

“On Christian Freedom” – by Martin Luther



The believing soul, by its faith in Christ, becomes free from all sin, fearless of death, safe from hell, and endowed with eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Revelation 6:9-11. The Fifth Seal



The Last Pagan Persecution Of The Church, Diocletian. A.D. 303-311.

The Last Prophecy: An Abridgment of

Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae*



Horae Apocalypticae is doubtless the most elaborate work ever produced on the Apocalypse. Without an equal in exhaustive research in its field, it was occasioned by the futurist attack on the Historical School of interpretation.

Roman Catholicism By Lorraine Boettner Chapter V Peter



This is the continuation of the [previous chapter of Roman Catholicism](#) by Lorraine Boettner.

1 The Roman Catholic Position

The controversial passage in regard to Peter's place in the Church is Matthew 16:13-19, which reads as follows: "Now Jesus, having come into the district of Caesarea Philippi, began to ask his disciples, saying, 'Who do men say the Son of Man is?' But they said, 'Some say, John the Baptist; and others, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Then Jesus answered and said, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father in heaven. And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose

on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Confraternity Version).

To this passage the Confraternity Version adds the following interpretation:

"The rock was Peter. ... *The gates of hell*: hostile, evil powers. Their aggressive force will struggle in vain against the Church. She shall never be overcome; she is indefectible. And since she has the office of teacher (cf. 28, 16-20), and since she would be overcome if error prevailed, she is infallible.

"Keys: a symbol of authority. Peter has the power to admit into the Church and to exclude therefrom. Nor is he merely the porter; he has complete power within the Church. 'To bind and to loose' seems to have been used by the Jews in the sense of to forbid or to permit; but the present context requires a more comprehensive meaning. In heaven God ratifies the decisions which Peter makes on earth in the name of Christ" (pp. 36-37).

And the late Cardinal Gibbons, a former archbishop of Baltimore and one of the most representative American Roman Catholics, in his widely read book, *Faith of our Fathers*, set forth the position of his church in these words:

"The Catholic Church teaches that our Lord conferred on St. Peter the first place of honor and jurisdiction in the government of His whole church, and that the same spiritual supremacy has always resided in the popes, or bishops of Rome, as being the successors of St. Peter. Consequently, to be true followers of Christ all Christians, both among the clergy and laity, must be in communion with the See of Rome, where Peter rules in the person of his successor" (p. 95).

The whole structure of the Roman Church is built on the assumption that in Matthew 16:13-19 Christ appointed Peter the first pope and so established the papacy. Disprove the primacy of Peter, and the foundation of the papacy is destroyed. Destroy the papacy, and the whole Roman hierarchy topples with it. Their system of priesthood depends absolutely upon their claim that Peter was the first pope at Rome, and that they are his successors. We propose to show that (1) Matthew 16:13-19 does not teach that Christ appointed Peter a pope; (2) that there is no proof that Peter ever was in Rome; and (3) that the New Testament records, particularly Peter's own writings, show that he never claimed authority over the other apostles or over the church, and that that authority was never accorded to him.

2 The "Rock"

"And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18, Confraternity Version).

Romanists quote this verse with relish, and add their own interpretation to establish their claim for papal authority. But in the Greek the word Peter is Petros, a person, masculine, while the word "rock," *petra*, is feminine and refers not to a person but to the declaration of Christ's deity that Peter had just uttered—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Using Peter's name and making, as it were, a play upon words, Jesus said to Peter, "You are Petros, and upon this petra I will build my church." The truth that Peter had just confessed was the foundation upon which Christ would build His church. He meant that Peter had seen the basic, essential truth concerning His person, the essential truth upon which the church would be founded, and that nothing would be able to overthrow that truth, not even all the forces of evil that might be arrayed against it. Peter was the first among the disciples to see our Lord as the Christ of God. Christ commended him for that spiritual insight, and said that His church would be founded upon that fact. And that, of course, was a far different thing from founding the church on Peter.

Had Christ intended to say that the Church would be founded on Peter, it would have been ridiculous for Him to have shifted to the feminine form of the word in the middle of the statement, saying, if we may translate literally and somewhat whimsically, "And I say unto thee, that thou art Mr. Rock, and upon this, the Miss Rock, I will build my church." Clearly it was upon the truth that Peter had expressed, the deity of Christ, and not upon weak, vacillating Peter, that the church would be founded. The Greek "petros" is commonly used of a small, movable stone, a mere pebble, as it were. But "petra" means an immovable foundation, in this instance, the basic truth that Peter had just confessed, the deity of Christ. And in fact, that is the point of conflict in the churches today between evangelicals on the one hand, and modernists or liberals on the other—whether the church is founded on a truly divine Christ as revealed in a fully trustworthy Bible, or whether it is essentially a social service and moral welfare organization which recognizes Christ as an example, an outstandingly great and good man, but denies or ignores His deity.

The Bible tells us plainly, not that the church is built upon Peter, but that it is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). And again, "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Without that foundation the true Christian church could not exist.

If Matthew 16:18 had been intended to teach that the church is founded on Peter, it would have read something like this: "Thou art Peter, and upon you I will build my church"; or, "Thou art Peter, and upon you the rock I will build my church." But that is not what Christ said. He made two complete, distinct statements. He said, "Thou art Peter," and, "Upon this rock (change of gender, indicating change of subject) I will build my church."

The gates of hell were not to prevail against the church. But the gates of hell did prevail against Peter shortly afterward, as recorded in this same chapter, when he attempted to deny that Christ would be crucified, and almost immediately afterward, in the presence of the other disciples, received the stinging rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art a stumbling block unto me, for thou mindest not the things of God but the things of men" (v. 23)—surely strong words to use against one who had just been appointed pope!

Later we read that Peter slept in Gethsemane, during Christ's agony. His rash

act in cutting off the servant's ear drew Christ's rebuke. He boasted that he was ready to die for his Master, but shortly afterward shamefully denied with oaths and curses that he even knew Him. And even after Pentecost Peter still was subject to such serious error that his hypocrisy had to be rebuked by Paul, who says: "But when Cephas came to Antioch [at which time he was in full possession of his papal powers, according to Romanist doctrine], I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned" (Galatians 2:11). And yet Romanists allege that their pope, as Peter's successor, is infallible in matters of faith and morals!

The Gospel written by Mark, who is described in early Christian literature as Peter's close companion and understudy, does not even record the remark about the "rock" in reporting Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27-30). No, Christ did not build His church upon a weak, sinful man. Rather the essential deity of Christ, which was so forcefully set forth in Peter's confession, was the foundation stone, the starting point, on which the church would be built.

That no superior standing was conferred upon Peter is clear from the later disputes among the disciples concerning who should be greatest among them. Had such rank already been given, Christ would simply have referred to His grant of power to Peter. Instead we read:

"And they came to Capernaum: and when he was in the house he asked them, What were ye reasoning on the way? But they held their Peace: for they had disputed one with another on the way, who was the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve; and he saith unto them, If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all" (Mark 9:33-35).

And again:

"And there came near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory. And when the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation concerning James and John. And Jesus called them unto him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:34-44).

It is interesting to notice that some of the church fathers, Augustine and Jerome among them, gave the Protestant explanation of this verse, understanding the "rock" to mean not Peter but Christ. Others, of course, gave the papal interpretation. But this shows that there was no "unanimous consent of the fathers," as the Roman Church claims, on this subject.

Dr. Harris says concerning the reference to the "rock":

"Mark's Gospel is connected with Peter by all early Christian tradition and

it does not even include this word of Jesus to Peter. Likewise in the Epistles of Peter there is no such claim. In 1 Peter 2:6-8 Christ is called a rock and a chief cornerstone. But Peter here claims nothing for himself. Indeed he is explicit in calling all believers living stones built up a spiritual house with Christ as the head of the corner.

"Christ is repeatedly called a Rock. The background for this is that around thirty-four times in the Old Testament God is called a Rock or the Rock of Israel. It was a designation of God. In the Messianic passages, Isaiah 8:14; 28:16; and Psalm 118:22, Christ is called a Rock or Stone upon which we should believe. These passages are quoted in the New Testament and for that reason Christ is called a Rock several times. It designates Him as divine. For that reason, every Jew, knowing the Old Testament, would refuse the designation to Peter or to anyone except insofar as we are children of Christ. He is the Rock. We are living stones built upon Him. Ephesians 2:20 says this plainly. We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. Paul says of the Rock from which the Israelites drank that it typified Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). In the New Testament there are twelve foundations and on them are the names of the twelve apostles—none of them are made pre-eminent" (The Bible Presbyterian Reporter, January, 1959.)

And Dr. Henry M. Woods says:

"If Christ had meant that Peter was to be the foundation, the natural form of statement would have been, 'Thou art Peter, and on thee I will build my church'; but He does not say this, because Peter was not to be the rock on which the church was built. Note also that in the expression 'on this rock,' our Lord purposely uses a different Greek word, Petra, from that used for Peter, Petros. He did this to show that, not Peter, but the great truth which had just been revealed to him, viz., that our Lord was 'the Christ, the Son of the living God,' was to be the church's foundation. Built on the Christ, the everlasting Saviour, the gates of hell would never prevail against the Church. But built on the well-meaning but sinful Peter, the gates of hell would surely prevail; for a little later our Lord had to severely rebuke Peter, calling him 'Satan'" (*Our Priceless Heritage*, p. 40).

3 The "Keys"

"And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19, Confraternity Version).

Admittedly this is a difficult verse to interpret, and numerous explanations have been given. It is important to notice, however, that the authority to bind and to loose was not given exclusively to Peter. In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew the same power *is given to all of the disciples*. There we read:

"At that hour the disciples came to Jesus. ... Amen. I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (vv. 1,18, Confraternity Version).

Consequently Matthew 16:19 does not prove any superiority on Peter's part. Even the scribes and Pharisees had this same power, for Jesus said to them: "But woe upon you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer them that are entering in to enter" (Matthew 23:13). And on another occasion He said: "The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not. Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger" (Matthew 23:2-4).

Here the expression clearly means that the scribes and Pharisees, in that the Word of God was in their hands, thereby had the power, in declaring that Word to the people, to open the kingdom of heaven to them, and in withholding that Word they shut the kingdom of heaven against people. That was Moses' function in giving the law. It was, therefore, a declaratory power, the authority to announce the terms on which God would grant salvation, not an absolute power to admit or to exclude from the kingdom of heaven. Only God can do that, and He never delegates that authority to men.

And in Luke 11:52 Jesus says: "Woe unto you lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." Here, the key of the knowledge of the way of salvation, by which entrance into the kingdom of heaven is obtained, was in the hands of the Pharisees in that they had the law of Moses in their possession, and were therefore the custodians of the Word of God. In that sense they possessed the key to the kingdom. They took away that key in that they failed to proclaim the Word of God to the people. They were not entering into the kingdom of heaven themselves, and they were hindering those who wanted to enter.

Furthermore, we notice that in the words spoken to Peter, it was "things," not "persons," that were to be bound or loosed—"whatsoever," not "whomsoever"—things such as the ceremonial laws and customs of the Old Testament dispensation were to be done away with, and new rituals and practices of the Gospel age were to be established.

Thus the "keys" symbolize the authority to open, in this instance, to open the kingdom of heaven to men through the proclamation of the Gospel. What the disciples were commissioned to do, given the privilege of doing, was the opposite of that which the scribes and Pharisees were doing; that is, they were to facilitate the entrance of the people into the kingdom of heaven.

There was, of course, no physical seat which had been used by Moses and which now was being used by the scribes and Pharisees. But the scribes and Pharisees, who were in possession of the law of Moses, were giving precepts which in themselves were authoritative and good and which therefore were to be obeyed; but since they did not live up to those precepts the people were not to follow their example.

It is clear that the keys were symbolical of authority, which here is specified as the power of binding and loosing; and it is also clear that the consequences of what the disciples did in this regard would go far beyond

earth and would have their permanent results in heaven. They were in a real sense building for eternity. In referring to the keys of the kingdom Jesus was continuing the figure in which He had been comparing the kingdom of heaven to a house which He was about to build. It would be built upon a solid rock (Matthew 7:24). Entrance into that house was through the door of faith. This door was to be opened, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. And Peter, who had been the first of the disciples to comprehend the person of Christ in His true deity and to confess that deity before the other disciples, was commissioned to be the first to open that door. In this sense the keys were first given to him. To him was given the distinction and high honor among the apostles of being the first to open the door of faith to the Jewish world, which he did on the day of Pentecost when through his sermon some three thousand Jews were converted (Acts 2:14-42), and a short time later the distinction and high honor of opening the door of faith to the Gentile world, which he did in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48). And while the keys were in this respect first given to Peter, they were soon afterward also given to the other disciples as they too proclaimed the Gospel both to Jews and Gentiles. But while Peter was given the distinction and honor of being the first to open the kingdom to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles, he did not claim nor assume any other authority, and was in all other respects on precisely the same footing as were the other apostles.

Possession of the keys, therefore, did not mean that Peter had sovereignly within his own person the authority to determine who should be admitted to heaven and who should be excluded, as the Roman Church now attempts to confer that authority on the pope and priests. Ultimate authority is in the hands of Christ alone—it is He “that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth” (Revelation 3:7). But it did mean that Peter, and later the other apostles, being in possession of the Gospel message, truly did open the door and present the opportunity to enter in as they proclaimed the message before the people. This same privilege of opening the door or of closing the door of salvation to others is given to every Christian, for the command that Christ gave His church was to go and make disciples of all the nations. Thus “the power of the keys” is a *declarative* power only.

It can almost be said that the Roman Catholics build their church upon these two verses which speak of the “rock” and the “keys.” They say that the power given to Peter was absolute and that it was transferred by him to his successors, although they have to admit that there is not one verse in Scripture which teaches such a transfer. Under this “power of the keys” the Roman Church claims that “In heaven God ratifies the decisions which Peter makes on earth” (footnote, Confraternity Version, p. 37).

But it is interesting to see how Peter himself understood this grant of power. In his exercise of the power of the keys he says: “And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). And at the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius he again gave a universal Gospel invitation: “To him [Christ] bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43). So, in the preaching of Peter, as elsewhere in the New Testament, salvation is set forth as based on faith in Christ, and nowhere is

obedience to Peter, or to the pope, or to any other man even hinted at.

Rome terribly abuses this “power of the keys” to insure obedience to her commands on the part of her church members and to instill in them a sense of fear and of constant dependence on the church for their salvation. This sense of fear and dependence, with constant references to “Mother Church,” goes far to explain the power that the Roman Church has over her members, even cowing them to the extent that they are afraid to read or to listen to anything contrary to what their church teaches. And since that teaching is drilled into them from childhood, the truly formidable power that the Roman Church exercises over the laity can be easily understood.

4 Papal Authority Not Claimed by Peter

The Roman Church claims that Peter was the first bishop or pope in Rome and that the later popes are his successors. But the best proof of a man’s position and authority is his own testimony. Does Peter claim to be a pope, or to have primacy over the other apostles? Fortunately, he wrote two epistles or letters which are found in the New Testament. There he gives his position and certain instructions as to how others in the same position are to perform their duties. We read:

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. ... The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 1:1, 5:1-3).

Here Peter refers to himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder (the word in the Greek is presbuteros), which of course has nothing to do with a sacrificing priesthood. He does not claim the highest place in the church as some would expect him to do or as some would claim for him. He assumes no ecclesiastical superiority, but with profound humility puts himself on a level with those whom he exhorts. He makes it clear that the church must be democratic, not authoritarian. He forbids the leaders to lord it over the people, to work for money or to take money unjustly. He says that they are to serve the people willingly, even eagerly, and that by their general lives they are to make themselves examples for the people.

But the fact is that the Church of Rome acts directly contrary to these instructions. Can anyone imagine the proud popes of later times adopting such a role of humility? It was several centuries later, when the church had lost much of its original simplicity and spiritual power, and had been submerged in a flood of worldliness, that the autocratic authority of the popes began to appear. After the fourth century, when the Roman empire had fallen, the bishops of Rome stepped into Caesar’s shoes, took his pagan title of Pontifex Maximus, the supreme high priest of the pagan Roman religion, sat down on Caesar’s throne, and wrapped themselves in Caesar’s gaudy trappings. And that role they have continued ever since.

In regard to the title Pontifex, the *Standard International Encyclopedia* says this was "the title given by the ancient Romans to members of one of the two celebrated religious colleges. The chief of the order was called Pontifex Maximus. The pontiffs had general control of the official religion, and their head was the highest religious authority in the state. ... Following Julius Caesar the emperor was the Pontifex Maximus. In the time of Theodosius [emperor, died A.D. 395] the title became equivalent to Pope, now one of the titles of the head of the Roman Catholic Church."

Peter refused to accept homage from men—as when Cornelius the Roman centurion fell down at his feet and would have worshipped him, Peter protested quickly and said, "Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25-26). Yet the popes accept the blasphemous title of "Holy Father" as theirs as a matter of right. And how the cardinals, bishops, and priests do like to set themselves apart from the congregations and to lord it over the people!

Surely if Peter had been a pope, "the supreme head of the church," he would have declared that fact in his general epistles, for that was the place of all others to have asserted his authority. The popes have never been slow to make such claims for themselves, or to extend their authority as far as possible. But instead Peter refers to himself only as an apostle (of which there were eleven others), and as an elder or presbyter, that is, simply as a minister of Christ.

5 Paul's Attitude toward Peter

It is very interesting to notice Paul's attitude toward Peter. Paul was called to be an apostle at a later time, after church had been launched. Yet Peter had nothing to do with that choice, as he surely would have had, if he had been pope. Instead God called and ordained Paul without consulting Peter, as He has called and ordained many thousands of ministers and evangelists since then without reference to the popes of Rome. Paul was easily the greatest of the apostles, with a deeper insight into the way of salvation and a larger revealed knowledge concerning the mysteries of life and death. He wrote much more of the New Testament than did Peter. His thirteen epistles contain 2,023 verses, while Peter's two epistles contain only 166 verses. And if we ascribe the Epistle to the Hebrews to Paul, as does the Roman Catholic Church (Confraternity Version, p. 397), he wrote an even larger proportion. Peter's epistles do not stand first among the epistles, but after those of Paul; and in fact his second epistle was one of the last to be accepted by the church. Paul worked more recorded miracles than did Peter, and he seems to have established more churches than did Peter. Apart from the church at Rome, which we believe was established by laymen, Paul established more prominent and more permanent churches than did Peter. And, so far as the New Testament record goes, Paul's influence in the church at Rome was much greater than was that of Peter. Paul mentions Peter more than once, but nowhere does he defer to Peter's authority, or acknowledge him as pope.

Indeed, quite the contrary is the case. Paul had founded the church at Corinth, but when some there rebelled against his authority, even to the extent of favoring Peter, he does not give even an inch on his own authority. Instead he vigorously defends his authority, declaring, "Am I not an apostle?"

have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9:1), and again, "For in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles" (2 Corinthians 12:11), or, as translated in the Confraternity Version, "In no way have I fallen short of the most eminent apostles." He declares that he has been "intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision" (Galatians 2:7). He therefore put himself on a level with all the other apostles. Certainly those ideas were incompatible with any idea of a pope in Paul's day.

But beyond all that, on one occasion Paul publicly rebuked Peter. When Peter at Antioch sided with the "false brethren" (v. 4) in their Jewish legalism and "drew back and separated himself" from the Gentiles and was even the cause of Barnabas being misled, Paul administered a severe rebuke. We read:

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. For before that certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Galatians 2:11-14).

He then impressed upon Peter some good, sound, evangelical theology, declaring that:

"...a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ... because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (v. 16).

In other words, Paul gave the "Holy Father" a "dressing down" before them all, accusing him of not walking uprightly in the truth of the Gospel. Surely that was no way to talk to a pope! Imagine anyone today, even a cardinal, taking it upon himself to rebuke and instruct a real pope with such language! Just who was Paul that he should rebuke the Vicar of Christ for unchristian conduct? If Peter was the chief it was Paul's duty and the duty of the other apostles to recognize him as such and to teach only what he approved. Obviously Paul did not regard Peter as infallible in faith and morals, or recognize any supremacy on his part.

6 Attitude of the Other Apostles toward Peter

The other apostles as well as Paul seem totally unaware of any appointment that made Peter the head of the church. Nowhere do they acknowledge his authority. And nowhere does he attempt to exercise authority over them. The only instance in which another man was chosen to succeed an apostle is recorded in Acts 1:15-26, and there the choice was made not by Peter but by popular choice on the part the brethren who numbered about one hundred and twenty, and by the casting of lots.

On another occasion Peter, together with John, was sent by the apostles to preach the Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:14). Imagine the pope today being sent

by the cardinals or bishops on any such mission. It is well known that today the popes seldom if ever preach. They do issue statements, and they address select audiences which come to them. But they do not go out and preach the Gospel as did Peter and the other apostles.

The important church council in Jerusalem (Acts 15) reveals quite clearly how the unity of the church was expressed in apostolic days. Differences had arisen when certain men from Judaea came down to Antioch, in Syria, where Paul and Barnabas were working and insisted that certain parts of the Jewish ritual must be observed. Had the present Roman Catholic theory of the papacy been followed, there would have been no need at all for a council. The church in Antioch would have written a letter to Peter, the bishop of Rome, and he would have sent them an encyclical or bull settling the matter. And of all the churches the one at Antioch was the last that should have appealed to Jerusalem. For according to Roman Catholic legend Peter was bishop in Antioch for seven years before transferring his see to Rome! But the appeal was made, not to Peter, but to a church council in Jerusalem. At that council not Peter but James presided and announced the decision with the words, "Wherefore my judgment is..." (v. 19). And his judgment was accepted by the apostles and presbyters. Peter was present, but only after there had been "much questioning" (v. 7) did he even so much as express an opinion. He did not attempt to make any infallible pronouncements although the subject under discussion was a vital matter of faith. In any event it is clear that the unity of the early church was maintained not by the voice of Peter but by the decision of the ecumenical council which was presided over by James, the leader of the Jerusalem church. Furthermore, after that council *Peter is never again mentioned in the book of Acts.*

It is an old human failing for people to want to exercise authority over their fellow men. We are told that the disciples disputed among themselves which was to be accounted the greatest. Jesus rebuked them with the words: "If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). On another occasion the mother of James and John came to Jesus with the request that her two sons should have the chief places in the kingdom. But He called the disciples to Him and said, "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25-28). And even on the night in which Christ was delivered up to die they contended among themselves "which of them was accounted to be greatest" (Luke 22:24). In each instance Jesus taught them that they were not to seek to exercise lordship, but rather to excel in service. But in no instance did He settle the dispute by reminding them that Peter was the Prince of the Apostles. In fact they could not have argued that question at all if Peter had already been given the place of preeminence, as the Roman Church holds.

Christ alone is the Head of the church. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus

himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). Paul says that God "gave him [Christ] to be head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Ephesians 1:22-23). Besides Him there can be no earthly foundation or head of the church. Only a monstrosity can have two heads for one body.

7 Was Peter Ever in Rome?

According to Roman Catholic tradition Peter was the first bishop of Rome, his pontificate lasted twenty-five years, from A.D. 42 to 67, and he was martyred in Rome in A.D. 67. The Douay and Confraternity versions say that he was in Rome before the Jerusalem council of Acts 15, and that he returned to Jerusalem for that council, after which he went to Antioch, and then returned to Rome. In the Confraternity Version we read:

"After the resurrection the primacy was conferred upon him and immediately after the ascension he began to exercise it. After preaching in Jerusalem and Palestine he went to Rome, probably after his liberation from prison. Some years later he was in Jerusalem for the first church council, and shortly afterward at Antioch. In the year 67 he was martyred in Rome" (Introduction to the First Epistle of St. Peter).

The remarkable thing, however, about Peter's alleged bishopric in Rome, is that the New Testament has not one word to say about it. The word Rome occurs only nine times in the Bible, and never is Peter mentioned in connection with it. There is no allusion to Rome in either of his epistles. Paul's journey to that city is recorded in great detail (Acts 27 and 28). There is in fact no New Testament evidence, nor any historical proof of any kind, that Peter ever was in Rome. All rests on legend. The first twelve chapters of the book of Acts tell of Peter's ministry and travels in Palestine and Syria. Surely if he had gone to the capital of the empire, that would have been mentioned. We may well ask, if Peter was superior to Paul, why does he receive so little attention after Paul comes on the scene? Not much is known about his later life, except that he traveled extensively, and that on at least some of his missionary journeys he was accompanied by his wife—for Paul says, "Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas" (1 Corinthians 9:5). (The Confraternity Version here reads "sister" instead of "wife"; but the Greek word is *gunē*, wife, not *adelphē*, sister.)

We know nothing at all about the origins of Christianity in Rome. This is acknowledged even by some Roman Catholic historians. It was already a flourishing church when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in A.D. 58. Quite possibly it had been founded by some of those who were present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and heard Peter's great sermon when some 3,000 were converted, for Luke says that in that audience were "sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes" (Acts 2:10). In any event there is nothing but unfounded tradition to support the claim that Peter founded the church in Rome and that he was its bishop for 25 years. The fact is that the apostles did not settle in one place as did the diocesan bishops of much later date, so that it is quite incorrect to speak of Rome as the "See of Peter," or to speak of the popes occupying "the chair" of St. Peter.

Legend was early busy with the life of Peter. The one which tells of his twenty-five years' episcopate in Rome has its roots in the apocryphal stories originating with a heretical group, the Ebionites, who rejected much of the supernatural content of the New Testament, and the account is discredited both by its origin and by its internal inconsistencies. The first reference that might be given any credence at all is found in the writings of Eusebius, and that reference is doubted even by some Roman Catholic writers. Eusebius wrote in Greek about the year 310, and his work was translated by Jerome. A 17th century historian, William Cave (1637-1713), chaplain to King Charles II of England, in his most important work, *The Lives of the Apostles*, says:

"It cannot be denied that in St. Jerome's translation it is expressly said that he (Peter) continued twenty-five years as bishop in that city: but then it is as evident that this was his own addition, who probably set things down as the report went in his time, *no such thing being found in the Greek copy of Eusebius.*"

Exhaustive research by archaeologists has been made down through the centuries to find some inscription in the Catacombs and other ruins of ancient places in Rome that would indicate that Peter at least visited Rome. But the only things found which gave any promise at all were some bones of uncertain origin. L. H. Lehmann, who was educated for the priesthood at the University for the Propagation of the Faith, Rome, tells us of a lecture by a noted Roman archaeologist, Professor Marucchi, given before his class, in which he said that no shred of evidence of Peter's having been in the Eternal City had ever been unearthed, and of another archaeologist, Di Rossi, who declared that for forty years his greatest ambition had been to unearth in Rome some inscription which would verify the papal claim that the Apostle Peter was actually in Rome, but that he was forced to admit that he had given up hope of success in his search. He had the promise of handsome rewards by the church if he succeeded. What he had dug up verified what the New Testament says about the formation of the Christian church in Rome, but remained absolutely silent regarding the claims of the bishops of Rome to be the successors of the apostle Peter (cf., *The Soul of a Priest*, p. 10).

And, after all, suppose Peter's bones should be found and identified beyond question, what would that prove? The important thing is, does the Church of Rome teach the same Gospel that Peter taught? Succession to Peter should be claimed, not by those who say they have discovered his bones, but by those who teach the Gospel that he taught—the evangelical message of salvation by grace through faith.

Furthermore, if mere residence conferred superiority, then Antioch would outrank Rome; for the same tradition which asserts that Peter resided in Rome asserts that he first resided in Antioch, a small city in Syria. It is well known that during the time of the apostles and for generations later the Eastern cities and the Eastern church had the greatest influence, and that the Roman church was comparatively insignificant. The first councils were held in Eastern cities and were composed almost altogether of Eastern bishops. Four of the patriarchates were Eastern—Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria. Rome did not gain the ascendancy until centuries later, after the breakup of the Roman empire. If any church had a

special right to be called the Mistress of all the churches, it surely was the church in Jerusalem, where our Lord lived and taught, where He was crucified, where Christianity was first preached by Peter and the other apostles, where Peter's great Pentecostal sermon was delivered, and from which went forth to Antioch and Rome and to all the world the glad tidings of salvation. Long before the Reformation Rome's claim to be the only true church was rejected by the eastern churches, which were the most ancient and in the early days much the most influential churches in the world.

Another interesting and very important if not decisive line of evidence in this regard is the fact that Paul was preeminently the apostle to the Gentiles while Peter was preeminently the apostle to the Jews, this division of labor having been by divine appointment. In Galatians 2:7-8 Paul says that he "had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles)." Thus Paul's work was primarily among the Gentiles, while Peter's was primarily among the Jews. Peter ministered to the Jews who were in exile in Asia Minor, "to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Peter 1:1), and in his journeys he went as far east as Babylon, from which city his first epistle (and probably his second) was addressed to the Jewish Christians in Asia Minor: "She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you" (1 Peter 5:13). As most of Paul's letters were addressed to churches he had evangelized, so Peter wrote to the Jewish brethren that he had evangelized, who were scattered through those provinces. While there is no Scriptural evidence at all that Peter went west to Rome, here is a plain statement of Scripture that he did go east to Babylon. Why cannot the Roman Church take Peter's word to that effect?

But his testimony, of course, must be circumvented by those who are so anxious to place him in Rome, and they take a curious way to do it. The Confraternity edition has an introductory note to 1 Peter which reads: "The place of composition is given as 'Babylon'... a cryptic designation of the city of Rome."

But there is no good reason for saying that "Babylon" means "Rome." The reason alleged by the Church of Rome for understanding Babylon to mean Rome is that in the book of Revelation Rome is called by that name (Revelation 17:5, 18:2). But there is a great difference between an apocalyptic book such as the book of Revelation, which for the most part is written in figurative and symbolic language, and an epistle such as this which is written in a straightforward, matter-of-fact style.

In regard to Peter's assignment to work among the Jews, it is known that there were many Jews in Babylon in New Testament times. Many had not returned to Palestine after the Exile. Many others, such as those in Asia Minor and Egypt, had been driven out or had left Palestine for various reasons. Josephus says that some "gave Hyrcanus, the high priest, a habitation at Babylon, where there were Jews in great numbers" (Antiquities, Book XV, Ch. II, 2). Peter's assigned ministry to the Jews took him to those places where the Jews were in the greatest numbers, even to Babylon.

8 Paul's Epistle to the Romans

The strongest reason of all for believing that Peter never was in Rome is found in Paul's epistle to the Romans. According to Roman Church tradition, Peter reigned as pope in Rome for 25 years, from A.D. 42 to 67. It is generally agreed that Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome was written in the year A.D. 58, at the very height of Peter's alleged episcopacy there. He did not address his letter to Peter, as he should have done if Peter was in Rome and the head of all the churches, but to the saints in the church in Rome. How strange for a missionary to write to a church and not mention the pastor! That would be an inexcusable affront. What would we think of a minister today who would dare to write to a congregation in a distant city and without mentioning their pastor tell them that he was anxious to go there that he might have some fruit among them even as he has had in his own community (1:13), that he was anxious to instruct and strengthen them, and that he was anxious to preach the Gospel there where it had not been preached before? How would their pastor feel if he knew that such greetings had been sent to 27 of his most prominent members who were mentioned by name in the epistle (Ch. 16)? Would he stand for such ministerial ethics? And if he were the most prominent minister in the land, as allegedly was the bishop of Rome, such an affront would be all the more inexcusable. This point alone ought to open the eyes of the most obdurate person blinded by the traditions of the Roman Church.

If Peter had been working in the church in Rome for some 16 years, why did Paul write to the people of the church in these words: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the and ye may be established" (1:11)? Was not that a gratuitous insult to Peter? Was it not a most presumptuous thing for Paul to go over the head of the pope? And if Peter was there and had been there for 16 years, why was it necessary for Paul to go at all, especially since in his letter he says that he does not build on another's foundation: "making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation" (15:20)? This indicates clearly that Peter was not then in Rome, and that he had not been there, that in fact Paul was writing this letter because no apostle had yet been in Rome to clarify the Gospel to them and to establish them in the faith. At the conclusion of this letter Paul sends greetings to the 27 people mentioned above, including some women, also to several groups. But he does not mention Peter in any capacity.

And again, had Peter been in Rome prior to or at the time when Paul arrived there as a prisoner in A.D. 61, Paul could not have failed to have mentioned him, for in the epistles written from there during his imprisonment—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon—he gives a complete list of his fellow workers in Rome, and Peter's name is not among them. He spent two whole years there as a prisoner, and received all who came to visit him (Acts 28:30). Nor does he mention Peter in his second epistle to Timothy, which was written from Rome during his second imprisonment, in A.D. 67, the year that Peter is alleged to have suffered martyrdom in Rome, and shortly before his own death (2 Timothy 4:6-8). He says that all his friends have forsaken him, and that only Luke is with him (4:10-11). Where was Peter?

If Peter was in Rome when Paul was there as a prisoner, he surely lacked Christian courtesy since he never called to offer aid. Surely he must have been the first absentee bishop on a big scale!

All of this makes it quite certain that Peter never was in Rome at all. Not one of the early church fathers gives any support to the belief that Peter was a bishop in Rome until Jerome in the fifth century. Du Pin, a Roman Catholic historian, acknowledges that "the primacy of Peter is not recorded by the early Christian writers, Justin Martyr (139), Irenaeus (178), Clement of Alexandria (190), or others of the most ancient fathers." The Roman Church thus builds her papal system, not on New Testament teaching, nor upon the facts of history, but only on unfounded traditions.

The chronological table for Peter's work, so far as we can work it out, seems to be roughly as follows:

Most Bible students agree that Paul's conversion occurred in the year A.D. 37. After that he went to Arabia (Galatians 1:17), and after three years went up to Jerusalem where he remained with Peter for 15 days (Galatians 1:18). That brings us to the year A.D. 40. Fourteen years later he again went to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1), where he attended the Jerusalem council described in Acts 15, in which Peter also participated (v. 6). This conference dealt primarily with the problems which arose in connection with the presentation of the Gospel in Jewish and Gentile communities. Paul and Barnabas presented their case, and were authorized by the council to continue their ministry to the Gentiles (Acts 15:22-29); and this quite clearly was the occasion on which Paul was assigned to work primarily among the Gentiles while Peter was assigned to work primarily among the Jews (Galatians 2:7-8), since this same Jerusalem council is spoken of in the immediate context (Galatians 2:1-10). So this brings us to the year A.D. 54, and Peter still is in Syria, 12 years after the time that the Roman tradition says that he began his reign in Rome.

Sometime after the Jerusalem council Peter also came to Antioch, on which occasion it was necessary for Paul to reprimand him because of his conformity to Judaistic rituals (Galatians 2:11-21). And the same Roman tradition which says that Peter reigned in Rome also says that he governed the church in Antioch for seven years before going to Rome. Hence we reach the year A.D. 61, with Peter still in Syria! Indeed, how could Peter have gone to Rome, which was the very center of the Gentile world? Would he defy the decision reached by all the apostles and brethren from the various churches who met in the famous first Christian council in Jerusalem? Clearly the Scriptural evidence is that Peter accepted that decision, and that his work was primarily among the Jews of the dispersion, first in Asia Minor, and later as far east as Babylon—that in fact his work took him in the opposite direction from that which Roman tradition assigns to him! And even if Peter had been the first bishop of Rome, that would not mean that the bishops who followed him would have had any of the special powers that he had. The apostles had the power to work miracles and to write inspired Scripture. Even if Peter had been granted special powers above those of the other apostles, there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that those powers could have been transmitted to his successors. In his second epistle he makes a reference to

his approaching death (1:14), and surely that would have been the appropriate place to have said who his successor should be and what the method of choosing future bishops should be. But he gives no indication that he even thought of such things. Peter as an apostle had qualifications and gifts which the popes do not have and dare not claim. The fact of the matter is that with the passing of the apostles their place as guides to the church was taken not by an infallible pope but by an inspired and infallible Scripture which had been developed by that time, which we call the New Testament, through which God would speak to the church from that time until the end of the age.

We may be certain that if the humble, spiritually-minded Peter were to come back to earth he would not acknowledge as his successor the proud pontiff who wears the elaborate, triple-decked, gold bejeweled crown, who wears such fabulously expensive clothing, who is carried on the shoulders of the people who stands before the high altar of worship, who is surrounded by a Swiss military guard, and who receives such servile obedience from the people that he is in effect, if not in reality, worshipped by them. The dedicated Christian minister who serves his people faithfully and humbly, and not the pope, is the true successor of Peter.

9 Conclusion

Let it be understood that we do not seek to minimize or downgrade but only to expose the preposterous claims that the Roman Church makes for its popes and hierarchy. Peter was a prince of God, but he was not the Prince of the Apostles. He, together with the other apostles, Mary, and the early Christians, turned from the religion in which they were born, Judaism, and became simply Christians, followers of Christ. Not one of them was a Roman Catholic. Roman Catholicism did not develop until centuries later.

The doctrine of the primacy of Peter is just one more of the many errors that the Church of Rome has added to the Christian religion. With the exposure of that fallacy the foundation of the Roman Church is swept away. The whole papal system stands or falls depending on whether or not Peter was a pope in Rome, and neither the New Testament nor reliable historical records give any reason to believe that he ever held that position or that he ever was in Rome.

(Continued in [Roman Catholicism By Lorraine Boettner Section Two Chapter VI The Papacy.](#))

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Evidence for the Resurrection Part II



Absolute proofs that the resurrection of Christ was an historical event.

Evidence for the Resurrection Part I



If the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a fabricated hoax, it was the greatest deception, and a vicious and cruel lie created by despicable, heartless men.

[The Excellency of Christ Part III By Jonathan Edwards](#)



Continued from [part II](#).

I would now show how the aforesaid teaching is of benefit to us, in that

- A) it gives us insight into the names of Christ in Scripture,
- B) it encourages us to accept him as our Savior,
- C) it encourages us to accept him as our Friend.

A) From this doctrine we may learn one reason why Christ is called by such a variety of names, and held forth under such a variety of representations, in Scripture. It is the better to signify and exhibit to us that variety of excellencies that meet together and are conjoined in him. Many appellations are mentioned together in one verse Isaiah 9:6.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

It shows a wonderful conjunction of excellencies, that the same person should be a Son, born and given, and yet be the everlasting Father, without beginning or end, that he should be a Child, and yet be he whose name is Counsellor, and the mighty God; and well may his name, in whom such things are conjoined, be called wonderful.

By reason of the same wonderful conjunction, Christ is represented by a great variety of sensible things, that are on some account excellent. Thus in some places he is called a Sun, as Mal. 4:2, in others a Star, Numb. 24:17. And he is especially represented by the Morning star, as being that which excels all other stars in brightness, and is the forerunner of the day, Rev. 22:16. And, as in our text, he is compared to a lion in one verse, and a lamb in the next, so sometimes he is compared to a roe or young hart, another creature most diverse from a lion. So in some places he is called a rock, in others he is compared to a pearl. In some places he is called a man of war, and the Captain of our Salvation, in other places he is represented as a bridegroom. In the second chapter of Canticles, the first verse, he is compared to a rose and a lily, that are sweet and beautiful flowers; in the next verse but one, he is compared to a tree bearing sweet fruit. In Isaiah 53:2 he is called a Root out of a dry ground; but elsewhere, instead of that, he is called the Tree of Life, that grows (not in a dry or barren ground, but) " in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. 2:7.

B) Let the consideration of this wonderful meeting of diverse excellencies in Christ induce you to accept of him, and close with him as your Savior. As all manner of excellencies meet in him, so there are concurring in him all manner of arguments and motives, to move you to choose him for your Savior, and every thing that tends to encourage poor sinners to come and put their trust in him: his fullness and all-sufficiency as a Savior gloriously appear in that variety of excellencies that has been spoken of. Fallen man is in a state of exceeding great misery, and is helpless in it; he is a poor weak creature, like an infant cast out in its blood in the day that it is born. But Christ is the lion of the tribe of Judah; he is strong, though we are weak; he hath prevailed to do that for us which no creature else could do. Fallen man is a mean despicable creature, a contemptible worm; but Christ, who has undertaken for us, is infinitely honorable and worthy. Fallen man is polluted, but Christ is infinitely holy; fallen man is hateful, but Christ is infinitely lovely; fallen man is the object of God's indignation, but Christ is infinitely dear to him. We have dreadfully provoked God, but Christ has performed that righteousness which is infinitely precious in God's eyes.

And here is not only infinite strength and infinite worthiness, but infinite condescension, and love and mercy, as great as power and dignity. If you are a poor, distressed sinner, whose heart is ready to sink for fear that God never will have mercy on you, you need not be afraid to go to Christ, for fear that he is either unable or unwilling to help you. Here is a strong foundation, and an inexhaustible treasure, to answer the necessities of your poor soul, and here is infinite grace and gentleness to invite and embolden a poor, unworthy, fearful soul to come to it. If Christ accepts of you, you need not fear but that you will be safe, for he is a strong Lion for your defense. And if you come, you need not fear but that you shall be accepted;

for he is like a Lamb to all that come to him, and receives then with infinite grace and tenderness. It is true he has awful majesty, he is the great God, and infinitely high above you; but there is this to encourage and embolden the poor sinner, that Christ is man as well as God; he is a creature, as well as the Creator, and he is the most humble and lowly in heart of any creature in heaven or earth. This may well make the poor unworthy creature bold in coming to him. You need not hesitate one moment; but may run to him, and cast yourself upon him. You will certainly be graciously and meekly received by him. Though he is a lion, he will only be a lion to your enemies, but he will be a lamb to you. It could not have been conceived, had it not been so in the person of Christ, that there could have been so much in any Savior, that is inviting and tending to encourage sinners to trust in him. Whatever your circumstances are, you need not be afraid to come to such a Savior as this. Be you never so wicked a creature, here is worthiness enough; be you never so poor, and mean, and ignorant a creature, there is no danger of being despised, for though he be so much greater than you, he is also immensely more humble than you. Any one of you that is a father or mother, will not despise one of your own children that comes to you in distress: much less danger is there of Christ's despising you, if you in your heart come to him.

Here let me a little expostulate with the poor, burdened, distressed soul.

1. What are you afraid of, that you dare not venture your soul upon Christ? Are you afraid that he cannot save you, that he is not strong enough to conquer the enemies of your soul? But how can you desire one stronger than "the almighty God"? as Christ is called, Isa. 9:6. Is there need of greater than infinite strength? Are you afraid that he will not be willing to stoop so low as to take any gracious notice of you? But then, look on him, as he stood in the ring of soldiers, exposing his blessed face to be buffeted and spit upon by them! Behold him bound with his back uncovered to those that smote him! And behold him hanging on the cross! Do you think that he that had condescension enough to stoop to these things, and that for his crucifiers, will be unwilling to accept of you, if you come to him? Or, are you afraid that if he does accept you, that God the Father will not accept of him for you? But consider, will God reject his own Son, in whom his infinite delight is, and has been, from all eternity, and who is so united to him, that if he should reject him he would reject himself?

2. What is there that you can desire should be in a Savior, that is not in Christ? Or, wherein should you desire a Savior should be otherwise than Christ is? What excellency is there wanting? What is there that is great or good; what is there that is venerable or winning; what is there that is adorable or endearing; or, what can you think of that would be encouraging, which is not to be found in the person of Christ? Would you have your Savior to be great and honorable, because you are not willing to be beholden to a mean person? And, is not Christ a person honorable enough to be worthy that you should be dependent on him? Is he not a person high enough to be appointed to so honorable a work as your salvation? Would you not only have a Savior of high degree, but would you have him, notwithstanding his exaltation and dignity, to be made also of low degree, that he might have experience of

afflictions and trials, that he might learn by the things that he has suffered, to pity them that suffer and are tempted? And has not Christ been made low enough for you? and has he not suffered enough? Would you not only have him possess experience of the afflictions you now suffer, but also of that amazing wrath that you fear hereafter, that he may know how to pity those that are in danger, and afraid of it? This Christ has had experience of, which experience gave him a greater sense of it, a thousand times, than you have, or any man living has. Would you have your Savior to be one who is near to God, that so his mediation might be prevalent with him? And can you desire him to be nearer to God than Christ is, who is his only-begotten Son, of the same essence with the Father? And would you not only have him near to God, but also near to you, that you may have free access to him? And would you have him nearer to you than to be in the same nature, united to you by a spiritual union, so close as to be fitly represented by the union of the wife to the husband, of the branch to the vine, of the member to the head; yea, so as to be one spirit? For so he will be united to you, if you accept of him. Would you have a Savior that has given some great and extraordinary testimony of mercy and love to sinners, by something that he has done, as well as by what he says? And can you think or conceive of greater things than Christ has done? Was it not a great thing for him, who was God, to take upon him human nature: to be not only God, but man thenceforward to all eternity? But would you look upon suffering for sinners to be a yet greater testimony of love to sinners, than merely doing, though it be ever so extraordinary a thing that he has done? And would you desire that a Savior should suffer more than Christ has suffered for sinners? What is there wanting, or what would you add if you could, to make him more fit to be your Savior?

But further, to induce you to accept of Christ as your Savior, consider two things particularly.

3. How much Christ appears as the Lamb of God in his invitations to you to come to him and trust in him. With what sweet grace and kindness does he, from time to time, call and invite you, as Prov. 8:4. "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." And Isaiah 55:1-3 "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat— yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." How gracious is he here in inviting every one that thirsts, and in so repeating his invitation over and over, "Come ye to the waters, come, buy and eat — yea come!" Mark the excellency of that entertainment which he invites you to accept of; "Come, buy wine and milk!" your poverty, having nothing to pay for it, shall be no objection, "Come, he that hath no money, come without money, and without price!" What gracious arguments and expostulations he uses with you! "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." As much as to say, It is altogether needless for you to continue laboring and toiling for that which can never serve your turn, seeking rest in the world, and in your own righteousness — I have made abundant provision for you, of that which is really good, and will fully satisfy your desires, and answer your end, and I stand ready to accept of you: you need not be afraid; If you will come to me, I will engage to see all

your wants supplied, and you made a happy creature. As he promises in the third verse, " Incline your ear, and come unto me: Hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." And so Prov. 9 at the beginning. How gracious and sweet is the invitation there! " Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither;" let you be never so poor, ignorant, and blind a creature, you shall be welcome. And in the following words Christ sets forth the provision that he has made for you, " Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." You are in a poor famishing state, and have nothing wherewith to feed your perishing soul; you have been seeking something, but yet remain destitute. Hearken, how Christ calls you to eat of his bread, and to drink of the wine that he hath mingled! And how much like a lamb does Christ appear in Matt. 9:28 30. " Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." O thou poor distressed soul! whoever thou art, consider that Christ mentions thy very case when he calls to them who labor and are heavy laden! How he repeatedly promises you rest if you come to him! In the 28th verse he says, " I will give you rest." And in the 29th verse, " Ye shall find rest to your souls." This is what you want. This is the thing you have been so long in vain seeking after. O how sweet would rest be to you, if you could but obtain it! Come to Christ, and you shall obtain it. And hear how Christ, to encourage you, represents himself as a lamb! He tells you, that he is meek and lowly in heart, and are you afraid to come to such a one! And again, Rev. 3:20. " Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and I will sup with him and he with me." Christ condescends not only to call you to him, but he comes to you; he comes to your door, and there knocks. He might send an officer and seize you as a rebel and vile malefactor, but instead of that, he comes and knocks at your door, and seeks that you would receive him into your house, as your Friend and Savior. And he not only knocks at your door, but he stands there waiting, while you are backward and unwilling. And not only so, but he makes promises what he will do for you, if you will admit him, what privileges he will admit you to; he will sup with you, and you with him. And again, Rev. 22:16,17. " I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." How does Christ here graciously set before you his own winning attractive excellency! And how does he condescend to declare to you not only his own invitation, but the invitation of the Spirit and the bride, if by any means he might encourage you to come! And how does he invite every one that will, that they may " take of the water of life freely," that they may take it as a free gift, however precious it be, and though it be the Water of life.

4. If you do come to Christ, he will appear as a Lion, in his glorious power and dominion, to defend you. All those excellencies of his, in which he appears as a lion, shall be yours, and shall be employed for you in your defense, for your safety, and to promote your glory, he will be as a lion to fight against your enemies. He that touches you, or offends you, will provoke his wrath, as he that stirs up a lion. Unless your enemies can conquer this

Lion, they shall not be able to destroy or hurt you; unless they are stronger than he, they shall not be able to hinder your happiness. Isaiah 31:4. " For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them; so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof."

C) Let what has been said be improved to induce you to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and choose him for your friend and portion. As there is such an admirable meeting of diverse excellencies in Christ, so there is every thing in him to render him worthy of your love and choice, and to win and engage it. Whatsoever there is or can be desirable in a friend, is in Christ, and that to the highest degree that can be desired.

Would you choose for a friend a person of great dignity? It is a thing taking with men to have those for their friends who are much above them; because they look upon themselves honored by the friendship of such. Thus, how taking would it be with an inferior maid to be the object of the dear love of some great and excellent prince. But Christ is infinitely above you, and above all the princes of the earth; for he is the King of kings. So honorable a person as this offers himself to you, in the nearest and dearest friendship.

And would you choose to have a friend not only great but good? In Christ infinite greatness and infinite goodness meet together, and receive lustre and glory one from another. His greatness is rendered lovely by his goodness. The greater any one is without goodness, so much the greater evil; but when infinite goodness is joined with greatness, it renders it a glorious and adorable greatness. So, on the other hand, his infinite goodness receives lustre from his greatness. He that is of great understanding and ability, and is withal of a good and excellent disposition, is deservedly more esteemed than a lower and lesser being with the same kind inclination and good will. Indeed goodness is excellent in whatever subject it be found; it is beauty and excellency itself, and renders all excellent that are possessed of it; and yet most excellent when joined with greatness. The very same excellent qualities of gold render the body in which they are inherent more precious, and of greater value, when joined with greater than when with lesser dimensions. And how glorious is the sight, to see him who is the great Creator and supreme Lord of heaven and earth, full of condescension, tender pity and mercy, towards the mean and unworthy! His almighty power, and infinite majesty and self- sufficiency, render his exceeding love and grace the more surprising And how do his condescension and compassion endear his majesty, power, and dominion, and render those attributes pleasant, that would otherwise be only terrible! Would you not desire that your friend, though great and honorable, should be of such condescension and grace, and so to have the way opened to free access to him, that his exaltation above you might not hinder your free enjoyment of his friendship? – And would you choose not only that the infinite greatness and majesty of your friend should be, as it were, mollified and sweetened with condescension and grace; but would you also desire to have your friend brought nearer to you? Would you choose a friend far above you, and yet as it were upon a level with you too?

Though it be taking with men to have a near and dear friend of superior dignity, yet there is also an inclination in them to have their friend a sharer with them in circumstances. Thus is Christ. Though he be the great God, yet he has, as it were, brought himself down to be upon a level with you, so as to become man as you are that he might not only be your Lord, but your brother, and that he might be the more fit to be a companion for such a worm of the dust. This is one end of Christ's taking upon him man's nature, that his people might be under advantages for a more familiar converse with him than the infinite distance of the divine nature would allow of. And upon this account the church longed for Christ's incarnation, Cant. 8:1. "O that thou wert my brother that sucked the breast of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despised." One design of God in the gospel is to bring us to make God the object of our undivided respect, that he may engross our regard every way, that whatever natural inclination there is in our souls, he may be the centre of it; that God may be all in all. But there is an inclination in the creature, not only to the adoration of a Lord and Sovereign, but to complacency in some one as a friend, to love and delight in some one that may be conversed with as a companion. And virtue and holiness do not destroy or weaken this inclination of our nature. But so hath God contrived in the affair of our redemption, that a divine person may be the object even of this inclination of our nature. And in order hereto, such a one is come down to us, and has taken our nature, and is become one of us, and calls himself our friend, brother, and companion. Psalm 122:8. "For my brethren and companions' sake, will I now say, Peace be within thee."

But is it not enough in order to invite and encourage you to free access to a friend so great and high, that he is one of infinite condescending grace, and also has taken your own nature, and is become man? But would you, further to embolden and win you, have him a man of wonderful meekness and humility? Why, such a one is Christ! He is not only become man for you, but far the meekest and most humble of all men, the greatest instance of these sweet virtues that ever was, or will be. And besides these, he has all other human excellencies in the highest perfection. These, indeed, are no proper addition to his divine excellencies. Christ has no more excellency in his person, since his incarnation, than he had before; for divine excellency is infinite, and cannot be added to. Yet his human excellencies are additional manifestations of his glory and excellency to us, and are additional recommendations of him to our esteem and love, who are of finite comprehension. Though his human excellencies are but communications and reflections of his divine, and though this light, as reflected, falls infinitely short of the divine fountain of light in its immediate glory; yet the reflection shines not without its proper advantages, as presented to our view and affection. The glory of Christ in the qualifications of his human nature, appears to us in excellencies that are of our own kind, and are exercised in our own way and manner, and so, in some respect, are peculiarly fitted to invite our acquaintance and draw our affection. The glory of Christ as it appears in his divinity, though far brighter, more dazzles our eyes, and exceeds the strength of our sight or our comprehension; but, as it shines in the human excellencies of Christ, it is brought more to a level with our conceptions, and suitableness to our nature and manner, yet retaining a semblance of the

same divine beauty, and a savor of the same divine sweetness. But as both divine and human excellencies meet together in Christ, they set off and recommend each other to us. It tends to endear the divine majesty and holiness of Christ to us, that these are attributes of one in our nature, one of us, who is become our brother, and is the meekest and humblest of men. It encourages us to look upon these divine perfections, however high and great; since we have some near concern in and liberty freely to enjoy them. And on the other hand, how much more glorious and surprising do the meekness, the humility, obedience, resignation, and other human excellencies of Christ appear, when we consider that they are in so great a person, as the eternal Son of God, the Lord of heaven and earth!

By your choosing Christ for your friend and portion, you will obtain these two infinite benefits.

5. Christ will give himself to you, with all those various excellencies that meet in him, to your full and everlasting enjoyment. He will ever after treat you as his dear friend; and you shall ere long be where he is, and shall behold his glory, and dwell with him, in most free and intimate communion and enjoyment.

When the saints get to heaven, they shall not merely see Christ, and have to do with him as subjects and servants with a glorious and gracious Lord and Sovereign, but Christ will entertain them as friends and brethren. This we may learn from the manner of Christ's conversing with his disciples here on earth: though he was their Sovereign Lord, and did not refuse, but required, their supreme respect and adoration, yet he did not treat them as earthly sovereigns are wont to do their subjects. He did not keep them at an awful distance, but all along conversed with them with the most friendly familiarity, as a father amongst a company of children, yea, as with brethren. So he did with the twelve, and so he did with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. He told his disciples, that he did not call them servants, but friends, and we read of one of them that leaned on his bosom: and doubtless he will not treat his disciples with less freedom and endearment in heaven. He will not keep them at a greater distance for his being in a state of exaltation; but he will rather take them into a state of exaltation with him. This will be the improvement Christ will make of his own glory, to make his beloved friends partakers with him, to glorify them in his glory, as he says to his Father, John 17:22, 23. "And the glory which thou hast given me, have I given them, that they may be one, even as we are one I in them" etc. We are to consider, that though Christ is greatly exalted, yet he is exalted, not as a private person for himself only, but as his people's head; he is exalted in their name, and upon their account, as the first fruits, and as representing the whole harvest. He is not exalted that he may be at a greater distance from them, but that they may be exalted with him. The exaltation and honor of the head is not to make a greater distance between the head and the members, but the members have the same relation and union with the head they had before, and are honored with the head; and instead of the distance being greater, the union shall be nearer and more perfect. When believers get to heaven, Christ will conform them to himself, as he is set down in his Father's throne, so they shall sit down with him on his throne, and shall in

their measure be made like him.

When Christ was going to heaven, he comforted his disciples with the thought, that after a while, he would come again and take them to himself, that they might be with him. And we are not to suppose that when the disciples got to heaven, they found him keeping a greater distance than he used to do. No, doubtless, he embraced them as friends, and welcomed them to his and their Father's house, and to his and their glory. They who had been his friends in this world, who had been together with him here, and had together partaken of sorrows and troubles, are now welcomed by him to rest, and to partake of glory with him. He took them and led them into his chambers, and showed them all his glory; as he prayed, John 17:24. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me." And he led them to his living fountains of waters, and made them partake of his delights, as he prays John 17:13. "That my joy may be fulfilled in themselves," and set them down with him at his table in his kingdom, and made them partake with him of his dainties, according to his promise, Luke 22:30, and led them into his banqueting house, and made them to drink new wine with him in the kingdom of his heavenly Father, as he foretold them when he instituted the Lord's supper, Matt. 26:29.

Yea the saints' conversation with Christ in heaven shall not only be as intimate, and their access to him as free, as of the disciples on earth, but in many respects much more so; for in heaven, that vital union shall be perfect, which is exceeding imperfect here. While the saints are in this world, there are great remains of sin and darkness to separate or disunite them from Christ, which shall then all be removed. This is not a time for that full acquaintance, and those glorious manifestations of love, which Christ designs for his people hereafter; which seems to be signified by his speech to Mary Magdalene, when ready to embrace him, when she met him after his resurrection; John 20:17. "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father."

When the saints shall see Christ's glory and exaltation in heaven, it will indeed possess their hearts with the greater admiration and adoring respect, but it will not awe them into any separation, but will serve only to heighten their surprise and joy, when they find Christ condescending to admit them to such intimate access, and so freely and fully communicating himself to them. So that if we choose Christ for our friend and portion, we shall hereafter be so received to him, that there shall be nothing to hinder the fullest enjoyment of him, to the satisfying the utmost cravings of our souls. We may take our full swing at gratifying our spiritual appetite after these holy pleasures. Christ will then say, as in Cant. 5:1. "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly O beloved." And this shall be our entertainment to all eternity! There shall never be any end of this happiness, or any thing to interrupt our enjoyment of it, or in the least to molest us in it!

6. By your being united to Christ, you will have a more glorious union with and enjoyment of God the Father, than otherwise could be. For hereby the saints' relation to God becomes much nearer; they are the children of God in a higher manner than otherwise could be. For, being members of God's own Son, they are in a sort partakers of his relation to the Father: they are not only

sons of God by regeneration, but by a kind of communion in the sonship of the eternal Son. This seems to be intended, Gal. 4:4-6. " God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The church is the daughter of God not only as he hath begotten her by his word and Spirit but as she is the spouse of his eternal Son.

So we being members of the Son, are partakers in our measure of the Father's love to the Son, and complacency in him. John 17:23. " I in them, and thou in me, – Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." And ver. 26. " That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." And chap. 16:27. " The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." So we shall, according to our capacities, be partakers of the Son's enjoyment of God, and have his joy fulfilled in ourselves, John 17:13. And by this means we shall come to an immensely higher, more intimate and full enjoyment of God, than otherwise could have been. For there is doubtless an infinite intimacy between the Father and the Son which is expressed by his being in the bosom of the Father. And saints being in him, shall, in their measure and manner, partake with him in it, and of the blessedness of it.

And thus is the affair of our redemption ordered, that thereby we are brought to an immensely more exalted kind of union with God, and enjoyment of him, both the Father and the Son, than otherwise could have been. For Christ being united to the human nature, we have advantage for a more free and full enjoyment of him, than we could have had if he had remained only in the divine nature. So again, we being united to a divine person, as his members, can have a more intimate union and intercourse with God the Father, who is only in the divine nature, than otherwise could be. Christ, who is a divine person, by taking on him our nature, descends from the infinite distance and height above us, and is brought nigh to us; whereby we have advantage for the full enjoyment of him. And, on the other hand, we, by being in Christ a divine person, do as it were ascend up to God, through the infinite distance, and have hereby advantage for the full enjoyment of him also.

This was the design of Christ, that he, and his Father, and his people, might all be united in one. John 17:21 23. " That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee – that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Christ has brought it to pass, that those whom the Father has given him should be brought into the household of God, that he and his Father, and his people, should be as one society, one family; that the church should be as it were admitted into the society of the blessed Trinity.

The Rapture Theory



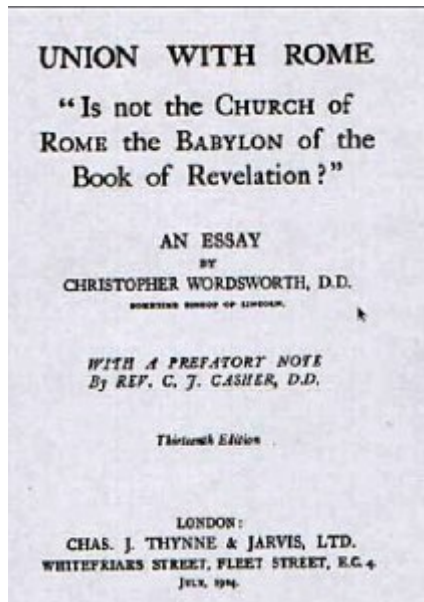
We should read the prophecy in 1 Thess 4 as it continues into chapter 5 as the Second Coming of Christ and events that all happen all on the same day!

History of the Pagan Festival of Easter



Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country

Union with Rome – Christopher Wordsworth



Is not the Church of Rome the Babylon of the Book of Revelation? 19th-century Bible scholar Christopher Wordsworth offers infallible proof from Holy Scripture and secular history.

Jeff Markin: Back from the Dead, Reborn Into the Light



Jeff Markin

Please see this short and inspiring video of a man who died and the doctor who helped bring him back to life by prayer!

They called a time of death on Jeff. Then, his doctor heard the Lord say, 'Pray for him.'

It was the morning of September 20, 2006. Jeff Markin recalls heading for work as usual. What he doesn't remember is driving himself to the hospital.

He had called his boss and told him he didn't feel well. His boss was concerned and convinced Jeff to go to the emergency room. Somehow Jeff made

it. Once he got there, he collapsed.

Dr. Chauncey Crandall was doing rounds in the intensive care unit that morning. He recalls, "An alert call came over the PA system that someone had arrived at the hospital with a massive deadly heart attack. Then a second call went out over the PA system and specifically asking for me because I was the cardiologist on that day. When I arrived there, it was like a war zone. It was chaos. Everyone there fighting to keep this man alive."

The ER staff worked on Jeff for 40 minutes. They shocked him a dozen times. Despite their efforts, there was no response.

Once Dr. Crandall decided the team had done everything medically possible, he called the time of death. Medically Jeff was dead, but he was still experiencing consciousness.

"I was standing in the back of a funeral home, and at that time, I determined that I had died," Jeff Markin says. "This funeral home was empty and was wondering where all my friends and family were."

While a nurse prepared Jeff's body for the morgue, Dr. Crandall updated the charts.

"As soon as my note was completed, I walked out through the door to this emergency room and I heard this voice say, 'Turn around and pray for this man.' I wanted to ignore that voice because I said to myself, How can I pray for that man? He's dead he's gone. There's no life in him, so I keep walking. The voice came back again and said, 'Turn around and pray for that man.' I stopped and thought I need to honor the Lord. So I turned around at the doorway, and I walked to the side of the body.

"The nurse was on the other side of the body, and she's looking at me like, 'What are you doing? Why are you here?' And I stood there next to the corpse and I opened my mouth and these words came out: 'Father God, I cry out for this man's soul. If he does not know you as his Lord and Savior, Father, raise him from the dead now, in Jesus name.'"

'I remember staring at bright lights and they were swirling around," Jeff says. "Out of those bright lights came an image and he told me that he was there to look over me and make sure that everything was going to be fine."

Dr. Crandall continues, "The other doctor walked in the room and I pointed to him and said, 'Shock this man one more time.' He looked at me and said, 'Dr. Crandall, we can't shock him. He's dead. There's no life in him. He's gone.' I said, 'For me, shock him one more time.' That doctor out of respect and honor for me went over to that body with those defibrillator paddles and put his paddles on that patient and shocked him. Immediately an instant heartbeat came back. Instant perfect, regular, which we've never seen before. Then suddenly this abdomen started moving and starting breathing and then a couple moments later, the fingers started twitching."

They immediately moved Jeff to the intensive care unit. Three days later, Jeff woke up with no evidence of brain or organ damage.

"Once I woke up, my daughter Jillian was there," Jeff says. "That's when she told me what had happened."

Dr. Crandall says, "When I came in Monday morning, Jeff was sitting up in bed, and I said, 'Where were you that day that I prayed for you in the emergency room?' And he said, 'I was in total darkness and I was so disappointed.' I said, 'Jeff, what were you disappointed about?' He said, 'I was alone for eternity.'"

Jeff recalls, "He asked me at that time if I was willing to accept God into my life and into my heart and I did. I just opened my arms and accepted God. It was just a very emotional time and I remember crying in his arms."

Today Jeff is back at work and gets regular check-ups with Dr. Crandall.

"He still has no heart problems or residual complications from his brush with death," Dr. Crandall says.

"To know what I had gone through and to be fortunate... That's been part of my daily battle is why me," Jeff ponders. "Why have I been so fortunate to have God shine on me? It's been tremendous. I've been physically reborn. I've been spiritually reborn, and I'm just very grateful for that."

"This day that I prayed for Jeff was a day of very little faith. It wasn't one of my big God days," Dr. Crandall says. "I was so much in a rush with my work, and I didn't have a lot of faith backing that prayer up that day. But the Lord asked me to do it, so I honored the Lord and prayed. That's all we need. Just a spark of faith like that mustard seed, and when you cry out to the mighty Holy Spirit, He will take over. Miracles are real, and they're real today."

Adventures in St. Petersburg, Russia



I lived in St. Petersburg, Russia, from August of 1994 to October of 1997. It was known as Leningrad during the time of the Soviet Union. Many people who don't live in St. Petersburg still call it Leningrad! At least they did

during my stay in Russia. But I don't remember a resident of St. Petersburg refer to it by the Soviet name. They are proud of their pre-Soviet history when Peter the Great founded the city on the tributary of the Neva river – actually a wetland. The mosquitoes in the summertime are terrible!



Gostiny Dvor on Nevsky Prospect.

The photo is *Gostini Dvor* on the main street, Nevsky Prospect. In 1997 I spent over 2 whole hours looking for a weather thermometer but could not find one. The salespeople kept telling me to go to a pharmacy. I replied, "I'm not looking for a body thermometer! I want a weather thermometer." They replied, "Yes, but they also sell those at the pharmacy." Well, can you guess what happened when I posed the same question to the pharmacy people back then? They looked at me like I was nuts! "This is a drugstore, not a household appliance store!" "I know I know! But the main department store in town **TOLD me** to come to you!" And so I was bounced back and forth about 3 times before I finally gave up. A few weeks later I went back to my old neighborhood in Chicago and found what I was looking for in a Dollar Shop in a matter of minutes.



Nostalgic communist lady

The lady on the right is a nostalgic communist who is campaigning for the return of communism. Behind her are photos of Stalin, Lenin, and a contemporary politician named Zugannof. If you guessed by the sour look on her face that she doesn't like me, you're correct. She knows that I am a foreigner and a Christian missionary. I just smiled back at her and walked on.



A beggar in St.
Petersburg

St. Petersburg is situated on a tributary, and so it is divided into several small islands that are linked by bridges and tunnels. Here is a typical beggar in Petrogradskaya Ostrov (Petersburg Island). It is hard to tell which beggars are really in need and who is faking. Some are professional beggars who actually pay the Mafia to beg on their turf. After a day's work of soliciting donations, they can relax in a fine restaurant eating a good meal. This is something I could not afford to do when I was there!



James and Helen

There was real poverty in St.Peterburg when I was there. I often visited a poor lady named Helen. Here I am with her in 1997. But though she was old and needy, she never begged. She taught English and got paid in groceries. Sometimes I would bring her food and gifts. Read [more about Helen](#), a former interpreter who helped in an interview with the famous Yuri Gagarin, the first man to be shot into space into orbit!



Giving a talk about the meaning of
Easter in a school in St.Petersburg

Here is a picture of me and my friends in a school in St. Petersburg. It is close to Easter and I am giving a talk to the pupils on the meaning of Easter – the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I had the total support of the school teachers and principal to do so. Do you think I could get away with this in a public school in my homeland, the USA? Only deep somewhere in a rural area in the State of Indiana where the Amish live perhaps.



With Natasha Blond

Here I am with Natasha Blond in a park in front of a horse. Isn't she pretty? The horse was kinda pretty too. Her family name is not "Blond" but I named her that because of her real 100% natural blond hair, smooth as silk! You can tell that I really liked Natasha Blond! But alas, she was way too young for me.



Selling audio-visuals at an
exhibition in St. Petersburg

In the photo is Russian Stephanie, American Nat, and me at the main exhibition hall in town. We are offering audio-visual teaching material for children. This is partly how we supported ourselves. The rest of the support came from donations from the headquarters of The Family and monthly donations from my faithful friends in Japan to whom I wrote monthly newsletters of my missionary activities in Russia.



Lydia with a women from Georgia

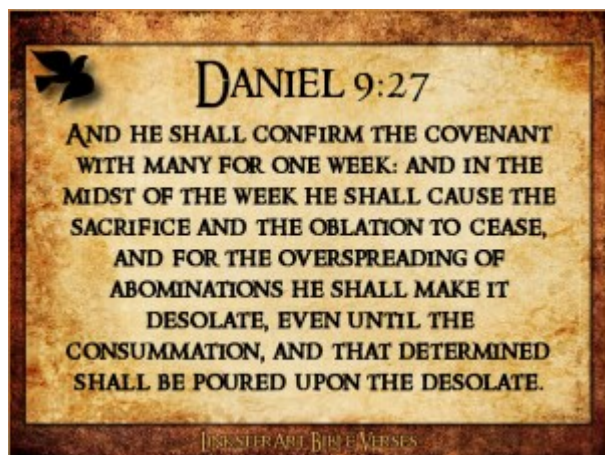
In the picture on the right is Lydia (right) talking to a lady from the former Soviet republic of Georgia. I don't know why in English we say "Georgia" because the correct pronunciation doesn't sound anything like the US state of Georgia. It sounds more like Gruzia. Lydia was a friend of the head of security at the main exhibition hall of St. Petersburg. He would let us inside for free when everyone else had to pay \$1.00. A dollar doesn't sound like much now but it sure did then! That was 5000 RUBLES!! It was nice to walk around with the head of security. This way the other guards would get to know us and leave us alone while we offered our teaching materials to the guests.



Lydia by a vendor of flowers

Here's Lydia again on a street by a vendor of flowers. Lydia is from Kiev, Ukraine. People often remarked that she spoke with an accent, unlike a Ukrainian. This is due to her learning English and being with missionaries from America. She married and has a one-year-old daughter named Diane.

What John Nelson Darby Taught About Daniel 9 vs. Prominent Bible Commentators



John Nelson Darby.

John Nelson Darby (18 November 1800 – 29 April 1882) was an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher, one of the influential figures among the original Plymouth Brethren

and the founder of the Exclusive Brethren. He is considered to be the father of modern Dispensationalism and Futurism ("the Rapture" in the English vernacular). (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Nelson_Darby)

The correct interpretation of Daniel chapter 9 and especially verse 27 is extremely important because it is the 'linchpin' of all Bible prophecy and determines whether you have either a futurism interpretation or a historicist interpretation of Endtime Bible prophecy. This article proves from Darby's own words he had a futurism interpretation of Daniel 9:27 which was contrary to the standard historist interpretation of his contemporaries and those before him. In other words, Protestants before Darby did NOT interpret Daniel 9:27 the way he did. They held to the historist view. And what is the historist view of Daniel 9:27? It's a Messianic prophecy, a prophecy already fulfilled by Jesus Christ! It's *not* a futurist prophecy to be fulfilled by a Endtime Antichrist!



All Bible Scriptures quoted in this article are from the King James Version. All emphasis in *italics* or **bold** are mine.

Quotes from John Darby's Synopsis of Daniel 9 taken from christianity.com

The prince that shall come confirms a covenant with the mass of the Jews. (The form of the word many indicates the mass of the people). This is the first thing that characterises the week; **the Jews form an alliance with the head, at that day, of the people who had formerly overthrown their city and their sanctuary.** They form an **alliance** with the head of the Roman Empire.

Darby is referring to the covenant of Daniel 9:27. Notice how he refers to the covenant as an *alliance*? And Darby calls the "prince" of Daniel 9 the head of the Roman Empire though faithful men of God taught the prince is the Messiah. This is not reading what the Word says, but adding one's subjective thoughts to the Word.

But there remained one week yet unaccomplished with this faithless and perverse, but yet beloved, race, before their iniquity should be pardoned, and everlasting righteousness brought in, and the vision and the prophecy closed by their fulfilment. This week should be distinguished by a covenant which the prince or leader would make with the Jewish people (with the exception of the remnant), and then by the compulsory cessation of their worship through the intervention of this prince.

Again Darby uses the indefinite article for covenant though the popular Bible of his time, the KJV, uses the definite article, *the* covenant. And Darby does not clarify the "prince or leader" he is referring to is in fact Jesus

Christ! He is referring to an unknown man in the future which most evangelicals today interpret as the Antichrist. That is why Darby is called the father of Futurism. My friends, this is not how Protestants used to interpret Daniel 9:27.

What the passage tells us is this: first, the prince, **the head that is of the Roman empire**, in the latter days makes a covenant referring to one whole week;

Darby again is referring to someone in the future, "in the latter days" and again says "a covenant". As you will see in this article, Protestants before him knew exactly what the covenant was and why the KJV version of the Bible in Daniel 9 uses the definite article, "the covenant", and not just in verse 27, but before it in verse 4! Darby does *not* make the connection of the covenant of verse 4 being the same as the covenant of verse 27! And why? It would prove his interpretation of a future prince making an alliance with the Jews to be false!

What John Calvin has to say:

Christ took upon him the character of a leader, or assumed the kingly office, when he promulgated the grace of God. This is the confirmation of the covenant of which the angel now speaks. As we have already stated, the legal expiation of other ritual ceremonies which God designed to confer on the fathers is contrasted with the blessings derived from Christ; and we now gather the same idea from the phrase, the confirmation of the covenant. We know how sure and stable was God's covenant under the law; he was from the beginning always truthful, and faithful, and consistent with himself. But as far as man was concerned, the covenant of the law was weak, as we learn from Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 31:31, 32.) I will enter into a new covenant with you, says he; not such as I made with your fathers, for they made it vain. We here observe the difference between the covenant which Christ sanctioned by his death and that of the Jewish law. Thus God's covenant is established with us, because we have been once reconciled by the death of Christ; and at the same time the effect of the Holy Spirit is added, because God inscribes the law upon our hearts; and thus his covenant is not engraven in stones, but in our hearts of flesh, according to the teaching of the Prophet Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 11:19.) Now, therefore, we understand why the angel says, Christ should confirm the covenant for one week, and why that week was placed last in order. In this week will he confirm the covenant with many.

You can see John Calvin believed the covenant had to do with the grace of God, not some Endtime treaty an Antichrist will make.

Geneva Bible Commentary

And he (a) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: By the preaching of the Gospel he affirmed his promise, first to the Jews, and after to the Gentiles.

You can see the Geneva Bible says it is Christ who confirms the covenant, and it has to do with the preaching of the Gospel.

Matthew Henry

He is called Messiah (Dan. 9:25, 26), which signifies Christ-Anointed (John 1:41), because he received the unction both for himself and for all that are his. [5.] In order to all this the Messiah must be cut off, must die a violent death, and so be cut off from the land of the living, as was foretold, Isa. 53:8. Hence, when Paul preaches the death of Christ, he says that he preached nothing but what the prophet said should come, 26:22, 23. And thus it behoved Christ to suffer. He must be cut off, but not for himself—not for any sin of his own, but, as Caiaphas prophesied, he must die for the people, in our stead and for our good,—not for any advantage of his own (the glory he purchased for himself was no more than the glory he had before, John 17:4, 5); no; it was to atone for our sins, and to purchase life for us, that he was cut off. [6.] He must confirm the covenant with many. He shall introduce a new covenant between God and man, a covenant of grace, since it had become impossible for us to be saved by a covenant of innocence. This covenant he shall confirm by his doctrine and miracles, by his death and resurrection, by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are the seals of the New Testament, assuring us that God is willing to accept us upon gospel-terms. His death made his testament of force, and enabled us to claim what is bequeathed by it. He confirmed it to the many, to the common people; the poor were evangelized, when the rulers and Pharisees believed not on him. Or, he confirmed it with many, with the Gentile world. He causes all the peace-offerings to cease when he has made peace by the blood of his cross, and by it confirmed the covenant of peace and reconciliation.

Matthew Henry's comment about the Prince of the Covenant

It is here foretold that the people of the prince that shall come shall be the instruments of this destruction, that is, the Roman armies, belonging to a monarchy yet to come (**Christ is the prince that shall come**, and they are employed by him in this service; they are his armies, Matt. 22:7), or **the Gentiles (who, though now strangers, shall become the people of the Messiah) shall destroy the Jews.**

Notice that Matthew Henry puts the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 in the past while John Darby puts it in the future? John Darby is the author of *futurism*, which is interpreting Bible prophecies having a future fulfillment. Before Darby Protestant theologians interpreted Christ fulfilling Daniel 9:27. They didn't look at prophecy as God telling us the future, but as God showing how His Word was fulfilled in the past which gives glory to God and verifies the Scriptures as the very Word of God! Did Jesus' disciples know when and how the Temple of Solomon was to be destroyed? I submit to you they did not. They only recognized the prophecy *after* it was fulfilled, not before.

Verily I say unto you, **This generation** shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.- Matthew 24:34

What generation was Jesus referring to? My generation? My children's generation? No! The generation of the people He was speaking to! His disciples of 30 A.D.! Most of them lived 40 more years and saw the fulfillment of the prophecies of Matthew 24.

Reading Darby is an exercise of my mental faculties. He is not nearly as clear as John Calvin or Matthew Henry. And his interpretation of prophecy is clearly an *eisegesis* which means "to lead into" – the interpreter injects his own ideas into the text, making it mean whatever he wants. Compare that to Matthew Henry and John Calvin and others who interpreted using *exegesis* which means "lead out of" or letting the Bible speak for itself without speculating. A good exegesis of what the covenant of Daniel 9:27 is found in verse 4 of the same chapter:

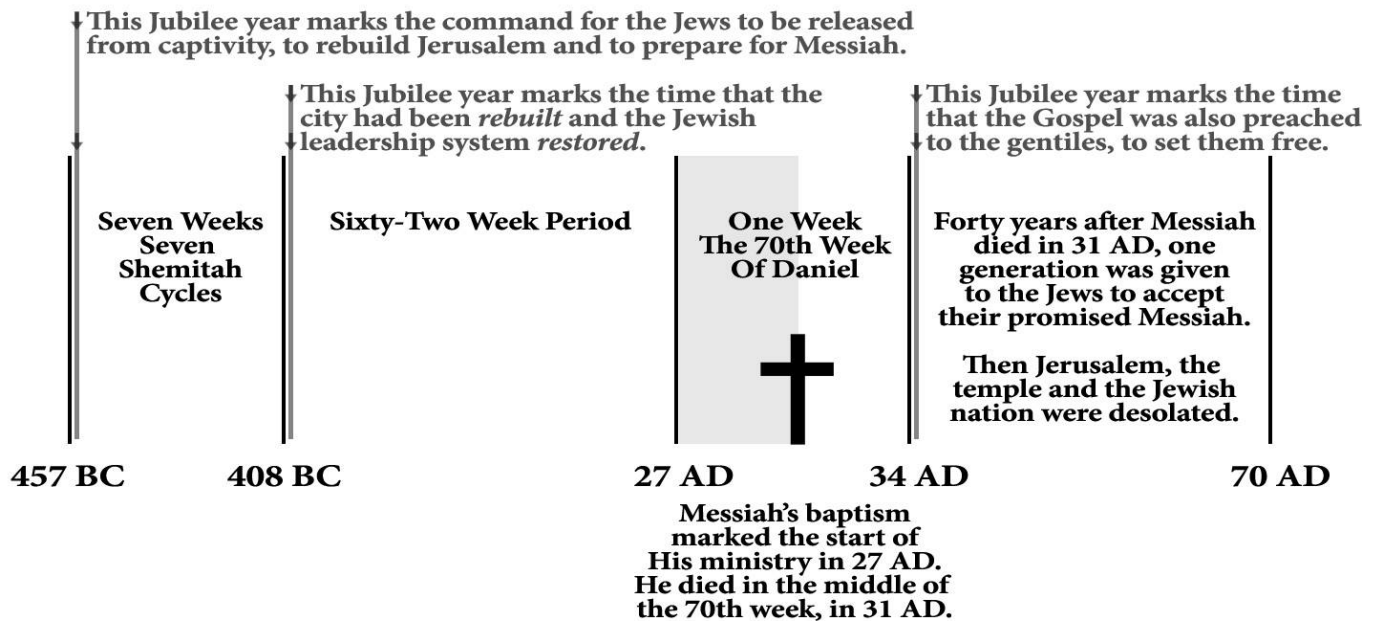
And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping **the covenant** and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; – Daniel 9:4

Where did Darby get his inspiration from? I highly suspect he was influenced by writings of a Jesuit priest for Darby's interpretation of Daniel 9 is what [Jesuit Ribera taught in 1585.](#)

Any comments about this article are appreciated. (As long as you agree with me. :))

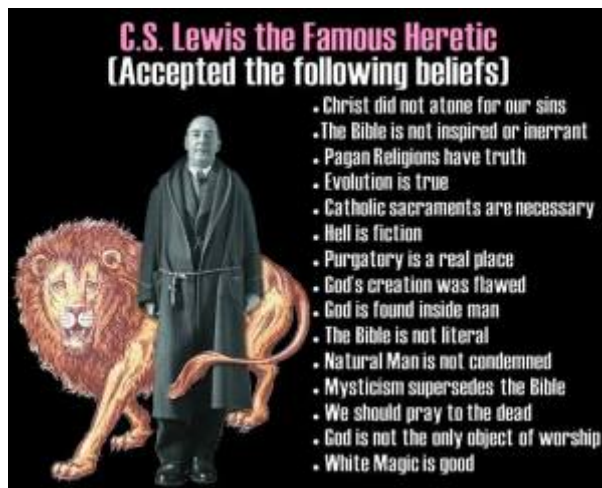
The Timeline of Daniel 9:24-27 Illustrated

Ten Shemitah cycles of forty-nine years, make up the 490-year prophecy. It starts with the Jewish captives being released from captivity, and it ends with the gentiles being released from their spiritual captivity.



This meme is courtesy of David Nikao Wilcoxson 70thweekofdaniel.com

Lupus Occultus: The Paganised Christianity of C. S. Lewis



by Jeremy James

C.S. Lewis is well known among born-again Christians as a 'Christian' writer, someone whose inclusive religious viewpoint is of particular relevance to the world we live in today. I would hope to show that this perception of Lewis is not only gravely mistaken but that it arose through deliberate misdirection on the part of Lewis himself.

In 2008, after 33 years as an active participant in the New Age movement, I

finally came to Christ. As I found my feet and met with other born-again Christians, I discovered that many Evangelicals, as well as Christians the world over, were keen readers of C S Lewis. They revered him as a great Christian author and apologist for true, Bible-believing Christianity. Frankly, this was a great surprise to me because, as a longtime practitioner of the New Age, I knew what C S Lewis was 'really' teaching.

Anyone with a deep familiarity with New Age philosophy, or with a grounding in Theosophy or the occult generally, knows that C S Lewis was about as Christian as the Dalai Lama. Religious, yes. Philosophical, yes. But Christian? Never.

Occult England

Lewis was moulded in the long tradition of high-Anglican British atheism, spiritism and oriental thought. Long before John Dee and Edward Kelly, two high level occultists who advised Queen Elizabeth I, a large segment of the English upper classes was involved in magic and a study of the occult books which started to flow into Europe after the Crusades. The English Reformation was mainly a political movement which, in the long run, had little impact on the religious beliefs of the ruling classes. Their fascination with the occult and the paranormal spread through the Anglican Church and led to a state-sponsored brand of Christianity which was purely ceremonial in nature. The Methodist, Presbyterian, Plymouth Brethren and other Bible-based churches emerged to fill the colossal void left by the established church, most of whose clergy and prelates were either non-believers, theists or spiritualists.

Lewis was a high Anglican with strong leanings toward the Roman Catholic Church. Raised in the Church of Ireland, he worked through an atheistic phase in his youth to become a theist – a believer in a deity, but not yet a Christian. His alleged conversion came in 1931, when he was aged 33 or thereabouts and a tenured academic at Oxford. He then joined the Church of England, even though his close friend, JRR Tolkien, wanted him to enter the Roman Catholic Church.

Many scholars who have studied this phase of Lewis's life have been unable to identify anything in his conversion which comes remotely close to what a Bible-believing Christian understands by 'born again'. His own account in *Surprised by Joy* reads more like the philosophical acceptance of a difficult scientific theory than a life-changing religious experience.

Most Americans are unaware of the extent to which the English academia in the 18th and 19th centuries was steeped in the literature, history and mythology of Greece and Rome. Furthermore, with countless members of the ruling elite and the upper middle class serving in India and the Middle East, they were exposed to, and greatly influenced by, the religious traditions and mythologies of the Orient. This led to the widely-held belief that all religions were fundamentally mythological in character and that, while they served a useful social function, they were either (a) devoid of any absolute truth or (b) expressions of a universal moral truth common to all religions. It was the latter stream from which English Freemasonry drew and from which

the spiritual ethos of Oxford and Cambridge was formed.

Theosophy and other eastern occult ideas, as well as mesmerism and spiritualism, took hold within the establishment and had a marked effect on many senior figures, even among the Anglican Church:

...among the clergy of the Church of England proper, there was in the early years of this century [20th] a measurable interest in Theosophy and occult matters. -Webb, p.131

Within the establishment of the Church of England, the classical scholar Dean Inge redirected attention to the Tradition of Plotinus and those Christians who had followed him. The interest aroused by Inge's lectures at Oxford in 1899...was extensive...[he] admitted that Christian mysticism owed a debt to the Greek Mysteries. -Webb, p.276

The Druidical theories gave birth in the 19th century to a cult known as "Bardism," whose members professed the articles of faith of the Church of England, while apparently holding to some almost Gnostic tenets and celebrating rites of "a Masonic character." -Webb, p.231

This was the ethos in which Lewis himself was formed. Unorthodox Christian theology, the mythologies of Greece and Rome, the Scandinavian sagas, the medieval romances, and the ancient lore of Egypt and Babylon provided the bricks from which his religious edifice was constructed. He simply put 'Christ' on top, where others put Zeus or Saturn or Apollo.

The C S Lewis version of Christ

What most Christians don't seem to realise is that this 'Christ' – the C S Lewis version of Christ – is not the Messiah Redeemer, but an archetypal figure revered by pagans since ancient times, the perfected man or god-man, the pinnacle of human evolution.

In light of the evidence that I present in this paper, I submit that Lewis chose Christ, rather than Apollo, say, as his god-man archetype because he wished to draw a great many others into his system of belief. While the small circle of committed pagans whom he knew and with whom he met regularly – known as the Inklings – were already in step with his philosophy, there was enormous potential for spreading his ideas by linking them directly to just one 'mythology,' that of Judeo-Christianity.

This is why I was surprised to learn that millions of Bible-believing Christians in the US were looking to Lewis for guidance and edification. Most members of the New Age, especially those who have read widely and met with representatives of its various branches, know that C S Lewis is simply a vehicle for drawing new converts into paganism and the New Age movement. He does this by the time-honoured method – pretend to be a friend, use the right terminology, and slowly draw your audience in another direction.

I will shortly show how he did this, in his own words. But first I'd like to quote two high-profile, former practitioners of witchcraft – John Todd and

David Meyer.

Testimony from Two Former Witches

Todd is a very interesting character. He was born into an Illuminati family (one which practices traditional witchcraft and conducts clandestine, usually illegal, activities with similar families) and was initiated into an advanced level of the occult while still in his teens. He made a series of taped talks in the 1970s after his surprise conversion to Christianity. Fortunately these recordings are still available on the Internet, though Todd himself was silenced shortly thereafter by his 'family' for revealing far too much information. On tape 2(b) he warns his audience of born-again Christians as follows:

"How many of you read [books by] C S Lewis? How many of you read [books by] JRR Tolkien? Burn them. I'm going to repeat this – Burn them, burn them! Lewis was supposed to have been once allured [charmed into witchcraft] by Tolkien. Tolkien was supposed to be a Christian. And witches call all those books [i.e. the books of Tolkien and Lewis] their bible. They have to read them before they can be initiated, and it is well known in England and published in occult books that they both belonged to Rothschild's private coven...They are not Christian books. We have found books that are outside of the Screwtape Letters where Lewis talks of the gods Diana, Kurnous and others as beings, as real gods. C. S. Lewis, who was supposed to be a Christian and his books are sold in Christian stores. Burn 'em. They're witchcraft books."

David Meyer was also born into a family which practiced traditional witchcraft. According to his own testimony, while still in his teens he opened himself successfully to the demonic entities which operated through his deceased grandmother, who was also a witch. This gave him unusual occult powers which, no doubt, would have led him to a senior position in the American occult hierarchy. However, before this could happen, he was saved by the blood of Christ, became a born-again Christian and, later, a pastor.

Here is how he described the dangers posed by the disguised occult writings of C S Lewis:

"As a former witch, astrologer, and occultist who has been saved by the grace of God, I know that the works of C.S. Lewis are required reading by neophyte witches, especially in the United States and England. This includes The Chronicles of Narnia, because [they] teach neophyte[s], or new witches, the basic mindset of the craft...

"The story of the Narnian Chronicle known as The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is one of clandestine occult mysticism and is not Sunday School material unless your Sunday School is a de facto witch coven...The main character of the book is a lion named Aslan, which is [derived from Arslan] the Turkish word for lion. Aslan the lion is the character that "Christian" teachers say is the Christ figure, but witches know him to be Lucifer. The lion, Aslan, appears in all seven of the books of The Chronicles of Narnia."

Of course, one could ignore these warnings, possibly by doubting the occult bona fides of their authors. After all, how could someone as “nice” as C S Lewis be involved in anything of this nature. But believe me, some of the “nicest” people you could ever meet are practitioners of the occult. According to their philosophy, they are morally entitled to spread their beliefs in a disguised form, for the greater good of mankind.

Ask yourself the Obvious Question

Ask yourself, why do New Age and occult book stores stock the works of C S Lewis? After all, if they were remotely Christian, they would be banned!

No practitioner of the occult would associate himself (or herself) with anything that genuinely proclaimed, in any sense, the cleansing blood of Christ. It pleases them greatly to see how completely Christians have been taken in by the paganised version of Christianity which Lewis portrays in his occult fantasies. Where Christians see Aslan as a Christ figure, they know that he really represents Lucifer, the glorious sun god of witchcraft. For example, the famous Luciferian, Albert Pike, one of the most respected figures in modern Freemasonry, described Horus, the powerful Egyptian deity – whose ‘eye’ is a well-known symbol in Illuminated Freemasonry – in the following terms: “He is the son of Osiris and Isis; and is represented sitting on a throne supported by lions; the same word, in Egyptian, meaning Lion and Sun.” (Morals and Dogma). He also says that “The Lion was the symbol of Atom-Re, the Great God of Upper Egypt.” This is why the lion figures so prominently in the iconography of British imperialism, representing as it does the sun god and perfected man of Masonry.

The Narnia Chronicles are plain celebrations of white magic and its power to defeat black magic. They are occult throughout. And the number of magical ideas and pagan deities which they portray is quite extraordinary. These are dressed up and presented in such a jolly British fashion, and carefully geared towards the mind of a child, that our critical faculty fails to register the obvious – that the power of white magic and the power of Christ are NOT the same thing. Readers fall into an appalling trap when they confuse the two. However, it is precisely this confusion that Lewis is exploiting.

Perhaps you are thinking that, while the fiction works of C S Lewis can be construed in this way, for whatever reason, his non-fiction writings must surely provide irrefutable evidence that he was Christian to the core? Well, you are in for a big surprise.

Two Key Works by C S Lewis

Let’s focus on two works which have long been regarded as exemplary expressions of his enlightened Christian theology – *Mere Christianity* (1952) and *Reflections on the Psalms* (1958). The former, I believe, has sold several million copies and is used by many born-again Christians as an evangelical tool. The latter, though less philosophical, will allow us to see how much understanding and respect Lewis had for the Word of God.

Mere Christianity



There are a number of things about the book, *Mere Christianity*, which should immediately strike any Christian as exceedingly odd. To begin with, Lewis virtually ignores the Word of God throughout. One looks in vain for a scriptural verse to support even one of his countless philosophical observations. What may seem like an eccentricity of his part in the early part of the book becomes more akin to an antipathy later on, especially when he makes one assertion after another which simply cry out for scriptural support.

Secondly, he makes no attempt whatever to relate his ideas to the work of any other scriptural authority or Bible commentator. Everything he says is suspended in a theological vacuum, supported entirely by the authority of just one individual – Mr Lewis himself. To deflect attention from this, he uses the age-old trick of soft persuasion and common sense as the basis for his many theological conclusions.

Thirdly, he pretends to ‘teach’ the basics of Christianity while all the time assuming that his audience already knows them. This is another literary device, whereby the writer avoids exposing any defects in his argument by inducing his readers to fill in the gaps for themselves.

This quicksilver approach is perfectly suited for his purpose. After all, we would be surprised if the author of *The Screwtape Letters* – which teach the art of deception – did not himself possess a similar skill. The difference here, however, is that instead of instructing his student (Wormwood), he is leading him into accepting ideas which have no Biblical foundation.

Preparing the Ground

The first twenty-five chapters sketch out a congenial picture of Christianity, one which is so vague and magnanimous, so soft and woolly, that virtually no-one could seriously object to it. These prepare the reader to imbibe just as willingly the toxic brew which he pours into the last eight chapters. Again, we see the consummate salesman at work, neutralising our critical faculty with endless platitudes and then passing off his glazed earthenware as Meissen china.

By the time he has reached the ‘toxic brew’ section of the book, the reader has been lured into accepting, or at least being open to, a host of compromising assumptions: that Christ was mainly a supremely wise and kindly man (“It is quite true that if we took Christ’s advice, we should soon be living in a happier world” – p.155); the possibility of panentheism (“God is not like that. He is inside you as well as outside”

– p.149); that human will is central to salvation (“Christian Love, either towards God or towards man, is an affair of the will.” – p.132); that modern psychology and psychoanalysis, notably the works of Carl Jung (“great psychologist”), are fully compatible with Christianity (“But psychoanalysis

itself...is not in the least contradictory to Christianity." – p.89); that the main goal of Christianity is moral perfectibility and that hell is the failure to achieve this ("Perhaps my bad temper or my jealousy are gradually getting worse – so gradually that the increase in seventy years will not be very noticeable. But it might be absolute hell in a million years: in fact, if Christianity is true, Hell is the precisely correct technical term for what it would be." – p.74); that Christian ordinances have sacramental power ("...this new life is spread not only by purely mental acts like belief, but by bodily acts like baptism and Holy Communion." – p.64); that Christ is substantially present in the communion bread ("...that mysterious action which different Christians call by different names – Holy Communion, the Mass, the Lord's Supper." – p.61); that Christ was primarily a step in the evolution of mankind ("People often ask when the next step in evolution – the step to something beyond man – will happen. But on the Christian view, it has happened already. In Christ a new kind of man appeared: and the new kind of life which began in Him is to be put into us." – p.60). And these are just a sample. All of these propositions are in conflict with Christianity, but they are perfectly compatible with New Age philosophy. Alas, many Christians today are unable to tell the difference.

The Toxic Brew

We can now examine the toxic brew which Lewis serves up in the last eight chapters of the book.

One of the main ideas in these chapters is that the universe is suffused by an invisible spiritual energy. In an earlier part of the book he has already made a distinction between two life energies – Bios, the animating force in living creatures, and Zoe, the eternal spiritual force. "The Spiritual life which is in God from all eternity, and which made the whole natural universe, is Zoe." (p.159) This is developed later into the notion that both Christ and the Holy Spirit are expressions of this Zoe: "...we must think of the Son always, so to speak, streaming forth from the Father, like light from a lamp, or heat from a fire, or thoughts from a mind. He is the self-expression of the Father – what the Father has to say." (p.173-174). This is not Christianity, but Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism.

Practitioners of witchcraft call Zoe by another name – The Force. This is the same concept that is eulogised in the Star Wars series of movies (Hollywood is passionately dedicated to the spread of witchcraft and the destruction of Bible-based Christianity).

This energy, he says, pulsates and evolves into more profound expressions of itself: "...in Christianity God is not a static thing – not even a person – but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance." (p.175) This dance is akin to the dance of Shiva, a key concept in Hinduism.



Note carefully – Lewis is saying that the God of Christianity is not even a person, but a pulsating drama.

He contends that the Father and the Son dance together and that this dance is such a tangible entity in itself that it produces a third person: "The union between the Father and the Son is such a live concrete thing that this union itself is also a Person."

(p.175) Anyone familiar with oriental philosophy and eastern mysticism will immediately recognise the pagan origin of Lewis's completely non-Biblical definition of the Holy Trinity. All of these ideas – Zoe, spiritual light and heat, the divine cosmic dance, pulsating union, evolution and projection – are fundamental to occult philosophy and pervade both New Age thinking and Gnosticism, as well as such paths as Theosophy, Anthroposophy and the higher degrees of Freemasonry.

Lewis develops the cosmic dance idea even further when he says: "The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance." (p.176) There is hardly a Hindu, a Buddhist or a Wiccan anywhere who would not be in complete agreement with this.

He goes on: "There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made...If you want to get warm you must stand near the fire...If you want joy, power, peace, eternal life, you must get close to, or even into, the thing that has them...They are a great fountain of energy and beauty spurting up at the very centre of reality." (p.176) This is precisely the kind of statement one would expect from Deepak Chopra or Shirley MacLaine. It is New Age to the core.

The 'good infection'

How does Lewis get away with this? Simple – he turns Christ into the match that sets you on fire: "He [Christ] came into this world and became a man in order to spread to other men the kind of life He has – by what I call 'good infection'. Every Christian is to become a little Christ." (p.177)

This is such a gross distortion of Christianity that it makes one wonder how any Baptist preacher or Presbyterian minister could ever recommend such heresy to his flock. Lewis has turned Christ into a pagan deity like Apollo or the Hindu god, Krishna – both of whom are associated with music and dance. In fact practitioners of high level witchcraft boast that the figure which Lewis is really depicting here is Lucifer, the Light Bringer (just like Aslan in the *Narnia* series).



If you find this incredible, please persevere and we'll examine even more evidence.

Another key concept in paganism is that of the goddess. Even though he should have had no scope whatever to smuggle in this idea, he still managed to do so. Describing the Incarnation of Christ, he says: "The result of this was that you now had one man who really was what all men were intended to be: one man in whom the created life, derived from His Mother, allowed itself to be

completely and perfectly turned into the begotten life.” (p.179) Notice the subtlety with which he does this. Christ’s earthly mother becomes “His Mother,” divine vessel of the perfect man.

The next New Age concept follows hot on the heels of these ‘cosmic’ images. A central idea in occult philosophy is that all is one, a grand unified ball of consciousness. Here is how Lewis defines it in his Christianized mythology: “If you could see humanity spread out in time, as God sees it, it would not look like a lot of separate things dotted about. It would look like one single growing thing – rather like a very complicated tree. Every individual would appear connected with every other. And not only that. Individuals are not really separate from God any more than from one another.” (p.180) [See the Tree of Zoe on the next page]

The Tree of Life (Zoe) sacred to the Gnostics



...we can say that the set of concepts underlying this “tree” of God’s manifestations is the same as the one used by the Cabalists and in Gnostic circles, and that both Cabalists and Gnostics call it a “tree.”

-Attilio Mastrocinque From Jewish Magic to Gnosticism, 2005, p.103

Here we have the famous New Age ‘everything is connected’ philosophy. What is more, Lewis portrays this cosmic entity as a huge living organism in the process of evolving. Thus, in a few sentences, rather like a stage magician, he manages to pull a whole series of New Age ideas from his mythological hat – evolution, pantheism (or panentheism), the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man.

According to Lewis, Christ came along at a critical stage in this evolutionary process and set a new phase in motion: “...when Christ becomes man it is...as if something which is always affecting the human race begins, at one point, to affect the whole human mass in a new way. From that point [Christ] the effect spreads through all mankind.” (p.180-181) In other words, Christ was a perfect individual who, by the process of “good infection” mentioned earlier (p.177), transmitted his Zoe to the rest of the human race. And this is possible because everything is connected.

Just in case we missed the “good infection” idea, he adds: “One of our own race has this new life: if we get close to Him we shall catch it from Him.” (p.181)

This is all so bizarre, so far removed from Biblical Christianity, that it beggars belief.

Some more Occult Principles

The remainder of the book is a consolidation of these ideas. But even while doing this he can’t resist dropping in a few more occult principles. One of these is the principle universally accepted in both witchcraft and Masonry that everything exists in terms of its opposite. According to Lewis “He [the

devil] always sends errors into the world in pairs – pairs of opposites.”
(p.186)

They believe the universe comprises both good and evil in equal measure and that it is the task of the initiate to learn how to balance these two aspects of The Force and thereby create one's own reality. This concept, that everything exists in pairs of opposites, is not found or even suggested anywhere in the Bible, but it permeates occult philosophy. For example, it is why witchcraft comprises both 'good' witches and 'bad' witches. Each accepts the need for the other, since The Force must stay in balance.

The idea that The Force can be moulded, using will and imagination, to create one's own reality is central to the occult. A falsehood can become a truth, or a mask a face, if one uses the right techniques. Lewis even provides a platform for this idea when he says: "The other story is about someone who had to wear a mask; a mask which made him look much nicer than he really was. He had to wear it for years. And when he took it off he found his own face had grown to fit it. He was now really beautiful. What had begun as disguise had become a reality." (p.187)

He then urges the reader to use another, related occult principle, known as the 'As if' principle. This states that if an idea is held long enough, and with sufficient feeling and identification, it will eventually become a reality. One is living 'as if' the goal had already been achieved. Here is how Lewis employs it in his fake Christianity to distort the Lord's Prayer: "Its very first words are Our Father. Do you now see what those words mean? They mean quite frankly, that you are putting yourself in the place of a son of God. To put it bluntly, you are dressing up as Christ. If you like, you are pretending." (p.187-188)

He then tries to present this gradual transformation, this evolutionary process, in Biblical terms: "And now we begin to see what it is that the New Testament is always talking about. It talks about Christians 'being born again'; it talks about them 'putting on Christ'; about Christ 'being formed in us'; about coming to 'have the mind of Christ'." (p.191)

The man is utterly shameless. The verses he is alluding to have no connection whatever with the occult process he is proposing. There is a vast chasm between the born-again experience of Christianity, as outlined for example in St Paul's epistles, and the alchemical transmutation which Lewis is describing. But of course, he wants to convince the reader that there is since it would mark a major step in the paganisation of Christianity.

The New Age Ascended Master

How many millions of Christians, having read this toxic brew, have been lured into the embrace of the New Age Christ, the fallen angel who masquerades as Jesus, the Ascended Master, on the 'inner planes' and works with the followers of all religions to bring enlightenment, wisdom and love? As St Paul said, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:13-14)

Lewis sees this process of transmutation leading all the way to what the New Agers call god-realization, where Christ turns man himself into a god by "killing the old natural self in you and replacing it with the kind of self He has. At first, only for moments. Then for longer periods. Finally, if all goes well, turning you permanently into a different sort of thing; into a new little Christ, a being which, in its own small way, has the same kind of life as God; which shares in His power, joy, knowledge and eternity." (p.191-192)

Lest there be any doubt that he does actually mean we are turning into little gods and goddesses, he says:

"He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness." (p.206)

In the occult such a perfected person is known as a god-man, an adept, a magus, or Illuminatus. He is deemed to be a law unto himself and can travel consciously in the "higher worlds" while still living on earth. Many senior Masons and Rosicrucians, among others, believe they have reached this state. They don't understand that Satan is able to project his false light into the minds of his victims and deceive them into thinking that something truly spiritual has occurred.

This promise of Mastership or God-Realization is exactly the enticement that Satan used to deceive Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is an ancient philosophy, but it's not Christianity. It is profoundly Luciferian and has been designed by him to lure men to their destruction. Christ warned of this terrible danger when he said: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28)

As an out-and-out universalist, Lewis does not agree with Jesus. Rather, he believes that everyone will be saved eventually, regardless of whether or not they have found Christ. This idea – that no-one can be lost and that everyone will evolve into a higher state eventually – is common in the occult. They generally believe that can be achieved only through reincarnation, though Lewis stops short of espousing this particular concept.

As a universalist, he believes that 'Christ' is gradually drawing people into alignment with himself, thereby enabling them to qualify for salvation: "There are people in other religions who are being led by God's secret influence to concentrate on those parts of their religion which are in agreement with Christianity, and who thus belong to Christ without knowing it." (p.209)

Lewis is a wolf in sheep's clothing, a false prophet who has done untold damage to true Christianity. As a hidden or disguised wolf – *lupus occultus* – he works his way into the minds and hearts of his readers, many of whom are children, and sows a handful of occult seeds from a bag labelled 'Christianity.' And his fleece is so soft and cuddly that no-one would ever

suspect he's a double-agent.

The Process of Evolution

The process of evolution itself will undergo change, according to Lewis. In place of the mechanical evolution which operated in the past, both man and animals will advance into a higher stage as more Zoe comes into the world via the growing number of god-realized individuals that live here and then spreads out to infect others: "...I should expect the next stage in Evolution not to be a stage in Evolution at all: should expect that Evolution itself as a method of producing change will be superseded...Already the new men are dotted here and there all over the earth. Some, as I have admitted, are still hardly recognisable: but others can be recognised." (p.220 and 223)

This is actually a core tenet of Masonry, Theosophy and many occult paths. These Adepts, Masters or Supermen are said to be operating incognito, moving quietly among the masses of mankind, dispensing their spiritual blessings and lifting natural man into a higher level of consciousness.

What can one say about all of this? How on earth did Lewis manage pass off all this occult nonsense as Christianity? He clearly knew what he was doing. It is reasonable to surmise that in his regular meetings with his Inklings friends at Oxford, he was testing out his ideas and seeking their opinions. This would enable him to determine just how far he could go without arousing suspicions. These lifelong confidants were all avid students of the occult, especially JRR Tolkien, Charles Williams and Owen Barfield.

Williams had actually been a member of the Golden Dawn, a group dedicated to the study of advanced witchcraft. Its membership included Aleister Crowley, one of the most Satanic black adepts of the 20th century. Lewis was also greatly influenced by Owen Barfield whom he described as "the best and wisest of my unofficial teachers." Barfield was an internationally recognised authority on Anthroposophy, an occult offshoot of Theosophy founded by the Austrian magus, Rudolph Steiner, in 1912. He even co-authored several books with Steiner. Like Madame Blavatsky, Steiner taught that Lucifer, the Light Bearer, was the true instructor in the divine mysteries.

Given that he was inviting high level occult practitioners into his personal circle, and that they in turn were closely associated with some of the most Lucifer-imbued people of the 20th century, there can be no doubt that Lewis himself was heavily exposed to demonic influences.

He would have found it hard to resist these dark influences even if he had wanted to. A fascination with the occult had taken hold of him in his childhood and, by his own admission, had stayed with him throughout his life:

"And that started in me something with which, on and off, I have had plenty of trouble since – the desire for the preternatural, simply as such, the passion for the Occult. Not everyone has this disease; those who have will know what I mean...I once tried to describe it in a novel. It is a spiritual lust; and like the lust of the body it has the fatal power of making everything else in the world seem uninteresting while it lasts."

Reflections on the Psalms

The second non-fiction work that I propose to examine is Reflections on the Psalms. Lewis published this in 1958, just five years before his death. He really let his fleece slip when writing this work. Again and again he makes statements which, had they been made earlier in his career, would have revealed his true antipathy to Christianity. Perhaps he felt so secure in his reputation that he saw no need for the clever misdirection which he had used to such good effect in Mere Christianity.

One of the first things that strikes the reader is the extraordinary arrogance of his tone when discussing the Psalms. When one thinks of the great Bible commentators like Matthew Henry, C H Spurgeon, Arthur Pink, Matthew Poole, and others, who speak with undiminished reverence for these wonderful works, it is extraordinary to see how disrespectful Lewis proves to be. Even though I already knew his 'game,' I found his flippancy quite breathtaking.

He starts with the 'imprecatory' Psalms, namely those in which the Psalmist asks the LORD to deal firmly with his enemies. Lewis regards these Psalms as clear evidence that the authors were not nearly as enlightened or as spiritual as we are today:

"The reaction of the Psalmists to injury, though profoundly natural, is profoundly wrong. One may try to excuse it on the ground that they were not Christians and knew no better." (p.22)

Lest we imagine that this was just an isolated instance of his spleen, he also says:

"Still more in the Psalmists' tendency to chew over and over the cud of some injury, to dwell in a kind of self-torture on every circumstance that aggravates it, most of us can recognise something we have met in ourselves. We are, after all, blood-brothers of these ferocious, self-pitying, barbaric men." (p.20)

Regarding verse 5 of Psalm 23 ("Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies"), he says:

"This may not be so diabolical as the passages I have quoted above; but the pettiness and vulgarity of it, especially in such surroundings, are hard to endure. One way of dealing with these terrible (dare we say?) contemptible Psalms is simply to leave them alone." (p.18)

Remember, he is speaking here about Psalm 23, one of the best-loved of all the Psalms.

Note the number of derogatory terms he employs to express his utter disregard for the Word of God – diabolical, pettiness, vulgarity, terrible, contemptible. What is more, he says that, in his opinion, some of the Psalms are even more "diabolical".

But he doesn't stop there:

"At the outset I felt sure, and I feel sure still, that we must not either try to explain them away or to yield for one moment to the idea that, because it comes in the Bible, all this vindictive hatred must somehow be good and pious. We must face both facts squarely. The hatred is there – festering, gloating, undisguised – and also we should be wicked if we in any way condoned or approved it..." (p.19)

This is quite incredible. As my daughters might say, This guy has really lost it. He is dismissing the authors of the 'imprecatory' Psalms – who must have included David – as men consumed by "vindictive hatred" – "festering, gloating, undisguised."

Speaking of pagan writers from the same era, he says:

"I can find in them lasciviousness, much brutal insensibility, cold cruelties taken for granted, but not this fury or luxury of hatred...One's first impression is that the Jews were much more vindictive and vitriolic than the Pagans." (p.23)

Is this is the kind of pseudo-Christian material which Baptist, Presbyterian and Evangelical pastors, among others, are recommending to their churches? Sadly, yes.

The Pharisaic Psalmists

Even when he leaves the 'imprecatory' Psalms, he is relentless in his mission to highlight what he perceives as the self-righteousness, even wickedness, of the Psalmists:

"...an extremely dangerous, almost a fatal, game. It leads straight to 'Pharisaism' in the sense which Our Lord's own teaching has given to that word. It leads not only to the wickedness but to the absurdity of those who in later times came to be called the 'unco guid' [i.e. the rigidly righteous]. This I assume from the outset, and I think that even in the Psalms this evil is already at work." (p.56-57)

Lewis does not accept that the Psalms, or even the Bible itself, is the directly inspired Word of God. It can only be said to be the Word of God to the extent that it happens to culminate, after a long process of evolution through earlier pagan cultures, in the myth known as Christianity.

"Every good teacher, within Judaism as without, has anticipated Him [Jesus]. The whole religious history of the pre-Christian world, on its better side, anticipates Him. It could not be otherwise. The Light which has lightened every man from the beginning may shine more clearly but cannot change." (p.23)

Lewis believes that the light which shone through Jesus was already in the world in pagan times, operating through pagan cultures and belief systems, but in an attenuated form. Gradually, over time it evolved to the point where it could find full expression in one particular culture, the Jewish culture, but it could just as easily have reached that stage in another culture had

circumstances been a little different.

He claims that the Egyptian Hymn to the Sun, written by the Pharaoh Amenhetep IV (also known as Akhenaten) in the 14th century BC "provides a fairly close parallel to Psalm 104":

"Whatever was true in Akhenaten's creed came to him, in some mode or other, as all truth comes to all men, from God. There is no reason why traditions descending from Akhenaten should not have been among the instruments which God used in making Himself known to Moses." (p.73-74)

He hints at the possibility, but says it would be rash to assume, that "if only the priests and people of Egypt had accepted it [Akhenaten's monotheism], God could have dispensed with Israel altogether and revealed Himself to us henceforward through a long line of Egyptian prophets." (p.75)

These remarks display such a flagrant misunderstanding of the Bible and God's plan of Redemption, such a fundamental ignorance of all that the LORD sought to achieve through the children of Israel, that they take one's breath away.

Pagan Light

Jesus said he was the Light of the world – "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12). There is no other supernatural light – none whatever – except the false light of Lucifer, the so-called Light Bearer. Jesus warned of the dangers posed by this false light when he said:

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! (Matthew 6:22-23)

Lewis wants us to believe that the Light of Christ was evident in the 'true' elements of pagan religions. But this is not what the Bible teaches. Rather it states clearly and repeatedly that all pagan religions are false and that the children of Israel were to have no association with them whatever. They weren't even to acquire a theoretical knowledge of their precepts and practices.

He claims that this 'light' informed the minds and hearts of pagan cultures and enabled them to identify disparate elements of Biblical truth. These truth-bearing stories were told and re-told over and over again, changing along the way in response to "pressure from God," and then appropriated and recorded by the Hebrew prophets:

"I have therefore no difficulty in accepting, say, the view of those scholars who tell us that the account of Creation in Genesis is derived from earlier Semitic stories which were Pagan and mythical." (p.95)

"What the teller, or last re-teller, of Genesis would have said if we had asked him why he brought...[a particular] episode in or where he had got it

from, I do not know. I think, as I have explained, that a pressure from God lay upon these tellings and re-tellings." (p.106-107)

"Generalising thus, I take it that the whole Old Testament consists of the same sort of material as any other literature...[chronicles, poems, diatribes, romances] ... but all taken into the service of God's word." (p.96)

We should pause here for a moment and reflect on the precise implications of what he is saying. The inspiration of the Hebrew prophets and the light which filled their understanding was exactly the same inspiration and the same light which shaped the myths and stories of pagan cultures. The only distinctive contribution made by the Hebrew prophets was the providential role they played in fitting all of these truths into a coherent religious framework. Thus the Bible is not the unique Word of God but merely a work of literature that happens to function in "the service of God's word."

Lewis rejects Biblical Prophecy

Lewis is clearly rejecting both the inerrancy and the unconditional authority of the Bible. He has already attacked some of the Psalms as "diabolical" and "contemptible." A more damning dismissal of divine inspiration would hardly seem possible, but he doesn't stop there. Since the prophetic power of the Bible has been cited from time immemorial as clear proof of its uniquely divine origin, he proceeds to attack this aspect as well.

For example, Isaiah 53 is universally regarded among Christians as a truly wonderful prophecy about the Messiah, yet in a patronising parenthetical comment he compares it to the work of J W Dunne, a modern psychic:

"(Our ancestors would have thought that Isaiah consciously foresaw the sufferings of Christ as people see the future in the sort of dreams recorded by Mr Dunne. Modern scholars would say, that on the conscious level, he was referring to Israel itself, the whole nation personified. I do not see that it matters which view we take.)" (p.102)

He then goes on to suggest that whenever Jesus identified himself with the Messiah foretold in the supposedly prophetic passages in the Old Testament, he is merely exploiting an incidental similarity for educational purposes. The passages themselves were not actually prophetic, merely useful. He even suggests that this holds for "the sufferer in Psalm 22" (p.102).

He berates modern Christians who use the Psalms to find allegorical meanings, like the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Redemption of man:

"All the Old Testament has been treated in the same way. The full significance of what the writers are saying is, on this view, apparent only in the light of events which happened after they were dead. Such a doctrine, not without reason, arouses deep distrust in a modern mind. Because, as we know, almost anything can be read into any book if you are determined enough. This will be especially impressed on anyone who has read fantastic fiction."

(p.85)

His sweeping dismissal of Biblical prophecy is almost triumphant in tone.

Lewis rejects the Praise of the LORD

Lewis also has great difficulty with the strong scriptural emphasis on praising the LORD. He found it both “especially troublesome” and “extremely distressing”:

“The Psalms were especially troublesome in this way...Worse still was the statement put into God’s own mouth, ‘whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me’ (50:23). It was hideously like saying, ‘What I most want is to be told that I am good and great.’...More than once the Psalmists seemed to be saying, ‘You like praise. Do this for me, and you shall have some.’... It was extremely distressing. It made one think what one least wanted to think. Gratitude to God, reverence to Him, obedience to Him, I thought I could understand; not this perpetual eulogy.” (p.77-78)

This is an extraordinary claim by Lewis. He is virtually accusing the Psalmists of idol worship. In fact he calls it “...the very silliest Pagan bargaining, that of the savage who makes offerings to his idol...” (p.78)

The idea that man should be obliged in any sense to praise God is extremely offensive to Lewis. He proceeds to come up with a solution to this “problem” by saying that it can only be legitimate when it is conducted on a par with the admiration one has for a work of art or an object found in nature:

“...many objects both in Nature and in Art may be said to deserve, or merit, or demand, admiration. It was from this end, which will seem to some irreverent, that I found it best to approach the idea that God ‘demands’ praise.” (p.79)

He then goes on to define God as “the supremely beautiful and all-satisfying Object.” (p.79). In other words, God is to be “admired” in the same way that a person admires one of His creations. Incredibly, Lewis himself is advocating idolatry – the giving of praise to any created thing which ought to be given only to God.

And when the Psalmists tell everyone to praise God, according to Lewis, they are really doing what any atheist does when he speaks highly of something he admires or cares about. This is true even when they claim to delight in the Law, for which he accuses them of spiritual pride – in addition to the pedantry and conceit that were already evident:

“The Psalmists in telling everyone to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about.” (p.81)

“...what an ancient Jew meant when he said he ‘delighted in the Law’ was very like what one of us would mean if he said that somebody ‘loved’ history, or physics, or archaeology...the danger of spiritual pride is added to that of mere ordinary pedantry and conceit.” (p.48)

Some Closing Heresies

His extraordinary attack upon the sovereignty of God is consistent with the pagan view that God is in some sense still evolving, just like His creation. Even the things that God has created are somehow deficient and must “evolve” in order to reach their intended perfection. Man is still an animal, a primate striving to transcend his earthly limitations:

“On the ordinary biological view (what difficulties I have about evolution are not religious) one of the primates is changed so that he becomes a man; but he remains still a primate and an animal.” (p.99-100)

How should one reconcile this with the atoning blood of Christ which removed all condemnation from the believer in the eyes of the Father? It turns out that Lewis does not believe in the atoning blood of Christ. For him, the death and resurrection constituted a Jungian archetype, the fulfilment of an ancient pre-Christian myth in which all mankind participates and draws benefit:



“If Christ ‘tasted death for all men’, became the archetypal sufferer, then the expressions of all who ever suffered in the world are, from the very nature of things, related to His.” (p.110)

This use of Christianity as merely a means of bringing ancient pagan truths into fulfilment, a kind of capstone on a pagan pyramid as it were, is further exemplified in the way he turns the marriage of the Bridegroom (Christ) with His bride (the Church) into the archetypal pagan union of the god and the goddess:

“...the god as bridegroom, his ‘holy marriage’ with the goddess, is a recurrent theme and a recurrent ritual in many forms of Paganism...Christ, in transcending, and thus abrogating, also fulfils, both Paganism and Judaism...” (p.112)

Conclusion

It should be fairly obvious that C S Lewis was never a Christian, that, like most pagans, he harboured a deep animosity towards true Christianity, and furthermore, that he sought to undermine it by stealthily presenting it in a paganised form.

The table above shows how wide a chasm exists between the occult views of C S Lewis and the beliefs held to be essential by a born-again Christian. The table may not even be complete since there are many other areas where Lewis departs from true Biblical theology. For example, in his essay, The Abolition of Man, he argues at length that all morality is founded in the Tao, an ancient Chinese concept denoting the dualistic harmony of the universe. Also, there are numerous Christian concepts and beliefs which Lewis does not address in any meaningful way, perhaps because, if he had, his real agenda would have become apparent.

Even if one managed to amass enough evidence from the total corpus of his writings to contest two or three of the 25 beliefs set out in the table, one is still left with ample proof that Lewis was not a Christian and never had been.

The next step should also be obvious – none of the books by C S Lewis should be sold in Christian bookstores, no born-again pastor or preacher should ever again endorse this apostate writer, and all churches which have hitherto endorsed his writings should hasten to warn their flocks.

Finally, I have one word for all those Christian pastors and preachers who have strongly endorsed this apostate, pseudo-Christian writer – **Shame**.

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Famous Preacher and American Politician, Chuck Baldwin, changes his position on the 70th Week of Daniel and the State of Israel



Charles Obadiah "Chuck" Baldwin (born May 3, 1952) is an American politician, radio host, and founder-former pastor of Crossroad Baptist Church in Pensacola, Florida. As of July 2014 he was pastor of Liberty Fellowship in Kalispell, Montana. He was the presidential nominee of the Constitution Party for the 2008 U.S. presidential election and had previously been its nominee for U.S. vice president in 2004. He hosts a daily one-hour radio program, Chuck Baldwin Live, and writes a daily editorial column carried on its website, on News with Views, and on VDare. (Quoted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuck_Baldwin)



Chuck Baldwin

This is very good news for those who know the true interpretation of Daniel 9:27! The Protestant Evangelical world totally missed it! The Jesuit based false doctrine of a time gap between the first 69 Weeks of Daniel and the final Week has led to a slew of false doctrines such as pre-tribulation rapture, a final 7 years of a reign of the Antichrist, and the acceptance of the founding of the State of Israel as fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The Protestant evangelical world has been misled on those points and more. Please join me in helping to educate them!

The following is from Chuck Baldwin's Facebook post of October 12, 2015:

A Facebook post is not the place to go into an in-depth theological discussion about prophecy. However, I have always been transparently honest with my viewers, listeners, readers, followers, and supporters, and so I need

to let folks know how my position has changed—and continues to change—on the subject of Eschatology.

I am not a novice on the subject. I have been in the Gospel ministry for over 40 years. And, until recently, my interpretation of Bible prophecy had been exclusively along the lines of dispensationalism and pre-tribulation rapturism. Until recently, I held the same Zionist positions as men such as John Hagee, Pat Robertson, and most preachers commonly associated with the “Religious Right.” But no longer.

It’s not easy to admit that something I had believed for a lifetime is not Biblically correct. It would have been easy to turn a blind eye to the illuminations that were appearing before my heart and mind, and search no further. Doing so would have saved me much additional study—not to mention a healthy dose of humble pie.

But study, I did. And pray, I did. And swallow my traditional thinking and personal pride, I did. As a result:

1) I no longer believe that Daniel’s Seventy Weeks prophecy had any gap of time. I believe Daniel’s Seventy Weeks (or 490 years) ran concurrently and were completely fulfilled by the death and resurrection of Christ, by the conversions of Saul of Tarsus and the Gentile Cornelius, and ultimately by the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD.

I am convinced there is no “gap theory” in Daniel 9 anymore than there is a “gap theory” in Genesis 1.

2) I no longer believe Ezekiel’s prophecy of Gog and Magog has anything to do with modern Russia. I believe both Ezekiel and Daniel’s prophecies in this regard were fulfilled by the invasion of Jerusalem and Judea by Antiochus Epiphanes.

3) I no longer believe Matthew 24 deals primarily with Christ’s Second Coming but has more to do with the coming destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

4) I no longer believe that the modern State of Israel has any connection to Biblical Israel—past or future. And, no, I do not believe in “Replacement Theology,” at least not as most people talk about it.

Accordingly, I do not believe the people of the United States have any Biblical reason to support the modern State of Israel militarily, economically, or in any other way. Our relationship with foreign nations (including Israel) should only be for the benefit of the liberty and safety of the United States. Which leads to:

The United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia created ISIS and have used the Sunni Muslim terror group to fight a proxy war against Syria’s King Assad. This is a despicable and illegal war that can only be regarded as international criminality. Putin is wearing the white hat on this one. And the western globalists who are calling the shots in Washington, D.C. for these illegal wars should be identified, rounded up, and hung for crimes against humanity and for international crimes of aggression.

I know my positions stated above will not be popular with many of my Christian friends. But, at least, give me the benefit of the doubt that, being as seasoned and tenured as I am, I would not come to such diametrically opposite conclusions suddenly or without much heartfelt prayer and study.

The True Story of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ



Every year Christians celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. His cruel death by crucifixion took place at the same time as the Jewish holy celebration of Passover. What they had been symbolizing for over one thousand years with the killing of sacrificial lambs and the Passover supper was now happening to the Lamb of God. On the very evening and at the very hour that people throughout the land were selecting and slaughtering Passover lambs, Jesus was crucified.

The way Jesus died also fulfilled many other Old Testament prophecies in amazing detail.

"He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). When Jesus stood trial for His life before the governor, Pontius Pilate, Jesus didn't speak in His own defense (Matthew 27:12-14).

About one thousand years before crucifixion became a usual means of execution in the Roman Empire, King David wrote of the Messiah: "All my bones are out of joint. ... They pierced My hands and My feet" (Psalm 22:14, 16). In death by crucifixion, the weight of the victim's body pulls his arms out of their sockets. Most of the condemned were tied to their crosses, but Jesus was nailed to His-through the hands and feet.

It was also customary for the Romans to break the legs of those who had been hanging on their crosses for hours but hadn't died yet. The lack of support for the body caused the windpipe and lungs to collapse, and hastened their

deaths. But when the Roman executioners came to do this to Jesus, they found that He was already dead. Thus another Bible prophecy was fulfilled: "[God] guards all His bones; not one of them is broken" (Psalm 34:20).

God had to temporarily turn His back on His own Son so Jesus might die the death of the sinner.

Instead, just to make sure Jesus was dead, one of the Romans thrust a spear into Jesus' side, piercing His heart. "And immediately blood and water came out" (John 19:34). This fulfilled the scripture, "I am poured out like water ... My heart has melted within Me" (Psalm 22:14). One would expect blood to flow from a spear wound, but not water. Where did that come from? Medical science has found that people who die in great anguish of heart often have an accumulation of water around the heart. Jesus died of a broken heart-for you and me.

Jesus also died feeling like the lost sinner. He went through an experience that, thank God, we will never have to go through-not just crucifixion, not just agony of body, but agony of mind and spirit, feeling that God had deserted Him. As He died, "Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" (Matthew 27:46).

Had God forsaken Him? Yes, momentarily He had. He had to, that Jesus might die like a sinner dies, without God. Think of it: Jesus died the death of the unsaved, in agony! God had to temporarily turn His back on His own Son so Jesus might die the death of the sinner.

Did God answer Jesus on the cross? There's no record of an answer. Jesus felt that God had deserted Him at that moment when He needed Him most.

Jesus suffered the spiritual agony of the dying sinner-lost, without salvation, without God, dying for his sins. Only in Jesus' case He was dying for our sins, the sins of the whole world. He was willing to go through all that so we could be forgiven and have eternal life. Such love!

"And they made His grave with the wicked-but with the rich at His death" (Isaiah 53:9). Jesus was unjustly condemned and crucified between two common criminals (Matthew 27:38). Yet after His death, a rich man who was among Jesus' followers, Joseph of Arimathea, laid Jesus' body in his own new tomb (Matthew 27:57-60).

After Jesus' body was laid in the tomb, to make sure His disciples didn't steal His body and claim He'd risen from the dead, the tomb was sealed and some Roman soldiers stood guard (Matthew 27:62-66).

Three days later, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came at dawn to the tomb, and an angel appeared and rolled the stone away. When the Roman guards saw the angel, "they shook for fear of him, and became as dead men." But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid. ... Jesus is not here; for He is risen, as He said." And the angel showed the women where Jesus' body had lain (Matthew 28:1-8). Jesus had risen from the dead!