journeys-jesus-closeness.html#:~:text=Pope%20Francis%27s%20travels%E2%80%9494averaging%20about,for%20the%20entire%20human%20family.>

Between only just these three individuals, the list of countries which still remain unvisited by a papal leader in modern times is small.

But there is something else far more significant about the pontificates of these three individuals that makes them unique in papal history.

Revelation 17:8 reads as follows:

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Revelation 17:11 states:

And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

According to the Bible, the Scarlet Beast “ascends out of the bottomless pit” – Revelation 17:8. The bottomless pit is the time period of the French Revolution, where the deadly wound was administered, and is described in Revelation 11 as the place where revolutionary France made war on the two witnesses of the Old and New Testament, and overcame and “killed them” – Revelation 11:7.

The great city of Revelation 11 is spiritually called “Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified”. By these symbols are understood to mean that the revolutionary era in France was marked by the notable sins of Sodom and Egypt. What were these sins?

Sodom is marked for all time by its perverse licentiousness, and by its attempt on the last night to have sexual relations with both Lot and his heavenly guests – Genesis 19:5-10.

Egypt is notable for Pharaoh’s defiance of the God of heaven in the face of the demand that he let the Israelites go: “Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go” – Exodus 5:2. It is not that Pharaoh did not believe that the God of the Hebrews and of all the earth exists, *per se*. Pharaoh’s sin was in placing reliance on his own reason and defying the God of Israel. Pharaoh is also notable for having been the Pharaoh whose defiance brought the plagues on Egypt.

It is herein proposed that the Scarlet Beast of Revelation 17 not only emerges from the literal time period of the French Revolution and the deadly wound, it embodies the sins of Egypt and Sodom in some particular and specific way. It is proposed that the count of the kings in Revelation 17 is to demonstrate the maturation of the popes of Rome, culminating in the re-emergence of the teachings of the beast from the bottomless pit.

Has the Scarlet Beast done something which even the Leopard-like Beast of Revelation 13 did not dare do? Something that is reminiscent of the French Revolution, the licentiousness of Sodom and the defiance of Egypt?

Yes, it has.

History reveals that John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis each, and for the first time in papal history, progressively opened the doors for the formal endorsement of the theory of evolution as a fact, and therefore formally denied the biblical account of Creation. As we well know, evolutionism leads to a direct attack on the seventh day Sabbath, the concept of individual rights which are an endowment to humanity from the Creator, and the authority and accuracy of the Bible. We ought to therefore expect evolution and its common good rationales to play a prominent role in the promulgation of the mark of the beast.

John Paul II began to open the door. In October 1996, he stated that evolution is “more than just a theory”.⁴³ In doing so, he began to make war on the Bible and the Genesis account of Creation as surely did the Jacobins in the French Revolution. Denying the biblical account of the creation of this world and of mankind is nothing less than mirroring the Cult of Reason in the French Revolution.

Benedict XVI followed suit in 2007. He called the clash between the biblical account of creation and scientific rationalism, especially in the United States and Germany (two of the countries which contain the most Protestant adherents), an “absurdity and stated that “reason can coexist with faith”.⁴⁴ In a speech in 1985, before he was Pope, the then-Cardinal Ratzinger “unmistakably” stated: ‘In no case should the appearance of a new dispute between natural science and faith be created’, and ‘it does not pose a problem to faith to allow ‘the scientific hypothesis of evolution to develop in peace according to its own methods’.⁴⁵ In making these arguments, Pope Benedict substituted his own reason above the Word of God in the same way that Pharaoh did in opposing the word of God delivered by Moses to him, and in substance followed in the footsteps of the Cult of Reason from the French Revolution.

These teachings reached their zenith in striking fashion during the pontificate of Pope Francis, who endorsed both evolution as fact, and promoted the licentiousness of Sodom.

In an article on Pope Francis’ revolutionary statements on evolution, the Independent wrote the following:

⁴³ <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1996-10-25-mn-57404-story.html>

⁴⁴ <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna19956961>

⁴⁵ <https://www.pas.va/content/dam/casinapioiv/pas/pdf-volumi/acta/acta-20-pdf-papers/acta20-schoenbornen.pdf> “Pope Benedict XVI on Creation and Evolution”.

The theories of evolution and the Big Bang are real and God is not “a magician with a magic wand”, Pope Francis has declared.

Speaking at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the Pope made comments which experts said put an end to the “pseudo theories” of creationism and intelligent design that some argue were encouraged by his predecessor, Benedict XVI.

Francis explained that both scientific theories were not incompatible with the existence of a creator – arguing instead that they “require it”.

“When we read about Creation in Genesis, we run the risk of imagining God was a magician, with a magic wand able to do everything. But that is not so,” Francis said.

“The Big Bang, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, requires it.

“Evolution in nature is not inconsistent with the notion of creation, because evolution requires the creation of beings that evolve.”⁴⁶

Pope Francis’ unprecedented statements are rightly understood as being opposed to the Bible, Genesis, and the words of Jesus Christ confirming the authenticity of the Genesis account of Creation. These are the teachings of the Beast from the Bottomless Pit, exemplified by the Cult of Reason.

The teaching of evolution is anti-Christian. Christ specifically confirmed the creation of Adam and Eve as recorded by Moses in Genesis, linking marriage as a divine institution created by God. Christ stated,

Mat 19:4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

Mat 19:5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

Mat 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder – Matthew 19:4-6 KJV.

Pope Francis’ statement is a rejection of the Bible teaching that God “spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast” – Psalms 33:9. The Man of Sin is once more revealed, exalting himself above God, saying he is God, and deceiving the world in the same way that the serpent deceived the woman in the garden – by substituting his word for the Word of God.

⁴⁶ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/pope-francis-declares-evolution-and-big-bang-theory-are-right-and-god-isn-t-a-magician-with-a-magic-wand-9822514.html>

Pope Francis also endorsed the licentiousness of the French Revolution, which is spiritual Sodom, when he famously responded to questions about homosexuality and gay priests with the words, “Who am I to judge”? The unprecedented statement was broadcast by media outlets around the world,⁴⁷ and broadly understood by many as an endorsement of their lifestyles.⁴⁸

These remarkable and unprecedented developments did not take place under the authority of the Leopard-like Beast during the 1260 years, but rather under the watch and authority of the Scarlet Beast following the reunification of church and state in 1929. More specifically, they reached their culmination under the 8th king, who is the Beast from the Bottomless Pit.

The eighth king in the progression is described as follows:

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition – Revelation 17:11.

The eighth king is different from the first seven kings of Revelation 17. The eighth is “the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth”. It is proposed that the eighth is not merely a man, but the new papal power itself which adopts and promulgates anew the policies of the French Revolution, as demonstrated by the teachings of Pope Francis, and continued with Pope Leo XIV, who appears to be very much cut from the same cloth.⁴⁹ It is proposed that the progression from one to eight is to illustrate the maturation of Satan’s policies in the papal power. The teachings of evolution lead inevitably to a denial of Creation, the God of the Bible, the Sabbath, marriage, the inalienable rights of humanity, and ultimately culminate in arguments to eliminate dissenters or extraneous people for the purpose of the supposed “common good”. The Three Angels Messages of Revelation 14 are God’s response to these teachings during the last days, and begin with the reminder to humanity of the “everlasting Gospel”, and the invitation and warning to worship the Creator – Revelation 14:6, 7.

It should be noted that there are clear ties between the Jesuit order and the deterioration of France leading up to French Revolution, the Jesuit order and the capture of the Pope in 1798, and the Jesuit order and the teachings of Marxism and science falsely so called in our modern times. As Ellen White wrote in Great Controversy,

“With the flight of the Huguenots a general decline settled upon France. Flourishing manufacturing cities fell into decay; fertile districts returned to their native wildness;

⁴⁷ <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/who-am-i-judge-popes-most-powerful-phrase-2013-flna2D11791260>

⁴⁸ <https://glaad.org/lgbtq-leaders-talk-pope-francis-legacy/>

⁴⁹ https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2025/06/08/vatican-pope-asks-God-open-borders-break-barriers/3961749427502/

intellectual dullness and moral declension succeeded a period of unwonted progress. Paris became one vast almshouse, and it is estimated that, at the breaking out of the Revolution, two hundred thousand paupers claimed charity from the hands of the king. The Jesuits alone flourished in the decaying nation, and ruled with dreadful tyranny over churches and schools, the prisons and the galleys.”⁵⁰

It may well be that the reference to the bottomless pit incorporates some aspect of this history of the order of Loyola, as well. The Jesuit Order is not only a highly political order aggressively advancing its theories of social justice, it is devoted to the elevation of reason and, in modern times, the elevation of science and the theory of evolution.⁵¹ Jesuit scientists have gone to great lengths to support the theories of Darwin while purporting to reconcile the idea of a God who started the original process.

To this point, it should be noted that neither the works of Charles Darwin, nor of Karl Marx, were ever included on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the list of banned books maintained by the Inquisition.

Ellen White writes that the beast from the bottomless pit is “a new manifestation of satanic power”. It is not one of the “many nations of Europe” that had been previously “been controlled by Satan through the medium of the papacy” – GC 268.3. This statement from the inspired pen is notable in the context of any discussion of Revelation 17. In Great Controversy, we see the following comment:

It had been Rome’s policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it locked up in an unknown tongue and hidden away from the people. Under her rule the witnesses prophesied “clothed in sackcloth.” But another power – the beast from the bottomless pit – was to arise to make open, avowed war upon the word of God – GC 269.

The eighth is said to be the beast “who was, and is not”, and then is the eighth, and “goes into perdition”.⁵² It is proposed that the beast and its policies will go into perdition, and lead others into perdition through deception. Indeed, an analysis of the Greek in this verse shows that some Greek translations understand “goes into perdition” to rather be, “leads into perdition”, or “leads under perdition”.⁵³

It should also be noted that “the eighth” is not a reference to one of the heads, the word for which in Greek is feminine, and the word for “the eighth” is masculine. It is proposed that “the eighth” is more than simply a king – it is the culmination of the policies of the

⁵⁰ GC88 279.1

⁵¹ See, for example: <https://jesuit.ie/blog/bill-toner/evolution-does-god-interfere/> ;

⁵² See for example, <https://biblehub.com/revelation/17-11.htm> for various renderings of this text.

⁵³ <http://qbible.com/greek-new-testament/revelation/17.html> ;

French Revolution in our day, the Beast from the Bottomless Pit itself. As such, it is expected that the Papacy will continue to champion the social justice positions of the Marxist left until the end of the world. This includes issues such as union power, climate change, and of course, the evolutionary narrative of the supposed common good with its limits on individual rights, the protection of which stemmed from the Protestant Reformation.

E. THE TEN HORNS/KINGS

It is proposed that the ten horns/kings of Revelation 17 are the nominally Protestant civil powers which give their support and influence for the promotion of papal falsehoods and receive their kingdom "one hour with the beast" – Revelation 17:12. As the Papacy is a church/state power, the Protestant nations also unite church and state, joining the confederacy to support the teachings of the Papacy. It is proposed that again, Revelation 17 differentiates between the church and state by having separate symbols for each, namely, the daughters of the harlot, and the ten horns of the beast, respectively.

Ellen White writes that "the church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and in this work papists and Protestants unite" – GC 607.

Further:

"Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul, and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of Spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." GC 588.

But the churches must have state power to be established in a similar way that it was civil power which established the Papacy in 538 AD. As Pope Gregory IX, declared, "The kingly power is not superior to the pontifical, but is subject to it, and is bound to obey it". This contention that the state be subordinate to the church animates many modern Protestants in our day.⁵⁴ They want civil power, and they will have it at all cost.

Ellen White writes,

What is it that gives its kingdom to this power? Protestantism, a power which, while professing to have the temper and spirit of a lamb and to be allied to Heaven, speaks with the voice of a dragon. It is moved by a power from beneath - Mar 187.3

⁵⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/ICG41BmwCTk>

We note that Ellen White is also referencing civil power in this quote. Protestantism gives its “kingdom” to the Scarlet Beast. Protestantism as a religion has no kingdom. But Protestantism controlling and influencing national interests possess an earthly kingdom, indeed. Ellen White is obviously referencing the church and state union of the Protestant powers.

F. BRIEF ANSWER TO OBJECTION RE HEALING OF THE WOUND

The objection will doubtless be raised by those who think the wound is not healed yet that this does not occur until the mark of the beast is imposed. The Bible does not say this, however. Revelation 13:3 ties the healing of the wound to the **wondering** after the beast, **not** to the imposition of the mark (Sunday observance as a condition of buying and selling): “And 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.” The same point is made again in Revelation 13:12, and again in Revelation 17:8.

Consider the following chart from Greek literal section of www.biblehub.com:

13:12		Study Tools	
	katoikountas		
2443 [e]	ἵνα hina	that	Conj
4352 [e]	προσκυνήσουσιν proskynēsousin	they will worship	V-FIA-3P
3588 [e]	τὸ to	the	Art-ANS
2342 [e]	θηρίον thērion	beast	N-ANS
3588 [e]	τὸ to	-	Art-ANS
4413 [e]	πρῶτον, prōton	first,	Adj-ANS
3739 [e]	οὗ hou	of whom	RelPro-GNS
2323 [e]	ἔθεραπεύθη etherapeuthē	had been healed	V-AIP-3S
3588 [e]	ἡ hē	the	Art-NFS
4127 [e]	πληγῇ plēgē	wound	N-NFS
3588 [e]	τοῦ tou	-	Art-GMS
2288 [e]	θανάτου thanatou	fatal	N-GMS
846 [e]	αὐτοῦ.	of it.	PPro-GN3S

The tense of the verb “ἔθεραπεύθη etherapeuthē” is aorist passive indicative. This is to show the action of the healing of the wound was completed prior to the causing of the earth to worship the first beast. The two actions are not coincident. Rather, the text seems to indicate the “healing” precedes the “worshipping”.

We can briefly address the two common assertions by many modern ministers on this point. Some argue that the deadly wound will not be healed until the Papacy is once more globally dominant earthly governments.

Consider the following quote from the Spirit of Prophecy:

I saw that the two-horned beast had a dragon's mouth, and that his power was in his head, and that the decree would go out of his mouth. Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but separate and distinct from them. **She has had her day, and it is past**, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, were the next to come on the stage and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints. I saw that as the mother has been declining in power, the daughters had been growing, and soon they will exercise the power once exercised by the mother - SpM 1.4.

This is not to say that there has not been profound strengthening globally of papal influence and power. There certainly has been, and doubtless will be. But the contention that the healing of the wound has not occurred until Sunday laws are legislated, or until direct persecuting power is restored is not substantiated by the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy in the respectful view of this author.

If the wound is indeed healed, as is proposed, it provides a starting point to establish the identity of the seven kings, who are naturally presumed to be the kings of the new civil power of Vatican City, with the Beast from the Bottomless Pit being the eighth, as proposed herein.

END