

The Dangers of Counterfeit Prophetic Scenarios

Introduction

At one of our worker's meetings not too long ago, the **pastors** were discussing how the **signs in the world** clearly reveal that the coming of Jesus is **even at the door!** In the midst of the conversation **one of the pastors** confidently affirmed: "I'm not too concerned about **what's coming** or **how** He's coming, I am only interested in **who** is coming!" It was a **nice sound bite** and many of the **pastors responded** with a hearty '**amen**'.

Some Christians believe that Christ will return **before** the tribulation to rapture his saints to heaven. Others believe he will come to their rescue in the **middle** of the tribulation and still others believe that He will come at the **end**. Does it really make **any difference** what we believe concerning the manner and timing of the coming of Jesus? **Who cares** if His coming is **pre-trib**, **mid-trib** or **post-trib**? Is it not sufficient to just **love Jesus** and **forget about theology**?

Television Eschatology

If you turn on your **television** to religious stations on **Sunday mornings**, you will get a **steady diet** of end time scenarios, all very similar. The **predominant one**, called '**Futurism**', is the standard view of conservative Christians including **evangelicals**, **Baptists** and **Charismatics**. Although there are **minor variations** in the details, several common denominators characterize **all** of the **televangelists** that you will see on **any given Sunday**.

The Futurist View

The fundamental view of futurists is that God has two **radically different** plans, one for **literal Israel** and the other for the **Christian Church**. That is to say, God has two **mutually exclusive** peoples with **different plans** for each.

The **entire scenario** of futurists is determined by their understanding of the prophecy of the seventy weeks. For them, the **seventy weeks** are **490 years** that began in **445 BC** when **Nehemiah** returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the **city and walls** of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity.

According to their view, the first **sixty-nine** weeks **flowed** consecutively **without interruption** and **ended in the year 33 AD** with the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry.

During His ministry, Jesus offered the Jews the **literal kingdom** but they **refused it** so God decided to go to **plan B**.

Because the Jewish nation **rejected the Messiah**, none of the events of the seventieth week occurred in **immediate succession** to the previous 69. For this reason, God **suspended** the immediate fulfillment of week #70 and for the last two thousand years, we have been in a **parenthesis** between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week. In other words, God **suspended** or put His plan for the Jewish nation **on hold** and turned to **the Gentiles**. Futurists refer to the **last twenty centuries** as the '**church age**' or the '**times of the Gentiles**', a period that is **radically distinct from the Jewish Age**.

According to this view, God re-established the **Jewish State** in **1948** and began the process of regathering literal Israel in **disobedience** to their land. Once literal Israel is regathered, God will kick-start his suspended plan for the literal Jewish nation and the events of the final week will begin to occur. Futurists believe that God gave literal Israel a signal victory over the Arabs in **1967**, when they recovered the **fullness of the land, further preparing** the way for the full restoration of literal Israel to its land.

Moving ahead, when the '**times of the Gentiles**' come to an end, God's **prophetic clock** for **literal Israel** will **begin to tick** once again and the events of the 70th week will **begin their fulfillment**. The event that will **mark** the beginning of the 70th week is the **rapture of the church**.

According to futurists, at the rapture Jesus will come **invisibly** to take His church to heaven for seven years. People on the planet will simply 'vanish into thin air'. Hal Lindsey refers to this event as '**the great snatch**'. **Drivers** will disappear, **pilots** will vanish and there will be **chaos everywhere**. While there is total chaos on earth, Jesus will snatch **believers away** to heaven and those Christians who are **not ready** along with the **literal Jews** will be '**left behind**'.

According to futurists (as well as historicists), the seven churches of Revelation 1-3 apply to the church age. However, futurists believe that **Revelation 4:1** (where a voice commands John to 'come up hither') refers to the rapture and that all of the events from Revelation 4:2 until the end of chapter 19 apply to the seven years between the rapture and the glorious coming of Jesus.

Futurists love to focus on the calamities that earthlings will suffer during the tribulation. Much of what they describe is just as spectacular as a Hollywood production (in fact they have produced several sensational movies). At the **beginning** of the **70th week**, a **personal antichrist** will begin to rule over a ten-nation federation of the revived Roman Empire (the **toes of the image** and the **ten horns of Daniel 7**).

Futurists divide the last of the seventy weeks into two equal halves. During the **first 1260 literal days** (3-½ literal years) of his rule, the antichrist **will sign a peace treaty** with the Jews and **favor them**. He will **rebuild** their temple and allow the **sacrificial system** to begin once more. During this period, all will **appear to be well** for the Jews.

However, as the **final 42 literal months** (the last 3-½ years) begin, the ruler of the ten nation federation will reveal his **true colors**. Lo and behold, he is **the antichrist!** He will blaspheme Christ, **turn on the Jews** and launch a **deadly persecution** against them. He will sit in the **literal Jerusalem temple**, will have a **literal image** of himself built and will command **everyone to bow down and worship** his image. He will command everyone to receive a **literal tattoo** on the forehead or on the right hand and **will kill** whoever does not comply.

During this time, a literal **144,000**-converted Jews will become '**Billy Grahams**' preaching **against the antichrist** and thousands of Jews will receive Jesus Christ as their Messiah. This will **enrage** the antichrist and he will **launch a final merciless persecution** against the Jews called the time of **Jacob's trouble**. During this period, God will send **Moses and Elijah** to rebuke the antichrist and he will kill them for witnessing against him but God will miraculously resurrect them from the dead.

At the end of the 42 months, **Jesus will come gloriously, literally** and **visibly** from heaven **with those** that He took to heaven seven years before, and **destroy the antichrist** and **deliver literal Israel** from the **time of Jacob's trouble**.

Jesus will then establish **His literal kingdom on earth** for one **thousand years**. During this period, people will be living on earth in their **mortal state** and Jesus will literally rule them with a **rod of iron**.

Serious problems with this view

This futurist scenario, in every particular, obliterates the prophetic message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and kills the protest of Protestantism.

It bears noting as I have shown in my book, **Futurism's Incredible Journey** that the rigid literalism of futurism came into Protestantism directly from the Roman Catholic counter-reformation. In fact, the two schools that rival Seventh-day Adventist eschatology came from two Roman Catholic Jesuits, Luis de Alcazar the preterist and Francisco Ribera the futurist.

Revelation 4-19

#1: If the fulfillment of **Revelation 4-19** is still **future** and applies to **literal Israel** after the **church is gone**, then the **three angels' messages** (which are in Revelation 14:6-12) have **no relevance** for us today and the reason for the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist church **disappears in a mist**.

Ellen White warned about changing the **importance, the time and the place** of the three angels' message:

*"The three angels of Revelation 14 are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizing the work of those who proclaim the first, second, and third angels' messages. All are linked together. The evidences of the abiding, ever living truth of these grand messages, that **mean so much to the church**, that have awakened such **intense opposition** from the religious world, are not extinct. Satan is constantly seeking to cast a **shadow about these messages**, so that the people of God shall **not clearly discern** their [1] **import**, their [2] **time** and [3] **place**; but*

they live and are to exert their power upon our religious experience while time shall last." 6T, pp. 17, 18

The Time for Antichrist to Appear

#2: Futurism changes the time for the appearance of the antichrist.

Adventists use the historical-flow method to interpret the great chain prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Daniel 7 is a perfect illustration of historicism. This chapter contains a historical sequence of events that occur in strict chronological order without any gaps or parentheses. The order is simple to follow:

- Lion (Babylon) 605-539 BC (Daniel 7:4)
- Bear (Medo-Persia) 539-331 BC (Daniel 7:5)
- Leopard (Greece) 331-168 BC (Daniel 7:6)
- Dragon (Roman Empire) 168 BC – 476 AD (Daniel 7:7)
- Ten horns (division of the Roman Empire complete) 476 AD (Daniel 7:7, 23)
- Little horn uproots three rebel horns 476-538 AD [493: Los Heruli, 534: Vandals, 538: Ostrogoths] (Daniel 7:8)
- Little horn (Ecclesiastical Rome) **538-1798** AD (Daniel 7:8, 24, 25)
- Announcement of the coming judgment 1798-1844 AD (Daniel 12:4; Revelation 10; Revelation 14:6, 7)
- Beginning of the heavenly judgment (1844 AD)

This unbroken prophetic chain reveals that the antichrist arose after the Roman Empire broke up into ten kingdoms in **476 AD**. After this year, the papacy appealed to the secular power of the Eastern Roman Empire to uproot three rebellious kingdoms, the Heruli in 493 AD, the Vandals in 534 AD and the Ostrogoths in 538 AD. In this way, the papacy arose to unopposed power amidst the ruins of the Empire in the year **538 AD** and then ruled until 1798 when the secular power of France gave it a deadly wound with the sword of civil power. We can categorically prove that during the 1260 years, the papacy did blaspheme the Most High, did persecute the saints of the Most High and attempted to change God's law by substituting Sunday in place of the Sabbath.

However, if the antichrist did not appear shortly after the Roman Empire disintegrated in the year 476 AD (as futurists believe) then his rise is still in the future. If this is true, then the Papacy has nothing to do with the fulfillment of the little horn prophecy of Daniel 7 and with its attempt to change God's law. By creating a two thousand year gap in the fulfillment of Daniel 7 Protestants have hidden from view the power that attempted to change God's law.

Futurists along with Adventists teach that the four kingdoms of Daniel 2 and 7 are already past. The head of gold and lion represent Babylon, the breast and arms of silver and bear represent the Medes and Persians, the belly of bronze and leopard is Greece and the legs of iron and dragon beast symbolize the Roman Empire. However, futurists then find a two

thousand year gap between the legs/dragon beast and the ten toes/ten horns. That is to say, they suspend the **flow of the prophecy** when it comes to the ten toes/ten horns teaching that the Roman empire was never divided and therefore the ten toes/ten horns represent a **ten-nation federation** that is yet **future**. If this were true then the rise of the little horn in the midst of the ten horns is still future and the papacy had nothing to do with the change in God's law.

The Place for Antichrist to Appear

#3: Futurism changes **the place** where the antichrist will appear.

For Adventists, the antichrist is an apostate Christian church that arose in the **Western Europe** shortly after the disintegration of the Roman Empire in the year 476 AD. Thus, the **temple of God** in which the **antichrist sits** is not a future, **literal Jerusalem temple** but a spiritual one. According to Paul, the temple is the Christian **church!**

The Greek **has two words** that are translated 'temple' in English. One is **hieron** and the other is **naos**. The apostle Paul **never** used the word *naos* to refer to the literal Jewish temple. Without exception, he used the word *naos* to refer to the spiritual body-temple and the spiritual temple, the Christian church (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19; 20; 2 Corinthians 6:16). The **book of Acts** refers to the Jewish 'temple' **25 times** and never calls it *naos*. Furthermore, not even once in any of the New Testament **epistles** do we find the word *naos* used to describe the literal Jewish temple.

Paul explained to the **Ephesians** what he meant by the word 'temple':

Ephesians 2:19-22

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the **chief cornerstone**, ²¹ in whom the **whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord, ²² in whom you also **are being built** together for a **dwelling place of God** in the Spirit."*

In this passage, the apostle Paul clearly explains the spiritual nature of the temple, the Christian Church (compare 1 Peter 2:4-10):

- The **foundations**: Apostles and Prophets
- The **Chief Cornerstone**: Jesus
- The **temple stones**: Believers
- The **Shekinah**: The Holy Spirit (invisible)

In conclusion, the man of sin who sits in the temple of God (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4) must **sit within the Christian Church** and not in a rebuilt Jewish temple. Futurist scholars agree that the little horn and the man of sin represent the same antichristian power. The link between the **little horn/beast** and the **man of sin** is clear. Both speak **blasphemies** against the Most High and **demand worship**.

We can discern the blasphemous nature of the papal claims by the fact that Pope **Benedict XVI**, at the conclusion of the week for Christian unity in **St. Paul's Outside the Wall**, sat on a great **white throne** and on either side of the throne was a **cherub**. Since then, pope Francis I has sit on the same throne. This act is clearly a usurpation of the position of the **great YHWH** who sits between the cherubim (Psalm 80:1).

In conclusion, if the antichrist has not yet risen but will sit in a **future rebuilt Jewish temple** for three and a half literal years, then the antichrist prophecies were not fulfilled in **Rome** but rather will be fulfilled in **the Middle East!** In this way, the papal fulfillment of the antichrist prophecies is **hidden from view**, because people are looking for antichrist in the **wrong place!**

The Manner of Antichrist's Appearance

#4: Futurism changes **the manner** in which the antichrist will appear.

We, along with all of the major **protestant reformers**, believe that the antichrist is a **system** of **counterfeit Christianity** that sat in the church, the **spiritual temple** of God for over one thousand years. As we have seen, Paul invariably uses the expression 'the temple of God' to refer to the Christian Church (see Ephesians 2:20-22).

If, as futurists believe, the antichrist will be a literal **individual**, then the antichrist is not a **worldwide system!** If antichrist is a **blasphemous atheist** (as, for example Nicolae Carpathia in the Left Behind series) then an apostate Christian church **has nothing to do** with the fulfillment of these prophecies.

Dave Hunt, the prolific evangelical writer, was a **dyed in the wool** futurist who believed that the antichrist had **not yet appeared** and yet his perspective of **the manner** in which the antichrist would appear is **quite accurate**:

*"While the Greek prefix 'anti' generally means 'against' or 'opposed to,' it can also mean 'in the place of' or 'a substitute for.' The Antichrist will embody both meanings. He will **oppose Christ while pretending to be Christ**. Instead of a **frontal assault** against Christianity, the evil one will **pervert the church from within** by posing as its founder. He will cunningly misrepresent Christ while **pretending to be Christ**. And right here is where the plot thickens. If the Antichrist will indeed pretend to be the Christ, then his **followers must be 'Christians!'**"* Dave Hunt, Global Peace, p. 7-8.

The Parties Involved

#5: Futurism changes **the parties** in the final conflict.

Adventist believe that the enemies of God's people in the end time will be the **dragon, the beast and the false prophet** on a **global scale**. We believe that the dragon represents the **political powers** of the world, the beast is symbolic of the **Roman Catholic papacy** and the False Prophet is symbolic of **Apostate Protestantism** in the United States.

However, futurists see it differently. The final battle will be the antichrist against the **Jews in the Middle East**. In this scenario, the **Arabs and Muslims** will ally themselves with the **Russians** to **persecute the Jews**. If this is true then the papacy and apostate Protestantism have nothing to do with the fulfillment of prophecy!

The Issues Involved

#6: Futurism blurs **the issues** involved in the final conflict.

For Adventists, the central issues in the final controversy will be over the **law, the Sabbath and worship**. However, for futurists the central issues will be **anti-Semitism**. This is the reason why futurists seek to influence the United States government to protect Israel.

If the futurist scenario is true, then the **final battle** has **nothing to do** with the battle between **true and counterfeit** Christians, the **law**, the **Sabbath** and **worship**!

Hiding the Identity of the Remnant Church

#7: Futurism obliterates the on-time **appearance of the remnant church** shortly after the conclusion of the 1260 years.

Revelation 12:17:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

As Adventists, we have followed the flow of Revelation 12 to discover **when** and where the remnant church would appear and what its characteristics would be. This chapter depicts several consecutive historical events in their order:

- The **Old Testament church** (the woman from which Christ was born)
- Satan’s attempt to **kill Christ** at His birth
- The victory of Jesus and His **ascension** to His Father’s throne
- The papal persecution against God’s people for a **time, times and the dividing of times**
- The **earth helping** the woman (the United States providing refuge to the persecuted saints)
- The **appearance of the remnant** that keep the **commandments** of God and have the **testimony** of Jesus

Clearly, in the prophetic chain of Revelation 12, the remnant was to appear after the territory of the United States had provided a refuge for the persecuted ones in Europe. Thus, we have four identifying marks of the final remnant:

- **Place:** The United States
- **Time:** At the end of the 1260 years
- **Characteristic #1:** They keep the Commandments of God
- **Characteristic #2:** They have the testimony of Jesus Christ

If the fulfillment of **Revelation 4-19** is still future, and will be fulfilled with the literal Jews in the Middle East, then Revelation 12:17 has **not found its fulfillment** and therefore has nothing to do with the appearance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Destroying the 2300 Day Prophecy

#8: **Daniel 8:14**: Futurism destroys the significance of the **2300-year prophecy**.

“And he said unto me: Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

The Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the 2300 days depends on four main factors:

- The **seventy weeks** are the **first part** of the 2300-day prophecy
- The 2300 days are **symbolic of years**
- There is **no gap** between the **69th and the 70th** week
- The seventy weeks (and 2300 days) **began in 457 BC**

Seventh-day Adventist scholars who have left the church have always questioned our interpretation of the 2300 days. Among the notables are **Canright, Ballenger, Fletcher, Ford**, and **Ratzlaff**. It is rather obvious that Satan does not like this prophecy!

An **erroneous beginning** and ending point for the seventy weeks **destroys** the significance of the 1844 date. In fact, **separating the 70th week** from the previous 69 totally **obliterates** the 1844 date. If there is a 2000-year gap between the 69th and the 70th week then the cleansing of the sanctuary **did not begin in 1844!** Satan wants to **hide the fact** that every person who has claimed Christ will have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

It is a well-**documented fact** that the historical flow method practically disappeared in the aftermath of the 1844 disappointment. Notice the words of **Richard Kyle** who used to belong to a Plymouth Brethren church:

*“Despite its visibility the Millerite movement had **little influence on subsequent end-time thinking**. It did, however, have three long-term effects: (1) Millerism spawned the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (2) it **discredited historicist premillennialism, causing it to fade out almost entirely after 1844**; and (3) the Millerite fiasco demonstrated the perils of setting definite dates for Christ’s return.”* Richard Kyle, *The Last Days Are Here Again*, p. 91

Once again, Kyle tells us:

*“The Great Disappointment of 1844 had **decimated historicist premillennialism**, but a futurist premillennialism called dispensationalism **soon arrived** on the scene.”* Richard Kyle, *The Last Days Are Here Again*, p. 102

Futurist **Thomas Ice** concurs with Kyle:

*“Historicism, **once the dominant view** of Protestants from the Reformation until the middle of the last century [please note that 1844 is almost at the midpoint of the 19th century], appears to exert **little attraction** as a **system** of prophetic interpretation. To conservative*

Christians (outside of Seventh-day Adventist circles)... **Within evangelicalism during the last one hundred fifty years, futurism has grown to dominate and overcome historicism.**” Thomas Ice and Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., The Great Tribulation: Past or Future? p. 6

According to **Ellen White**, this shift in understanding is the direct result of **Satan’s desire** to get rid of historicism as the proper method of understanding Bible prophecy:

*“After the **great disappointment in 1844**, Satan and his angels were **busily engaged** in laying snares to **unsettle the faith** of the body. He affected the minds of persons who had had an experience in the messages, and who had an appearance of humility. Some pointed **to the future** for the fulfillment of the first and second messages, while others **pointed far back into the past**, declaring that they had been there fulfilled. These were gaining an influence over the minds of the inexperienced and **unsettling their faith**. Some were searching the Bible to build up a **faith of their own**, independent of the body. Satan exulted in all this; for he knew that those who **broke loose from the anchor** he could affect by **different errors** and drive about with diverse winds of doctrine. Many who had led in the first and second messages now denied them, and there was **division and confusion** throughout the body.” EW, pp. 256, 257*

A False Sense of Security

#9: Futurism gives Christians a **false sense of security**. They reason thus:

“If I don’t make to heaven at the rapture, I can still be saved during the tribulation and if I am not saved during the tribulation, I can be saved during the millennium.”

Satan wants people to believe that they will have a **second chance** or perhaps even a **third chance** to be saved. They reason thus: ‘If I am not saved **at the rapture** I can still be saved **during the seven year tribulation** and if I survive the seven years and the glorious coming of Jesus, I can still be saved **during the millennium** (see 2 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 22:10-12; Jeremiah 8:20; Revelation 14:14).

Contrary to this erroneous idea, probation will close before the tribulation and whoever is not ready will be eternally ‘left behind’ dead on earth during the millennium!

Totally Unprepared for the Time of Trouble

#10: Futurists will be very much unprepared to pass **victoriously through the tribulation** because they are not expecting to go through it. After all, would you prepare for a Tsunami or a hurricane in Fresno, CA, USA? Bottom line: We do not prepare for a crisis that we think we will not experience!

Satan knows that God’s faithful children will need **a special preparation** in order to stand victoriously in this time of trouble. He knows that the remnant will need an **unshakable and unbreakable** faith. He knows that God’s people must **have a thorough knowledge of Bible prophecy**. For this reason, Satan has done his utmost to convince Christians that Christ will snatch them away to heaven before that time. He leads them to believe that the horrendous time of trouble **will be for the Jews in the Middle East** and in this way Christians will feel **no sense of urgency** to prepare for the coming crisis.

Protestants in the United States have become **complacent**. Their life of **comfort and ease** has made them **spiritually lazy and indolent**. With a society that is accustomed to **immediate gratification, ease and comfort**, people will not be willing to put up with the **suffering and pain** of the coming tribulation.

God has warned us about this coming time of trouble and the need to prepare for it:

*"The 'time of trouble, such as never was,' is soon to open upon us; and we **shall need an experience** which we do not now possess and which many are **too indolent** to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is **greater in anticipation** than in reality; but this is **not true** of the crisis before us. The **most vivid presentation** cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God." GC, p. 622*

*"The season of **distress and anguish** before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger--a faith that will not faint though **severely tried**. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time." GC, p. 621*

Matthew 24:21-22 corroborates Ellen White's remarks about the horrific nature of the time of trouble:

*"For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as **has not been** since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor **ever shall be**.²² And unless those days were **shortened**, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days **will be shortened**."*

In addition, Daniel 12:1 tells us that when the king of the north (the papacy) goes out with the intention of destroying and annihilating many, a time of trouble such as never has been seen will ensue:

*"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, **such as never was since there was a nation**, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book."*

God's people will relive the experience of Jesus in Gethsemane and on the cross:

*"Those who love and keep the commandments of God are most obnoxious to the synagogue of Satan, and the powers of evil **will manifest their hatred** toward them to the fullest extent possible. John foresaw the conflict between the remnant church and the power of evil, and said, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The **forces of darkness** will unite with **human agents** who have given themselves into the control of Satan, and the **same scenes** that were exhibited at the trial, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ **will be revived**. Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be **transformed into fiends**; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race **his masterpiece of evil**--men who reflect his own image." *The Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896*

God's people will then repeat the experiences of the **three young men** in the fiery furnace and Daniel in the lion's den on a global scale. The furnace symbolizes the period of affliction

and anguish that God's people will experience when the **death decree** is proclaimed against them. The stories of the three young men in the furnace and Daniel in the lion's den are vivid illustrations of what will occur when the United States will violate the First Amendment to its Constitution. In recent days, we have seen the desire of many to curtail the freedom of speech in the interest of political correctness.

Ellen White compared Satan's deceptions at the first coming with those of the end time:

*"Before His crucifixion the Savior explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death and to rise again from the tomb, and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. However, the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke [they wanted to make the Jewish nation great again!], and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centered should suffer an ignominious death. The words that they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared. The death of Jesus as fully destroyed their hopes as if He had not forewarned them. So [in the same way] in the prophecies the future is opened before us **as plainly** as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The **events connected with the close of probation** and the **work of preparation** for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had **never been revealed**. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of **trouble will find them unready**". GC, p. 594*

Deceived by the Counterfeit Second Coming

#11: Futurism leaves itself wide open to believe the Antichrist's **counterfeit second coming!**

The entire pre-tribulation rapture theory depends on a **wrong conception of the millennium**. Jesus made **two inheritance promises** to His people:

#1: He would take them **to heaven** (John 14:1-3).

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."*

#2: They would **inherit the earth** (Matthew 5:5):

*"Blessed are the meek, for they **shall inherit the earth.**"*

How can Jesus fulfill **both promises**? The futurists say that Jesus will take His people:

- To **heaven** for seven years thus fulfilling the first promise.
- At the end of the seven years Jesus will come back with those He took to heaven at the rapture and will establish His kingdom for a thousand years **on earth** and thus the meek will inherit the earth, fulfilling the second promise.

However, there is **another biblical way** of understanding it:

- Jesus comes **gloriously in His second coming** He will take His people to **heaven for one thousand** years
- After the millennium, He will bring them **back to the earth**, and after He cleanses it, the **meek will inherit** it.

Those who are expecting the coming of a **glorious Christ** to rule on the earth, will be deceived by Satan's counterfeit! It is important that we know not only **that** Jesus **will come** but also **how He will come**.

Matthew 24:26, 27:

*"Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the **desert**; go not forth: behold, he is in the **secret chambers**; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*

Ellen White measured in on the delusive nature of the counterfeit second coming:

*"As the **crowning act** in the great drama of **deception**, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Savior's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will **make it appear** that Christ has come. In **different parts** of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of **dazzling brightness**, resembling the **description of the Son of God** given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is **unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld**. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people **prostrate themselves** in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, **as Christ blessed** His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is **soft and subdued**, yet **full of melody**. In **gentle, compassionate** tones he presents **some of the same gracious, heavenly truths** which the Savior uttered; he **heals the diseases** of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have **changed the Sabbath to Sunday**, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the **strong, almost overmastering delusion**."*

However, the people of God will not be misled. The **teachings** of this false christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image, the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out.

And, **furthermore**, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit **the manner** of Christ's advent. The **Savior has warned** His people against deception upon this point, and has **clearly foretold the manner** of His second coming. "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:24-27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is **no possibility of counterfeiting**. It will be **universally known**--witnessed by the **whole world**." GC, pp. 624, 625

If we don't know how Jesus will come then we will accept the wrong who!

Let us assume for a moment that the **futurist scenario** that I described at the beginning of our study will unfold as futurists have taught. One day many people all over the earth **disappear into thin air**. A **ten-nation federation** is established in Europe led by a **charismatic individual** who signs a **seven-year peace treaty** with the Jews. During the first three and a half years of his reign **things begin to deteriorate**, but during the last three and a half years the planet unravels at the seams. There are unparalleled natural **disasters and devastating pandemics, warfare, social unrest, famines and criminality** such as the world has never seen.

As this individual increases in power, he receives a **deadly wound** but the wound is miraculously **healed**. At the beginning of the last three and a half years of his reign he **breaks his peace treaty** with the Jews moves his headquarters from **Rome to Jerusalem** and sits in the **rebuilt Jerusalem temple** claiming to be God and demanding the worship of the world. He builds a **gigantic image** of himself and commands everyone to worship it on **pain of death**. The Jews and unsaved Christians who were **'left behind' after the rapture** suffer merciless persecution. Finally, after seven years pass, a **glorious individual** appears in **different parts** of the earth with a radiance that outshines the noonday sun. He **heals** the diseases of the people, speaks in **soft and subdued** tones some of the truths that Jesus spoke, encourages everyone to keep Sunday in honor of his resurrection and **destroys the 'Antichrist'** and the enemies of the Jews and Christians who were left behind.

I can **just hear Christians** who 'accepted Christ' during the tribulation say to us:

"We told you Seventh-day Adventists that things were going to develop in this way but you would not listen. Now you see that we were right and you were wrong."

The question is this, how **many people** in the world at that time will **believe the historicist** interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation? How many would believe that the **true enemies** are the **Roman Catholic Papacy** and **apostate Protestantism**? Without dissenting voice, the **entire Christian world** will stand up against the nasty individual who sits in the Jerusalem temple and persecutes those who refuse to keep Sunday as the universal day of rest. Moreover, they will **believe the lie** of the counterfeit second coming of Jesus.

Someone might say 'Pastor Bohr, you are **insane!** What makes you think that Satan will be **able to implement** the prophetic scenario that is taught today by futurism?' I am not categorically saying that it will, but when we remember that after the door of probation closes, **Satan will have full control** of the finally impenitent perhaps God will **allow him to implement** his plan as he pleases, at least to a certain degree. Is it just possible that Satan has **revealed what he plans to do** in advance to hide the real issues in the great controversy? It is a definite possibility. Ellen White has told us that when probation closes:

*"The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has **entire control** of the finally impenitent."* GC, p. 614

Can Satan implement his plan to a "T" when he is given **free reign and has full and total control** of every impenitent person on planet earth? I will leave it to the reader to answer this question.

Is it not time for Seventh-day Adventists to give the **trumpet a certain sound**? Is it not time us to **warn the world** about the dangers ahead? Should we not be telling people clearly about the beast, the image of/to the beast and the mark of the beast? Should we not be telling people about the **United States** in Bible prophecy? Should we not **press together** and speak with a **unified voice** on the meaning of Bible prophecy? The time is now!

The Vital Nature of our Method

Satan NOT ONLY HATES OUR **MESSAGE** BUT HE HATES OUR **METHOD** because the **method is the means** that God uses to help us understand what our **message and mission** are (suggested reading: “Futurism’s Incredibly Journey” by Pastor Stephen Bohr)

We believe it is quite simple to follow the **trajectory of prophecy** and identify the antichrist because we follow the **historical flow method**. There are **no gaps** between the fourth kingdom and the ten horns and little horn. There is **no gap** between week 69 and week 70. Even a child can understand this simple method. Sadly, the gap in the 70-week prophecy hides the identity of the Christ and the gap in the prophecy of Daniel 7 hides the identity of the antichrist.

The historical flow method helps us identify **who** the Antichrist is, **when** and **where** he will arise, **what he will do** and **who will help him** recover his power. It also gives us a clear picture of what **the issues** will be in the final conflict. Furthermore, it points out **when and where the remnant** would arise and what its **message and mission** would be. Without the historical flow method, the church wanders in **prophetic darkness**—eschatological uncertainty!

If the antichrist is a **literal future person** and the **time periods** of his dominion are literal and future then the **Roman Catholic Church has nothing to do** with the fulfillment of prophecy. In addition, the role of apostate **Protestantism** in the fulfillment of prophecy also disappears in a mist. Further, the change of the Sabbath by the papacy is lost from view.

Ellen White has warned:

*“Those who become **confused** in their understanding of the Word, who **fail to see the meaning of antichrist** will surely place themselves **on the side of antichrist**. There is no time now for us to **assimilate with the world**. Daniel is standing in his lot and in his place. The prophecies of Daniel and of John **are to be understood**. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which **every one should understand**. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. By their fulfillment in these last days they **will explain themselves**.” 7BC, p. 949*

Protestantism’s Prophetic Apostasy

Ralph Reed and Pat Robertson have encouraged conservative Protestants to form **voting blocs** with the Catholics.

Various **recent presidents** of the United States have frequently asked the pope for counsel on world affairs. Three presidents even knelt before the dead body of Pope John Paul II.

Billy Graham once called John Paul II, the world's **foremost moral leader**?

The late **Paul Crouch**, founder of TBN should said: *"I'm not protesting anything, I am deleting the word Protestant from my vocabulary."*

Robert Schuler, the founder of the Crystal Cathedral, once announced that he hopes that the day will come when the **entire Christian world** accepts the pope as its leader

Television **futurist Jack Van Impe** said about Pope John Paul II *"What a man"*

In 1999, Lutherans and Catholics signed a *Joint Declaration on Righteousness by Faith*

Protestant and Catholic leaders signed the document *"Evangelicals and Catholics Together"*

Probably most of us have heard of Tony Palmer. Before his death, he was a clergyman in the Anglican Church of the Celtic tradition, a church that is seriously **fragmented** with **offshoots** everywhere. These divisions caused him to yearn **for unity** among Christians driven by a **common experience**.

On February 25, 2014, television evangelist Kenneth Copland invited Tony Palmer to speak at **Kenneth Copland's leadership convention**. In his speech Palmer assured the several thousand church leaders that he had come *'in the spirit of Elijah' to bring the hearts of the sons to the fathers and the fathers to the sons'*. In other words, to **unite all Christians**. Palmer lamented that **after Luther**, 33,000 Protestant denominations have appeared. This led Palmer to state that **'diversity is divine'** and **division is 'diabolic'**. He then explained what he meant by 'unity':

*"It is the glory that glues us together, not the doctrine. It's the glory. If you accept that the glory of God is living in me and the presence of God is in you, that's all we need because **God will sort out all our doctrine later upstairs.**"*

In **1999**, Lutherans and Catholics signed a **joint declaration** on righteousness by faith where, at least **on paper**, they agreed on the doctrine of **righteousness by faith**. **Five years** later the **Methodists** signed the declaration as well. This led Palmer to say that **Luther's protest is over**.

"Brothers and sisters, Luther's protest is over. Is yours?"

Palmer then lamented that to date **no evangelical church** had signed the agreement and then said that *'this must be fixed.'* Then he audaciously said:

*"The protest has been **over for 15 years**. If there is no longer any protest, how can there be a protestant church? **Maybe now we are all Catholics again.**"*

Palmer was a **close friend of Pope Francis I** and in a visit to the Vatican, he taped a video message from Francis I **on his cell phone** to deliver to the hundreds of leaders at Copeland's convention. In his message, the Pope called for the **visible unity** of all Christians:

"I am yearning that this separation comes to an end and gives us communion. I am yearning for that embrace."

At the **end of his message**, the Pope appealed to those present:

*'Please **pray for me**, I need your prayers; and I will pray for you, but I need your prayers; and let's pray to the Lord that **He unites us all**. Come on, we are brothers. Let us give each other a **spiritual hug** and let God complete the work that He has begun; and this is a miracle; the **miracle of unity has begun**. I ask you to bless me; I bless you. From brother to brother I embrace you.'*

After Palmer shared the pope's message with the church leaders, **Kenneth Copland** went to the stage shouting all the way there, "*Glory, glory, glory!*"

As Copland shouted, the people **stood, applauded** and raised their hands and then Copland said:

"We do not know how to pray for him [for the pope] as we ought" and then Copland began to pray **in tongues**.

After praying in tongues, he told Palmer to **bring his cell phone** to record a return message to the pope:

*"These leaders represent literally tens of thousands that **love you**, that believe that **God is with you**, and in answer to your request we have just prayed for you and with you, and we did so in the spirit. We do **bless you**; we **receive your blessing**. It is very, very important to us. And we bless you with all of our **hearts**, we bless you with all of our **souls**, we bless you with all of our **might**, and we thank you sir, we thank God for you, and so, all of us declare together: "**Be blessed**."*

After this episode, the **great Protestant leaders** in the United States began standing in line to **visit Pope Francis I** in Rome.

James Robison

James Robison visited the Pope in the middle of 2014 and said to him:

*"Pope Francis, let me just say to you that **I see Jesus in you**; and in Christ we are **brothers**, we are family. Thank you for speaking **the language of love** that all may come to know him and love him and love one another."*

Then the pope gave Robison the **first high five** in papal history!

On May 5, 2014, Tony Palmer was Robison's special guest on his television program "**Life Today**". Tony Palmer stated:

*"**Diversity** is divine; it is **division** that is diabolic. . . Jesus' theology is that if God is in you, and you are in God and God is in me and I am in God, we are one together in God. . . Our sin is that we do not make our **unity visible** because we allow our **diversities to divide** us and if we elevate anything to divide us, we are elevating it above the cross. So, whether it is a **doctrine or a dogma** or an expression, if you use that to divide our unity you have elevated that doctrine or whatever it may be above the cross. Now we are not saying 'put doctrine aside, certainly not!' Pope Francis recognizes only **two fundamental doctrines**—love for God and love for your neighbor, end of doctrine!"*

Joel Osteen

Joel Osteen was one of the prominent television personalities that Pope Francis invited to meet with him in the Vatican. After the meeting, Osteen told local television station *Click 2 Houston*, “I just felt very **honored and very humbled**”. Osteen then gushed about the tour he was given of the Vatican:

*“It was amazing; and even to go back into that part of the Vatican—there’s **so much history** there, the place that they took us through. You feel that deep **respect and reverence for God.**”*

Osteen also met with other **Vatican staff** during his visit, including Cardinal **Pietro Parolli, Secretary of State** for the Vatican, and had dinner with an unspecified staff member.

Prior to meeting with the pope, **Osteen attended mass** in St. Peter's and stood in the midst of a crowd of **100,000 people**. He then described what the pope did after mass:

*“Afterward, [the pope] spent an hour and a half going through the crowd with the Pope mobile, greeting people; it was very heartwarming to see him **caring for people.**”*

Osteen went on:

*“I love the fact that’s he’s made the Church **more inclusive**; not trying to make it smaller, but to try to make it larger—to take everybody in. So, that just **resonates with me.**”*

Rick Warren

November 2014 Rick Warren attended the ‘Complementarity of Man and Woman’, an interfaith meeting at the Vatican. Heather Clark (“Warren’s Call for Christians to Unite with Catholics, ‘Holy Father’ Raising Concerns”, December 2, 2014 filed under ‘Apostasy, Top Stories, World’) reported Warren’s remarks:

“We have **far more in common** than what divides us. . . They would say: ‘We believe in the Trinity; we believe in the Bible; we believe in the resurrection; we believe in salvation through Jesus Christ, **these are the big issues.** . . Sometimes protestants think that Catholics worship Mary, like she’s another god, but that’s not exactly Catholic doctrine. . . People say, ‘what are the saints all about? Why are you praying to the saints?’ And when you understand what they mean by what they are saying, there is a **whole lot more commonality** [that we have with Roman Catholics. . . There are still real differences—no doubt about that, but **the most important thing** is, if you love Jesus we are on the **same team.** . . When it comes to family, we are co-workers in the field in this for the protection of the sanctity of life, the sanctity of sex and the sanctity of marriage, so there is a **great commonality** and there is no division on any of those three.”

Is it true that there is more that unites us than divides us? The answer is a robust, no! The **main contribution** of Luther to the Protestant Reformation was *Sola Scriptura*, not **justification by faith**. He discovered righteousness by faith because he **discovered the Bible**. Let us formulate a series of questions to see how much Catholics and Protestants have in common:

- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that the **sacrifice of Jesus** on the cross was **not sufficient** and therefore He needs to be sacrificed all over again in every mass?

- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that some persons will go to **purgatory** to purge sins that Jesus **already forgave** when they accepted Him as their Savior?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that it is all right to **bow before images** in violation of the Second Commandment?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the **primacy of the Pope** as the visible sovereign of the Christian World?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that Mary is the **Mother of God**, that her mother conceived her **without original sin**, that she **never sinned**, that she **ascended bodily** to heaven and that she **now intercedes** for us?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the practice of **canonizing** the saints?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that the Bible is not our **only rule of faith and practice** and that the Bible and tradition have the same level of authority?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that the Church can give individuals **indulgences for sin** if they perform certain actions?
- Are Protestants willing to accept the idea that it is all right to **confess your sins** to a priest instead of directly to God?
- Yet there are two Roman Catholic doctrines that Protestants have never been able to discard, the state of man in death and the Sabbath.
- The matters that divide us are not **insignificant**. Will these doctrinal matters be resolved when we **get to heaven**? Is it true that there is **more that unites** us than divides us?

An interesting article appeared in the online edition of Christianity Today on **March 10, 2014**. The title read:

"Sweden's Pentecostal Mega-pastor Converts to Catholicism"

The **subtitle** of the article read:

"He stuns his Word of Life mega-church in Sunday sermon: He's crossing the Tiber."

The article explained:

*"Just who is Ulf Eckman? He founded the 3,300-member mega-church in one of Sweden's largest cities. He operated the largest Bible school in Scandinavia. It has educated more than 9,500 students in the period of its existence. On **Sunday, March 9**, he announced to his **stunned congregation** that he was leaving his congregation to join the Roman Catholic Church."*

What reason did Eckman give for his union with Rome?

*"I have come to realize that the movement I, for the last 30 years have represented, despite some successes and much good that has occurred on various mission fields, is **part of the ongoing Protestant fragmentation** of Christendom".*

He stated that he would now dedicate his time to **pursue unity** among Christian movements and denominations.

He explained that as he became **acquainted with Roman Catholics** over a decade he grew **closer and closer** to them. In his own words:

*"It really challenged our **protestant prejudices**, and we realized that we in many cases did not have **any basis for our criticism of them.**" "We needed to know the Catholic faith better. This led us to realize that it was actually **Jesus Christ who led us to unite** with the Catholic Church."*

He also said:

*"We have seen a great love for Jesus and a **sound theology founded on the Bible and classic dogma [in other words, 'tradition']**. We have **experienced** the richness of sacramental life. We have seen the logic in having a **solid structure** for priesthood that keeps the faith of the church and **passes it on from one generation to the next**. We have met an ethical and moral strength and consistency that dare to **face up to the general opinion** [social factors], and a kindness towards the **poor and weak**. And, last but not least, we have come in contact with representatives for millions of **charismatic Catholics** and we have seen their living faith."*

We could go on and on describing the overtures that the papacy is making toward Protestants, the meeting of the pope with the Waldensians in Torre Pellice, the pope's address to a joint session of congress, etc.

Do you think that if these Protestant leaders **understood the prophecies** of **Daniel and Revelation** concerning the identity of the antichrist they would **be saying this about the papacy?**

Two Seventh-day Adventist Teachers

However, Protestants are not the only ones who are encouraging unity with Rome. Paul Landa, who taught history at La Sierra University specializing in **Reformation studies**—unbelievably—wrote an article where he **lauded the changes** that have taken place in the Roman Catholic Church. After describing the Roman Catholic Church of the **past** as 'a **contemptuous and contemptible organization**,' Landa goes on to state:

*"But those days **are over**. The world has **changed**. The United States has **changed**. And even the Roman Catholic Church has **changed**, in the second half of our century, having reconciled itself with progress, liberalism and modern civilization. It is **no longer** the Bible-suppressing, science-resisting, liberty-opposing, Protestant-hating, culture ignoring, Latin-mumbling, obscurantism loving ecclesiastical organization of former years, **intent on ruling the world** from Rome. Vatican Council II transformed all of that.*

*To ignore these new realities and to refuse to come to terms with the contemporary Roman church is to choose to remain stuck in a religious no-man's-land, condemning a church that **no longer exists**, using old **labels and propaganda** that only offend and alienate deeply. Instead, Seventh-day Adventists ought to involve themselves in **building bridges of understanding** to*

reach out to Roman Catholics and developing **bonds of love** to enable **them with us** to arrive at a fuller appreciation and application of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Paul Landa, “American Anti-Catholicism: History and Evaluation,” Adventist Today (July/August, 1993), p. 18, (emphasis supplied)

In contrast to Landa’s call for bridges of understanding, Ellen White unambiguously stated:

*“The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be: the apostasy of the latter times 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. It is a part of her policy to **assume the character** which will best accomplish her purpose; but **beneath** the **variable appearance** of the chameleon she conceals the **invariable venom** of the serpent. “Faith ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy” (Lenfant, volume 1, page 516), she declares. Shall this power, whose record for a thousand years is written in the blood of the saints, be now acknowledged as a **part of the church of Christ?**”*

*It is not without reason that the claim has been put forth in Protestant countries that Catholicism **differs less widely** from Protestantism than in former times. There has been **a change**; but **the change is not in the papacy**. Catholicism indeed resembles much of the Protestantism that now exists, because Protestantism has **so greatly degenerated** since the days of the Reformers.” GC, pp. 571, 572*

In another statement, Ellen White assures us that the union between Catholic and Protestants:

*“. . . will not, however, be effected by a **change** in Catholicism; for **Rome never changes**. She claims infallibility. It is **Protestantism that will change**. The adoption of **liberal ideas [false charity or political correctness]** on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism.” The Review and Herald, June 1, 1886.*

So the critical question is this: Do we believe the prophetic voice of **Ellen White** or the scholarly opinion of **Paul Landa**? No contest!

Frank Knittel who at the time was an English teacher at **La Sierra University** and **co-pastor** of the Riverside Community Seventh-day Adventist Church said regarding Ellen White’s view of the Papacy in the book The Great Controversy:

*“. . . we must not base any spiritual warning to the world on evidence which we feel is found in any book **other than the Bible**. White gave Adventism **her interpretation** of the Scriptures, and **her view** is not infallible.” Frank Knittel, ‘Anti-Catholicism: A Substitute Gospel,’ Adventist Today (July/August 1993), p. 11*

One wonders what Knittel would say to the Protestant Reformers and Bible commentators who studied **sola Scriptura** and reached **identical conclusions** about the Antichrist as Ellen White. They had **no Ellen White** to lean on and yet they reached the **same conclusions** as she did! The simple fact is that Ellen White is in full harmony with the **Bible** as **understood by the Protestant Reformers** while Knittel is at odds with them.

Regarding the importance of understanding prophecy and the Sabbath, **Knittel added**:

*“Our message to the world, as Paul declared for himself, is Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and a detailed accounting of the prophecies and an exposition of the Sabbath is **secondary**. Whatever we wish to believe about prophecy is **our own right and responsibility**, but whatever we believe should be based totally upon what we derive from our own study of the Bible and not*

upon anything written by anyone since the canon of the Scriptures was established. We have almost destroyed ourselves by our passionate disinclination to search for ourselves, and we wear out the pages of the *Ellen White Index* when we should **instead be studying the Bible.**" Frank Knittel, "Anti-Catholicism: A Substitute Gospel," *Adventist Today* (July/August 1993), p. 11.

Knittel's remark about the primacy of preaching the gospel, leads one to ask, **which gospel?** Is the gospel that Roman Catholicism teaches the **true gospel?** Not according to the Protestant Reformers who risked their lives for the cause of truth! In fact, their main reason for confronting the Roman Catholic Papacy was that, according to **their study of the Bible prophecies,** the Papacy had adulterated the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

The book of Revelation places the everlasting gospel within the context of keeping the **commandments, worshiping the Creator,** proclaiming the **hour of God's judgment,** calling God's people **out of Babylon** and warning the world about the **dangers of the beast, his image and his mark.** We cannot merely **stop our reading and preaching at Revelation 14:6** without paying serious attention to the succeeding context in **verses 7-12.** The link between Revelation 14:6 and the succeeding context is made clear by the fact that verses 6 and 7 are linked with the present progressive verb 'saying.'

*"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-- **saying** with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."*

Uniting on Common Points

Almost one hundred and thirty years ago, Ellen White predicted the unity of Protestants with Catholics and the tragic results:

*"When the leading churches of the United States, **uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common,** shall **influence the state** to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an **image** of the Roman hierarchy, and the **infliction of civil penalties [the state using the sword]** upon dissenters will inevitably result." *The Great Controversy*, p. 445*

*"The **wide diversity of belief** in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon **common points of doctrine.** To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed--however important they might be from a **Bible standpoint**--must necessarily be waived." *GC 444**

*"When the land which the Lord provided as an asylum for his people, that they might worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land over which for long years the shield of Omnipotence has been spread, the land which God has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ--when that land shall, **through its legislators,** abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to Romish apostasy in tampering with God's law,--it is then that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by **a national act [an act of***

congress] enforcing the false Sabbath, they will **give life and vigor** to the corrupt faith of Rome, **reviving** her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of his truth." Signs of the Times, June 12, 1893

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare [so to speak, the USA is presently nibbling at the entrance to the snare smelling the seemingly 'delicious' food inside. Remember that the purpose of a snare is to entice the victim into thinking that it is safe to eat the food]. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which she will repeat her former persecutions. Stealthily and unsuspectedly, she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution." GC 581

"The Protestant churches **are in great darkness**, or they would discern the signs of the times. 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." GC 565, 566

"Rome is aiming to **re-establish** her power, to **recover** her lost supremacy. Let the principle once be established in the United States that the **church may employ or control the power of the state**; that religious observances may be **enforced by secular laws**; in short, that the **authority of church and state** is to dominate the conscience and the **triumph of Rome** in this country is assured." GC 581

"As the Protestant churches have been seeking the **favor of the world**, **false charity** has **blinded their eyes**. They do not see but that it is right to believe **good of all evil**, and as the inevitable result they will finally believe **evil of all good**. Instead of standing in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints, they are now, as it were, **apologizing to Rome** for their uncharitable opinion of her, begging pardon for their bigotry." GC 571, 572

What is false charity?

"To heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, **is called charity**. To **confederate together**, to call sin holiness and truth, **is called charity**; but it is the **counterfeit** article." An Appeal to our Ministers and Conference Committees (1892), p. 30, 31

"It is not without reason that the claim has been put forth in **Protestant countries** that Catholicism differs less widely from Protestantism than in former times. **There has been a change**; but the change is not in the papacy. Catholicism indeed resembles much of the Protestantism that now exists, because **Protestantism has so greatly degenerated** since the days of the Reformers." GC 571

The Loud Cry

If the remnant church should ever forsake her **prophetic roots** she would have no reason to exist! Our entire **message and mission** vanishes in a mist! The soon coming **Loud Cry** has

the purpose of unmasking this entire scenario by proclaiming the true culprits in the controversy:

*“Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through **humble instruments**, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the **unction of His Spirit** than by the **training of literary institutions**. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The **sins of Babylon will be laid open**. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the **church by civil authority**, the **inroads of spiritualism**, the stealthy but rapid progress of the **papal power**--all will be **unmasked**. By these solemn warnings **the people will be stirred**. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have **never heard words like these**. In **amazement** they hear the testimony that Babylon is **the church**, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her **rejection of the truth** sent to her from heaven. As the people go to their **former teachers** with the eager inquiry: Are these things so? the ministers **present fables**, prophesy **smooth things**, to **soothe** their fears and **quiet** the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the **mere authority of men** and demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord,” the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, **filled with anger** as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the **sin-loving** multitudes to **revile and persecute** those who proclaim it.” GC, pp. 606, 607*

*“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as **watchmen [defensive]** and **light bearers [offensive]**. To them has been entrusted the **last warning** for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light [**awesome privilege**] from the word of God. They have been given a **work of the most solemn import [great responsibility]**--the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is **no other work** of so great importance. They are to allow **nothing else** to absorb their attention.” 9T 19*

*“There are many **in the church** who **at heart** belong to the world, but God calls upon those who claim to believe the **advanced truth** to rise above the present attitude of the **popular churches** of today . . . The reason we have had so little influence upon unbelieving relatives and associates is that we have manifested **little decided difference** in our **practices** from those of the world . . . When we reach the standard that the Lord would have us reach, **worldlings** will regard Seventh-day Adventists as **odd, singular, strait-laced extremists**.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 289*

Ellen White on the Importance of the 'Historical Flow Method'

*“There are those now living who in studying the prophecies of Daniel and John, received great light from God as they passed over the ground where special prophecies were in **process of fulfillment in their order**. They bore the message of time to the people. The truth shone out clearly as the sun at noonday. Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative **delineation of events leading down** to the close of this earth's history.” 2SM, p.102*

*“Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and **place it in the future**. Events in the **train of prophecy that had their fulfillment away in the past are made future**, and thus by these theories the faith of some is undermined. From the light that the Lord has been pleased to give*

me, you are in danger of doing the same work, presenting before others truths which **have had their place and done their specific work** for the time, in the history of the faith of the people of God. You recognize these facts in Bible history as true, but **apply them to the future**. They have their force still **in their proper place, in the chain of events** that have made us as a people what we are today, and as such they are to be presented to those who are in the darkness of error." 2SM, p. 102.2

"The truths that have been unfolding in their order, as we have advanced along the line of prophecy revealed in the Word of God, are truth, sacred, eternal truth today. Those who passed over the ground step by step in the past history of our experience, seeing the chain of truth in the prophecies, were prepared to accept and obey every ray of light." 2SM, p. 103.1

"The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth. By pen and voice we are to sound the proclamation, showing their order and the application of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel's message. There cannot be a third without the first and second. These messages we are to give to the world in publications, in discourses, showing in the line of prophetic history the things that have been and the things that will be." CW, p. 26.2

"All that God has in prophetic history specified to be fulfilled in the past has been, and all that is yet to come in its order will be." Christ Triumphant, p. 340.6

"Theories will be continually agitated to divert the mind, to unsettle the faith. Those who have had the actual experience in the unfolding of the prophecies, have been made what they are today, Seventh-day Adventists, by these prophecies." 2SM, p. 115.3