

# **The Church of God Triumphs over Babylon (False Prophet) and the Beast Power... A Historical and Prophetic Narrative**

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## **Preface**

Studies in history soon reveal major gaps in the interpretation of origin, societal trends, morality, beliefs and patterns. Uncovering hidden cycles reveals the causes behind the rise and fall of empires; the identity of peoples – then and now; and the consequences for the future. For God knows the end from the beginning and reveals the sequences – both historically and prophetically (Isa. 46:10). How do we know the end from the beginning? God says through the prophet Hosea that the lack of knowledge destroys our people - a serious indictment!

Hosea, taking the spiritual feed from God, concludes that the sources of social disaster emerge from the necessary components of true community sustainability. What makes a civilization survive and thrive? A fundamental comes from the carnal mind that rejects and does not acknowledge God, in all of our relationships and institutions (Hos. 4: 1-6 Faithful Version):

***1. Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, “There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.***

***2. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood.***

***3. Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away.***

*4. Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another, for your people are as those who strive with the priest.*

*5. And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you in the night, and I will destroy your mother.*

*6. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children.”*

Mankind devolves into a dependence on nature, ironically created by God. Animism or the worship of nature bears the fruit of the tree of death that runs with the deadly sap of the knowledge of good and evil. This sensory culture tragically leads to the loss of mental and physical well-being and resiliency, with the outcomes of family dysfunction, rebellion, revolution, jealousies, and war (James 4:1).

In their collapse, civil structures and community, mirror the individual! The internal peace and security weaken first, exacerbated always by prevalent outside pressures. Morality degrades, meaninglessness predominates, and in a world of “advancing” and unrestrained scientific knowledge our controls seem even more incomplete.

Biology, genetics, information technology, environmental controls, artificial intelligence submerge, neutralize and fracture absolute determinants of right and wrong. Individual ascendancy through preference and opinions breeds enticing “freedoms” as liberty turns to anarchy (Judges 21:25). As the nation of Israel broke free from the edicts and statutes of God, so we too follow in their footsteps. But catastrophic consequences loom over all mankind:

*In those days there was no king in Israel. **Every man did what was right in his own eyes.***

Knowledge that does not prioritize God but rather overvalues science, geography, language, chronology, ethnicity, or culture eventually self-destructs. In physical history, geography is the finger, chronology is the eye, etymology is the tongue and theology is the ear. But in a spiritual history that searches for meaning through God’s lens of revelation – the law discerns the heart and mind (love God and man with all your heart and mind), grace determines destiny (He gave His life for all), the Sabbath enlightens and historically grounds the ancient paths of our identity and brings us into communion with the constantly creating Creator (remember the Sabbath for it was made for us).

A cautionary tale emerges. Humans want blessings without obedience and prize tradition over God’s statutes and laws. Imitation, falsehood, fantasy, myth, and deception crawls and flies from the heart (Jer. 17:9) egged on by another very diabolical and eternal spirit that mood matches with ours.

A phony salvation superficially imprints on the human psyche as man’s knowledge dominates. The springs of death poisons the wellspring of life and, over and over, abuses of the truth seem

right. Good becomes evil and evil good (Isa. 5:20), while evil attacks the good, and the guilty attack the innocent. The most important powers in community – the civil and religious governance eventually undermine true spiritual pursuits. The imitating dominance of a false spirit twists and spins into, what the bible calls, the beast (civil) and false prophet (religion).

Mark Twain quipped “God created man in the image of God, and man being the gentleman that he is returned the favor.” So, we fabricate a history that suits a narrative rife with lies, and the truth lies buried, partly unseen, or at least, difficult to discover. God’s word contains the words and examples that define the narrow path.

Christ’s sacrifice and our commitment through baptism brings Him into communion with each of us – our bodies the temple of the Holy Spirit – no longer made with human hands! The temples and cathedrals of this world built on the backs and blood of the martyrs testify to the carnal pursuit of man without God. Contrary to the crumbling edifices that house the churches of vanity, the true Church of God never dies – identifiable both individually and as a body throughout all generations (Matt. 16:18); while tragically marked with tombstones containing the historical records and testimonies of the martyrs.

God’s glory conceals a matter and the king’s honour searches it out (Prov. 25:2).

1. So, how has His word – the Holy Bible - been passed down through the generations?
2. Who is the custodian of the word of God and practices the mission (Matt. 28:19)?
3. Who abuses and suppresses both the word and the practice – against Christ – Anti-Christ (Matt. 24:5, 11:, II Thess. 2:1-12:, Rev.17:4)?
4. Can we trace the true Church of God and its mission – she works within the world but is not OF the world (John 17:16)?
5. By their fruits, can we distinguish between the true Church of God and the false (Gal. 5:22:, Matt. 7:15-20)?
6. What is the legacy of the true Church of God both to the world and the Church today (Rev. 2 and 3)?
7. Where is the true Church today? What is her mission?

This book does not affirm that specific genealogies and ancestries offer any advantage to the Christian in their walk. On the contrary that approach breeds a sense of entitlement pumped with arrogance. The Pharisees exemplify that vain inheritance. The false church falls into the same pit. Paul faces these challenges head on when some of the apostles separate themselves from the Gentiles (Gal. 2:12). The belief that birth endows spiritual rights, wars against the beauty of the Holy Spirit working with our human spirit, hammering out Godly character, through suffering (I Tim. 1:4).

*Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which lead to empty speculations rather than to edification from God, which is in faith (I Tim. 1:4 FV)*

In the “Early Church” series the first century True Church of God made her mark throughout Europe under the shadow of the Roman Empire, sending roots into British soil and then shoots into Eastern France (Gaul), the Spanish peninsula (Iberia), Lotharingia (Netherlands), and the NE Italy (Cottian Alps). Christ and Paul founded the Church of God in Cornwall. But the slow

whittling away of true doctrine impacts the True Church and pushes the main body into the wilderness – the light in the darkest of the Dark Ages.

The despotic Dark Ages shroud the truth and attempt to recast events, but never completely obscure the work or word of God. Finding the truth in history does not require extensive research. For with minimal exploration, a vista of adventure and discovery uncovers a continual lineage of God's people. They hold to, not only the truth of God, but live the scripture in word and deed.

Depending on God to protect and provide spiritual and physical refuge, the True Church recoils at the anger and vengeance of the anti-Christ. She relies on the promise of God as the One who owns vengeance. Christian love casts out all evil - even to the point of loving those that rape, pillage, destroy and fracture families. Vengeance is mine says the Lord! Love your enemies and do good to those that persecute you (Rom. 12:19: and Matt. 5:43-47).

God blesses the physical and spiritual lineage of descendants of Abraham – the stars (spiritual) and the sand (physical). Today, in most countries we experience relative freedom from persecution, as inheritors of the physical seed of Abraham and his blessing and the spiritual seed of Christ. The martyrs sowed the freedoms, prayed and died for us, blessed by the enduring power of God on the earth – as our true master Jesus Christ prophesied (Gen. 22:17 and John 15:20).

We will explore the next two phases in Church History as prophesied by the words of Christ in Revelation 2 and 3; and explore the historical chronicles touted in academia and mainstream “Christian” churches. Satan and mankind unhinged from God practise the locus of power that resides in dominance and tyranny. For without the working of God, anarchy and lawlessness upset the spirit in man, then society and then the whole world!

In the 1800s a profusion of literature voices the martyr's plight in the preceding centuries. The world seems to awaken from a deep and dark slumber to the sudden awareness of the travesties of kings, princes and religious leaders. The dark lords, driven by the heart of man, trounce and destroy the freedoms of all mankind. With religious and monetary fervor, they seek to destroy the truth.

**These truths are not within our primary, secondary and post-secondary schools. No, not even within the seminaries who are entrusted with the history of the eternal Church of God. If this knowledge and remembrance does not permeate our behavior, we are condemned to repeat it!**

These traumatic times emerge from a dusky era about 500 A.D. as the power of the Roman Catholic Church slowly rises spiritually, replacing, but with more might, the civil powers of Rome. The beast and false prophet dominate the European scene, especially as her inquisitorial and crusading ship embarks in 1000 A.D. From the time of Constantine in 325 A.D. to the beginning of the reformation in the early 1500s A.D. the Roman religious and civil edicts and culture infiltrate the minds and powers of the European societies and governments.

The Early Church events to 597 A.D. are repeated here:

## Early Church of God Events – Dates are approximate<sup>1</sup> Ephesus to Smyrna – Rev. 2 – 30 A.D. – 395 A.D.

Early Church of God Events – Dates are approximate<sup>3</sup>  
Ephesus to Smyrna – Rev. 2 – 30 A.D. – 395 A.D.

Year	Event	Significance
8 A.D. – 26 A.D.	Christ as a youth travels to Britain with Uncle Joseph of Arimathea	Joseph, an entrepreneur and tin trader who plied the well worn trade routes from Marseilles through the land of the Continental Celts (Gaul) to Cornwall in Britain
30 A.D.	Passover Sacrifice of Christ	Dies on Nisan 14; the same day as the Death of the first born in Egypt; 17 <sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar
30 A.D.	Pentecost	50 days later Holy Spirit is given in Jerusalem; the same day as the 10 commandments and law are given to Israel at Mount Sinai
32 A.D.	Stephen martyred; Jerusalem persecution	Saul, later Paul helped murder Christians and was <sup>1</sup> converted on the way to Antioch – 35 A.D.
32 – 39 A.D.	Joseph of Arimathea introduces Christianity to Britain	Escapes with Christians after severe Jerusalem persecution begins
33-150 A.D.	Conversion of Britain and Gaul to Christianity	Laid the groundwork for the later Church of God eras – especially Albigenses and Waldenses (Pergamos and Thyatira) <sup>2</sup>
35 A.D.	Paul converted; Matthew published; Mark 38 A.D.	
40 – 41 A.D.	James published; Claudius emperor	Romans gain foothold in Britain - 43 A.D.
44 A.D.	Apostle James Martyred	
52 A.D.	Galatians published	
51 A.D.	I and II Thessalonians published	
54 A.D.	Nero Emperor	
56-57 A.D.	I and II Corinthians; Romans	
55 A.D.	Aristobulus sent to Britain by Paul	
52 – 58 A.D.	British royal family captive in Rome	Consorts of Paul, but were later martyred; Paul spent time there 63 A.D. after imprisonment; see family tree
60 – 63 A.D.	Paul in Rome	Paul imprisoned for 2 years, then released to house captivity
58 – 60 A.D.	Luke published; Acts begins	
61 – 63 A.D.	Acts, Ephesians, Colossians; Hebrews; Philippians; Philemon; Paul in Rome;	
62 A.D.	James, brother of Jesus martyred	
63 – 66 A.D.	I and II Peter; I and II Timothy; Titus	
64 – 67 A.D.	Fire in Rome; Peter martyred; Hebrews; Paul leaves for Britain and returns in 67 A.D.	Nero blames Christians and great persecution begins 64 A.D. – 68 A.D.
67 A.D.	Paul martyred	
66 – 73 A.D.	Jewish revolt	
68 A.D.	Jude	
70 A.D.	Jerusalem temple destroyed	
76 A.D.	Joseph of Arimathea dies	
85 A.D.	John, I, II and III John	
89 – 96 A.D.	Persecution by Domitian	
95 A.D.	Revelation; Bible canonized	
100 A.D.	John dies	
303 A.D.	Persecution by Diocletian	285 A.D. many British martyrs over 10,000
313 A.D.	"Roman Christianity" legalized under Edict of Milan influenced by Constantine	
325 A.D.	Council of Nicaea; Constantine Emperor; Catholic Church official state religion	
395 – 1655 A.D.	1260 years main body of Church of God in wilderness	Piedmont Valleys but in many other areas of Europe
597 A.D.	Augustine visits Britain	607 A.D. at Augustine's Oak - clear gulf evident between the Roman church and Church of God in Britain

<sup>1</sup> Joseph of Arimathea and others leave on a boat for Marseilles – see Family Tree – Mary the Mother of Christ; Mary, wife of Cleopas, Martha, Lazarus, Eutropius, Salome, Mary Magdalene, Maximin, Martial, Trophimus, Sidonius, Marcella – Bethany sister's maid

<sup>2</sup> 1260 days in the wilderness Rev. 12 – 395 A.D. – 1655 A.D. – Piedmont Massacre of the Waldenses; In 395 A.D. the Roman empire splits into east and west; the main body of the Church of God begins to seek shelter in the Piedmont valleys; although many churches of God continue in Gaul, lowlands later Netherlands, Bohemia later Czech republic, North Baltic states, and Calabria in Southern Italy, and Celtiberia – northern modern Spain.

<sup>3</sup> Dates referenced from St. Paul in Britain – R.W. Morgan – and Appendix Q - Faithful Version of the Bible – see <https://afaithfulversion.org/>

But rebel princes support the Church of God, historically of Celtic origin, in Ireland, Britain, Gaul, Cottian Alps, Bohemia, the Baltics, Calabria, and Switzerland. Sheltered by these early civil governments the body of God suffers attacks of vengeance and pride that strike at her mission and success at preserving the word of God in the scripture that converts many throughout the earth.

Babylon seems to triumph in all ages, constantly adapting and reinventing herself, gaining followers, effectively and spiritually penetrating civil governments and society. Constantly changing, but holding to traditions of “times and seasons” (Dan. 7:25) she opposes the true nature of God and Christ - the beginner and finisher of truth and “the same yesterday, today and

<sup>1</sup> Dates referenced from St. Paul in Britain – R.W. Morgan – and Appendix Q - Faithful Version of the Bible – see <https://afaithfulversion.org/>

forever” (Heb. 13:8). Born of harlotry, full of pride, hating God, she thrives in autocratic environments, dominating and subjugating any dissent, especially those born of humble and Christian origins and practices.

Surrounded by ancient myth, symbols, false holy days, idols, mighty in ritual, bloody, and mysterious-Babylon, from antiquity confounds and enslaves mankind in all institutions. Arrogant, irreverent, proud, and metaphysical she permeates the whole world’s economy, and social structures and attacks the remnant of the truth that never dies - but in our story - even the stones cry out.

Assaults against the truth elicit from reliable records – some from civil sources, some by the hand of the false religious edicts and testimonies, and some from the hands of the persecuted. Historical records primarily found in major documentaries including Martyr’s Mirror – published 1632, Waldenses: Anterior to the Reformation – published 1611; and the works of the Church preserved in various libraries of the Europe.

True to prophecy the Church not only survives but thrives in the wilderness for 700 years establishes groups throughout Europe, although some are unprotected by the narrow defiles and immense precipices of the Alps. In the communities of ancient Gaul (eastern modern France), the low lands (modern Netherlands), Bohemia (modern Czech republic), Saxony (modern Germany) and Calabria (southern Italy) she is attacked with the most vile instruments of torture and death with the intent to kill both the true spirit of God and the people who preserve the power of the Holy Spirit - ironically attacking those that add value, industry and peace to all peoples.

**Their legacy and voices must be heard and re-recorded, for these troubled times loom on our horizon. But the next onslaught cascades in heightened and aggravated tones. Her legacy and inheritance underpin the modern democracies of the earth. Private, not communal, property and an entrepreneurial spirit reflect, not Rome or Greece, but the nation of Israel - the first and only nation blessed with the laws of God and Him as Leader and the King not of this earth!**

True freedom does not come from mankind, it shouts from the spiritual power of God! For He alone defines the standard of behavior - the ultimate judge of all nations and, each one of us. The stories and testimonies penetrate the sensibility of anyone in their right mind! The testimonies stand as eternal markers on earth and in heaven awaiting the future resurrection of the just and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on this earth.

The people of God - hide but speak; travel but share; in jail but testify; vilified but defend the truth of the word of God; and captured but spread the promise of the coming kingdom of God. The True kingdom, in man’s sense of time, afar off but coming as sure as the sun rises every day. A godly people in this world, but not of this world’s systems, holding to the doctrines of scripture kept by Christ and the apostles. A people bound to the Decalogue including the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath, Passover and all seven holy days which portray the destiny and history of mankind.

The Church originates and speaks the truth based on the apostles and the Rock of Christ, keeps adult Baptism, while not being swallowed up by the enticing mythical systems of Babylon. In missions, she traveled as merchants with the word of God both in writing and testimony; and as minstrels that sang the news in the streets and gathering places, with teachings from scripture.

The more she was captured, hunted and harangued the more she spread the good news.

Pommeled by spiritual principalities, cloaked as earthly powers, the bloody powers extract many innocent Christian lives through torture and eventual death. But rarely do they gain their prize – confessions! Pretending to do the will of God (John 16:2), the dark angel rages against those that live outside her dominions, as if to say “How dare anyone challenge our godly preponderant power!” The Church of God stands against the papacy, against infant baptism, against the supposed saints of Babylon, idols, sexual promiscuity and deviancy – the beating foul heart of Babylon that flourishes in her monkeries and monasteries, and has throughout all generations. Even within our “illuminated” progressive time, the religious hypocrisy continues to destroy the innocent!

Brigands and ruffians, empowered by the religious authority acquiring the innocent’s possessions, wealth and lives. But the Church of God moves continuously, defending and sharing the good news- truly Christian soldiers with the armor of God – without vengeance; passive, patient and persevering.

**She seeks the only true refuge in the spiritual protection of the living God, and in some generations, she is sheltered by the wilderness of the Alps. Ashes of the martyrs gave fodder for the seeds planted deep within their families and children. Sustained by the truth of God, the Reformation blossoms, as do the modern republics, with edicts that separate the civil and religious government, attempting to minimize abuses. But the harmonic powers of destructive civil and religious union rise again on the horizon!**

Truth spreads through martyrdom, encourages peace and safety – the progenitors of true freedom. Civil discord and disobedience, not as a political movement but as the undercurrent of the truth, defies the pride of power, and expresses God’s love, and sustains life.

Patient endurance over many generations does not come easily when the onslaught is continuous, vicious and violent. The Church taught their young, shared the good news of the kingdom and lived according to the tenets of the scripture. As the light of the world they ironically brought peace, wealth and protection to those that sought to kill them. The nature of the human heart pretends goodness but covers good with evil. Fact and truth become so distorted, good and evil flip upside down to the detriment and destruction of our own children, community, nation and world.

The educational system touts research and fact finding under the auspices of best available science. Why do we not challenge and investigate the common sacred beliefs we hold? Even outside religious domains our secular system clings to mythical and dead symbols that endow physical endurance and eternity with technology.

Progress is measured by wealth, health, education, liberty, and inclusiveness without any moral underpinning. We value the indicators of a temporal world – the gross domestic product. But why not privilege the eternal gauge of morality, and Godly spiritual fruits? Our world embraces an ignorance that forgets and undermines the previous generations of sacrifice and suffering. That lost identity and recognition brings about the peril of a meaningless postmodern system with apocalyptic consequences. For today the war weapons annihilate all life.

Does that mean that their deaths were in vain, and without fruit? Our church phase today is predominately Laodicean. We live in a world of convenience, creature comforts, and relative peace from persecution. This temporary solace with each tick of the generational clock beckons a

persecuting storm that will plumb the depths of all, especially Christians.

Babylon rises from the ashes – true to historical form - with global vigor, power, wealth and influence, with the appearance of goodness, purity and peace! But her primary characteristics intact - hold sway under Satan. Her accoutrements of each age - impatience, anger, arrogance, pride of power, injustice, lovers of self, disdainful of the true God, imposing an attractive spiritual edifice, iniquitous and surrounded by wealth and merchandise (Galatians 5). She challenges and attacks those that hold to the truth of the Scripture and attempts to destroy those that fight against our deceptive human nature.

This contract between light and darkness harkens to the Garden of Eden, where God offered the two trees. Adam and Eve, and their descendants chose the tree of the knowledge of good and evil becoming gods. Not eternal or immortal but instead relinquish power to the false light bringer of this world – Lucifer who deceives the whole world (Rev. 12:9). God has always called servants - eventually choosing Abraham, and his descendants - the nations of Israel. The patriarch and the nation bless the whole earth. Now, that spiritual nation, the True Church of God, takes the baton and runs with it under the guidance, calling and choosing of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

God bars access to the tree of life but calls and chooses people throughout history. He offers His spiritual character to the repentant, believing and obeying human spirit that then develops holy righteous character. Through suffering – the joy of God resides at the center of our lives. The power of the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection brings the jurisdiction of the kingdom of God into our hearts and minds. He sustains His work and presence throughout time until the world reaches the precipice and folly of complete self-destruction. But then, the kingdom of God reaches its full expression in the millennium on this earth!

**But wait, there is one more step at the end of all evil and breaking of God's law - all are resurrected to judgement as pictured by the Last Great Day. The judgement of God stands against those chosen now, and like the martyrs of yore we suffer eagerly awaiting that transformation that reveals all sons and daughters of God (Rom. 8:19). The kingdoms of this world want God's blessings now, in their own way, forged by their own creative spirit fashioned by the father of lies, Satan.**

The successful, safe and enduring communities take the authority of God into the halls of towns, counties, states, and nations to temper man's will and laws. True to the cycles of mankind, without obedience to the word and law of God, all collapse in violence and revolution.

We cannot escape this round except by the direct intervention of God (Rev. 12). A safe place for a next generation, detached from God, does not exist – nowhere to run and hide! Not the moon, not Mars – the final trumpet blasts to us - earthbound on this beautiful spaceship that supplies all of our needs – physical and spiritual.

Eventually the valleys of the Alps were emptied of the people of God. Many escape to other areas of Europe, sheltered by the protestant movement, and eventually to the new Worlds of Canada, U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and many other countries of the British Empire.

The new republics and constitutional monarchies based on the private rights and freedoms and public decision-making restraints based on the Old Testament reduces abuse by separating ecclesiastical and civil powers. The seeds and ashes of the martyrs can be heard and felt in the halls of justice, the parliaments, and congress in these nations. This reprieve gives us the



opportunity and freedom to grow in the knowledge of God and continue to spread this word to the whole world. The martyr's deaths and sacrifices, sewn in bloody suffering, leaves a tremendous legacy of accountability and underpins our freedom of movement and expression.

## **Part 1 – To the Inquisition, Crusades and the Testimony of the Church of God**

Historical perspectives, especially in the postmodern mindset, privileges the ethnic and religious foundations of people. By elevating the traditions and beliefs of previous generations to mythical heights, excludes the truth. As Christians we know only one Ancient of Days, called the Alpha and the Omega, who provokes the truth – who sees the end from the beginning. He says – “Remember My edicts and Works – *leave Egypt through the final act of My Passover. Keep My Sabbath established at creation – the eternal and unchanging ethic of God (Heb. 13:8).*”

For without this remembrance and continual adherence, we lose meaning, forget our origins and fashion historical fantasies that lead to revolution and anarchy – at first individual and then community (James 3:6). But another *ancient* - that old serpent, the devil (Rev. 12:9) - Lucifer, the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4), permeates society with lies and deceit that appear true.

Western belief systems include the ancient celebration and recognition of Easter and Christmas – all shrouded and instilled with false values and symbols of sexual renewal and prowess. Dead and meaningless – symbols of the tree, eggs, rabbits, and ornaments hold no reference to a past, a present or a future - like an intoxicating elixir of sensual freedom that enslaves and destroys the truth, embracing darkness and death (Col 1:13).

Alternatively, God's holy days, the weekly Sabbath, Passover and Baptism are alive with meaning. They work to transform the inner self to eternal attributes. Each symbol has a past, present and future – the rock-solid definition of meaning. Especially, the True Christian knows that Christ kept all of these as our example of the only true spiritual way, truth and life!

Many groups – ethnic or religious, attempt to identify an unbroken “God-given” historical line based on birth, ethnicity and practised faith. But this mindset breeds a falsehood - that our ancestor's rites bestow eternity embodied with tradition – the straw man of meaning and eternity.

The Catholic calls herself the first Church of Christ and Peter. Muslims call to the origins and prophecy of Mohamed; Buddhists to Buddha; Hindus to Vishnu and thousands of other gods; humanism to a “creative” naturalism; and animism (worship of spirit in nature) to the “spirits”. Christ prophecies that the grave would never prevail against the true Church of God (Matt. 16:18).

To successive generations, this “salvation imprint” feels eternal and meaningful, trumping the need to question, search and discover. Paul echoes the warnings from the prophets and the apostles in his letter to Timothy. Salvation works between the temporal spirit in man and the Holy Spirit by molding Godly character, through suffering. (I Tim. 1:4)<sup>1</sup>

*Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which lead to empty speculations rather than to edification from God, which is in faith (I Tim. 1:4)*

Our social stability depends on enterprise, spiritual and physical health, and a peace based on the rule of law. The Church of God birthed by Christ gives those blessings. When individuals and communities believe and keep the holy law contained in His commandments the children prosper. God's revelation to chosen ones, nations, community and in scripture extends from the Garden of Eden to the present and to future generations. The Word governs the healthy behavior and relationships of communities and civilizations. God, in His wonderful plan for mankind, speaks and writes the words of life in the common tongue or language. Our heavenly Father, and Christ as our friend and brother (Matt. 12:46), exact a tremendous price for non-obedience because the most valuable prize is eternity as gods (Matt. 13:45). The promise of eternal life to all mankind emerges from His grace and commandment keeping (John 14:15 and I John 2:4).

Christ's sacrifice and resurrection occur at a watershed time in history. He extends blessings to all of mankind (the spiritual stars in the blessings of Abraham John 7:37)! From His promise and spiritual nation under God, comes the plight and flight of the body of Christ – the church throughout history. At times difficult to recognize, but, true to Christ's words, always prevalent and preeminent - influencing and spreading the true words of God from scripture – chosen children adhering to faithful obedience.

In many cases the obedience to the bread of the word leads to martyrdom. Those events are charted, catalogued and kept in the libraries of many major cities of the world, including Paris, Geneva, Cambridge and Dublin (see archive.org and references). The grave never prevails against the Holy body of Christ!

*Now only crumbling, uncared-for walls remain to remind us of its triumph and tragedy **(first church in Rome)** yet the modern Christian by-passes it without a look, without a twinge of gratitude or admiration, or a prayer, to be thrilled by the glamour of the Vatican and its cathedrals, basking in wealth and luxury, which had no part in the original planting of the faith, or in establishing and preserving our democratic freedoms. <sup>2</sup>*

We continue our Church of God journey through the phases of Pergamos and Thyatira. In Church History, as predicted from the words of Christ in Revelation 2 and 3, we honestly and objectively seek the truth. And the revelation counters the superficial chronicles touted in academia. They rely on a worldly narrative that buttresses the mainstream "Christian" churches. Prophecy predicts the most prominent as *Babylon the Great and the Mother of Harlots* (Rev. 17).

From the early Christian church, an imposter Roman belief system slowly erodes the primitive churches' influence and openness; but does not destroy it. The immeasurable influence of the Christian church and truth of scripture pervades each successive generation and society, as a foundational and formational force. The false church distorts and derides the doctrines of the early church; and through artifice and invention builds a structure of irreverent fantasy, firstly proud and boastful and secondly, intertwines her authority with the powers of this world's systems (false prophet and the beast power – Rev. 17:4).

As we learned, separated by the English Channel - the Old Irish and Celtic churches shared the original understandings of the early Church (Ephesus) along with teachings of their ancestors; as

they migrated to and from Old Gaul (eastern modern France) and the Cottian Alps (modern northwestern Italy).

The scriptures and teachings cross-pollinated the churches of God - known in history by many names including the Albigenses and Waldenses – but always the Church of God identified in later years as the predicted predominant phases of Pergamos and Thyatira.

The Church of God (300 A.D. to 1500 A.D.) shouts forward to the reformation and harkens to her early beginnings, eventually transitioning to the Sardis church – the fifth phase.

The Inquisition edicts bring a religious fervour that draws in brigands and ruffians to assail and destroy. Seen as the “enemies” of the state and against the “spiritual mother” church, the edicts serve to destroy the wealth and sustenance of the people of God and give inquisitors and crusaders physical AND spiritual rewards – material booty and the guarantee of eternal life.

In the early 1200 an extract against the Church called the Paterines or “sufferers” in Latin:

*After the example of the martyrs - Notwithstanding the obscurity which rests upon the etymology of this name, does it not appear evident from this Imperial Edict, that it was then understood to have been conferred on these people on account of the suffering, to which they were exposed- it is determined from the Latin “pati” , " to suffer<sup>3</sup>*

*Sometimes they excited princes to arm their subjects against them, and at other times they inflamed the rabble, whom they themselves headed, to wake up arms, and unite in extirpating them. Such as they could prevail upon to devote themselves to this, service, **obtained the title of crusader**, and were distinguished by a cross of cloth affixed to their garments.*

*This badge operated **like a charm upon the deluded populace, who, if they were inflamed before, their JOY became infuriate, and, as one happily expresses it, were raised to a super-celestial sort of virtue, which defies all the restraints of reason and humanity.** Things remained pretty much in this state till about the year 1250; that is, for half a century.*

*During this period the efforts of the inquisitors were greatly assisted by the **emperor of the Romans, Frederick II who in the year 1224, promulgated, from Padua, four edicts against heretics**, of the most ferocious and sanguinary description, addressed to his beloved princes, the venerable archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church; to the dukes, marquises, earls, barons, governors, judges, ministers, officials, and all other his faithful subjects throughout the empire.*

*In these edicts he takes the inquisitors under his protection, imposes on obstinate heretics the punishment of being burnt to death, and of perpetual imprisonment on the penitent, committing the cognizance of the crime to the ecclesiastical, and the condemnation of the criminals, as well as the infliction of the punishment, to the secular judges.*

The doctrines of the Church of God and those founded on Scripture face constant assault. Political power and wealth derive from the control of behaviour, especially if rewards attach to

the present or here and now and then combine spiritually with immortality, or promises beyond the grave.

The deceitful human heart married to Lucifer sets up its own systems and institutions based on human drives - the flesh and senses (nature of paganism). Each of these doctrinal changes become institutions (tree of knowledge of good and evil) in the dark ages supplanting scripture, and eventually forbidding bible usage in any form – practice or text. Paganism relies on the experience of the five senses, and minimizes faith, hope and love. The Christian edicts espouse the fact that nothing of value is accomplished without the living action of faith, hope and love (I Cor. 13, James 2, and Luke 18:8).

Slowly the power of the church becomes instilled in a papal hierarchy housing idolatry that adapts the Sabbath to Sunday – worships nature and the creation instead of the creator and communion with God; redefines the nature of God with the introduction of the trinity, instead of the Holy Spirit as the power of God; baptises infants instead of adults; changes times and seasons through the dominance of the Roman Calendar with the year beginning in the dead of winter; and casting aside God's Holy days in favour of Babylonian pagan myths - Easter, Christmas, Halloween, instead of the plan of salvation pictured by the seven Holy Days kept by Christ, the apostles and early church.

The Inquisition, borne of the madness of the anti-Christ foists a "Holy War" against Muslims and all heretics within all principalities and dominions. The Dominicans, a religious sect of the Catholic Church, acutely prosecute the papal edicts - eventually endowed as Catholic saints!

The persecutions lead some to apostasy while the acquired wealth helps fund the false church's monoliths, temples and cathedrals that dominate the community centers in all of Europe. Many built on former Roman pagan sites – mortared with the blood of the martyrs!

Thinking that they do the will of God they martyr the people of God (John 16:2):

*As the object of all these bloody edicts was chiefly to destroy the Waldenses or Albigenses, **it may not be foreign to our purpose to give a specimen of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole of them.***

*"The care of the imperial government," says his Majesty (Frederick), "**committed to us from heaven, and over which we preside, demands the material sword, which is given to us separately from the priesthood, against the enemies of the faith, and for the extirpation of heretical pravity, that we should pursue with judgment and justice, those vipers and perfidious children who insult the Lord and his church as though they would tear out the very bowels of their mother.***

*I shall not suffer these wretches to live, who infect the world by their seducing doctrines, and who, being themselves corrupted, more grievously taint the flock of the faithful."*

*He then proceeds to denounce **the most dreadful sentences against all persons convicted of heresy, against all who may be employed as advocates for them, and against all who may be***

***detected in receiving and abetting them, condemning their persons, disinheriting their children, and confiscating their property.***

*The second edict, though not less sanguinary, was more definite in its object, since it professes to **have directly in view the destruction of the sect of the Paterines , of whom it will be recollected, a particular account has been given in a former section.***

*"The heretics are endeavouring to rend the seamless coat of our God, and raging with deceitful words, strive to collide the unity of the illustrious faith itself and to separate the sheep from the care of St. Peter, to whom they were committed by the good Shepherd, to be fed.*

***These are the ravenous wolves within, who put on the meekness of the sheep, that they may the better enter into the Lord's sheep fold. These are the worst angels-the sons of naughtiness, of the father of wickedness-appointed to deceive simple souls.***

*These are adders who deceive the doves serpents which crawl in private, and under the sweetness of honey, vomit poison; so that whilst they pretend to administer the food of life, they sting with their tail, and mingle the most bitter poison into the cup of death.*

*They call themselves Paterines, after the example of the martyrs.*

*These miserable Paterines, **who do not believe the eternal Trinity**, by their complicated wickedness offend against three, viz. God, their neighbour, and themselves.*

*Against God, because they do not acknowledge the Son and the true faith-they deceive their neighbours, whilst under the pretence of spiritual food, they minister the delights of heretical pravity-but their cruelty to themselves is yet more savage, since, besides the loss of their immortal souls, they expose their bodies to a cruel death, being prodigal of their lives and fearless of destruction, which by acknowledging the true faith they might escape, and, which is horrible to express, their survivors are not terrified by their example.*

*Against such enemies to God and man we cannot contain our indignation, nor refuse to punish them with the sword of just vengeance, but shall pursue them with so much the greater vigour, as they appear to spread wider the crimes of their superstition, to the most evident injury of the Christian faith, and of the church of Rome, which is adjudged to be the head of all other churches."*

*The edict then proceeds to denounce one convicted of belonging to the sect of the Paterines, as guilty of the crime of **high treason - to be punished with the loss of life and of goods, and their memory rendered infamous.***<sup>4</sup>

**Strange that the death dealing martyrdoms carries the Satanic tyranny that *appears* to destroy true Christian lives, property and, even, memory. An identical permanent fate awaits the incorrigible thrown into the lake of fire after the second resurrection, and at the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:10)! But God's judgement houses righteousness, and His creative action through personal choice.**

## Part 2 – The Church of God – In Many Quarters – Under Assault and on the Run

The Dominican persecution under the guise of truth and the infallible but deadly Cross emerges in vengeance in the 1200's, driving the Church into the wilderness, but also into many other communities in Europe.

Two popes dominate the Church of God, primarily attacking the old Gaul of France (Celtic region) branding them, and any that shelter them, as heretics. Many princes defy the papal and monarchical edicts and, for a time, resist the armies of the Anti-Christ, but eventually their resistance collapses.

*Celtic areas of France/Italy*



*The **Albigensian Crusade** or the **Cathar Crusade** (1209–1229; French: Croisade des albigeois, Occitan: Crosada dels albigeses) was a 20-year military campaign initiated by Pope Innocent III to eliminate Catharism in Languedoc, in southern France.*

*The Crusade was prosecuted primarily by the French crown and promptly took on a political flavour, resulting in not only a significant reduction in the number of practising Cathars, but also a realignment of the County of Toulouse in Languedoc, bringing it into the sphere of the French crown and diminishing the distinct regional culture and high level of influence of the Counts of Barcelona.*

*The Albigensian Crusade also had a role in the creation and institutionalization of **both the Dominican Order and the Medieval Inquisition**. The Dominicans promulgated the message of the Church to combat alleged heresies by preaching the Church's teachings in towns and villages, while the Inquisition investigated heresies. Because of these efforts, by the middle of the 14th century, any discernible traces of the Cathar movement had been eradicated.<sup>5</sup>*

**The exaltation of the pontifical power - synonymous with the advancement of Christianity.** Dominic represents the power of the right arm of the mighty and dreadful Babylon in destroying all true Christians who live and work outside the strictures of papal edicts – Satan incarnate as Babylon the Great (Rev. 17). The tyrannical edict - none should be separated from her power! None should escape the movements as it infiltrates all principalities and homes of the Churches of God. But under God's almighty protection the Church of God finds physical and spiritual refuge from Jezebel (Rev. 2 and 3).

**Satan will not sustain challenges to his earthly throne and the kingdoms he masters.** When a Christ like people, bound by the doctrines of scripture thrives and spreads, vicious attacks begin firstly with gentle persuasion that collapses in the face of stalwart scriptural Christians and then secondly, by despotic corruption backed by bloody domination.

*Scarcely had this rupture taken place when Popery stirred up the Crusades and soon afterwards those internal persecutions by which it effected the destruction of the Albigenses<sup>6</sup>.*

*But down to this time the Bible had been read in the vulgar tongue<sup>7</sup> in France; and in Piedmont - the diocese of Milan maintained its independence, the Ambrosian ritual preserved there the recollections of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and the Vaudois (***Waldenses of Church of God***) could still find shelter and peace behind this venerated shelter.*

*In the following year (1487) Innocent VIII fulminated against them (Vaudois) a bull of extermination, by which he enjoined all temporal powers to take arms for their destruction.*

*He summoned all Catholics to a crusade against them, "absolving beforehand all who should take part in this crusade from all ecclesiastical penalties, general or special, setting them free from the obligation of vows which they might have made, **legitimizing their possession of goods which they might have wrongfully acquired, and concluding with a promise of the remission of all sins to every one who should slay a heretic.**"*

*Moreover, he annulled all contracts subscribed in favour of the Vaudois, commanded their domestics to abandon them, "**forbade any one to give them any assistance, and authorized all and sundry to seize upon their goods.**"*

***Forthwith some thousands of volunteers, persons ambitious of distinction, vagabonds, fanatics, men without lawful employment, needy adventurers, plunderers of every description, and pitiless robbers and assassins, assembled from all parts of Italy to execute the behests of the pretended successor of St. Peter.***

***This horde of depredators and brigands, an army worthy of a pontiff whose own life was scandalous marched upon the valleys, in company with 18,000 regular troops, jointly furnished by the king of France and the sovereign of Piedmont.<sup>8</sup>***

The general tumult exacted a tremendous price on the people in many principalities and communities. Neighbours, families and friends, pronounced as enemies, become open game of the ravenous human heart, as the innocent forfeit their lives, relationships and property based on the edicts emanating from the Roman throne.

Judgment without trial, married to torture and eventual burnings and drowning, prescribed by the most hideous methods, invented just for the heretics, demonstrates the nature of man that always lacks any divine foundation (Jer. 17:9). The ages, darkened by evil harmony prevails throughout history - hallmarks of man before the flood. For without the standard of God's law we devolve into anarchy – everyone doing what is right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25).

As Jones highlights:

*The preceding sections will have enabled the reader to form a tolerably correct judgment concerning the religious principles and general character of that denomination of Christians called Catharists, Paterines, Albigenses, or Waldenses; and I should now proceed to a more detailed account of their history, subsequent to the times of Peter Waldo, and especially of the dreadful persecutions and complicated sufferings which came upon them in consequence of their adherence "**to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus;**" but it will be proper, in this place, to take a glance at the origin, the establishment, and the operation of that monstrous system of cruelty and oppression, **gently called by the Catholics "the holy office," though better known among Protestants by the name of the Inquisition<sup>9</sup>.***

*It was not until about the year 1200, the papal chair being then filled by Innocent III that the terms "Inquisition into heresy," and "Inquisitor," were much, if at all, heard of.*

*The bishops, and their vicars, being, in the Pope's apprehension, neither so fit nor so diligent in the discharge of their duty respecting the extirpation of heresy as he thought necessary, two new orders of regulars were at this time instituted, viz. those of St. Dominic and St. Francis, both zealously devoted to the church, and consisting of persons with **whom the advancement of Christianity, and the exaltation of the pontifical power, were always synonymous terms.***

*To St. Dominic, indeed, the honour of first suggesting the erection of this extraordinary court is commonly ascribed.*

*It was not, however, at first, on the same footing on which it afterwards settled, and on which it has since continued. The first inquisitors were vested with a double capacity, not very happily conjoined in the same persons; **one was that of preachers, to convince the heretics by argument; the other that of persecutors, to instigate magistrates to employ every possible method of extirpating the refractory-that is, all who were so unreasonable as not to be convinced by the profound reasoning of those merciless fanatics and wretched sophisters (those that deconstruct truth and wash away differences between evil and good).***

*Dominic descended from an illustrious Spanish family of the name of Guzman, was the son of Felix and Joanna, and born at the village of Cabaroga, in the year 1170, in the diocese of Osma.*

*His mother, during her pregnancy, is said to have dreamed that she was with child of a pup, carrying in its mouth a lighted torch; **that after its birth, it put the world in an uproar by its fierce barkings, and at length set it on fire by the torch which it carried in its mouth.***

*His followers have interpreted this dream, of his doctrine, by which he enlightened the world; while others, if dreams presage anything, think that the torch was an emblem of that fire and faggot by which an infinite multitude of persons were burnt to ashes.*

***He was educated for the priesthood, and grew up the most fiery and the most bloody of mortals. Before his time every bishop was a sort of inquisitor in his own diocese; but Dominic contrived to incorporate a body of men, independent of every human being except the Pope, for the express purpose of ensnaring and destroying Christians.***

*He was well aware that however loudly the priests declaimed against heresy, the lords of the soil would not suffer them to butcher their tenants under any such vain pretences.*

*In Biscay, the priesthood was at a very low ebb, in the eleventh century, and the clergy complained to the King of Navarre that the nobility and gentry treated them very little better than their slaves, employing them chiefly only to breed up and feed their dogs.*

*Nearly a century after that time, in a neighbouring state, when the renowned St. Bernard began, in a sermon to a crowded auditory, to inveigh against heresy, the nobility and gentry all rose up and left the church, and the people followed them.*



*The preacher came down and proceeded to the market place, where he attempted to harangue on the same subject; but the populace, wiser than the preacher, refused to hear him, and raised such a clamour as drowned his voice, and compelled him to desist.*

*Only one expedient remained Bernard recollected that Jesus had ordered his apostles, in certain cases, to shake off the dust of their feet, and as though he were an apostle and had received the same command, he affected to imitate the example.*

*He left the city, shook his feet, and cursed the inhabitants by exclaiming, "**May the Almighty punish this city with a drought.**" Thus far went the rage of Catholicism at the beginning of the twelfth century, and here its proud waves were stayed; but at the commencement of the thirteenth, about the year 1215, Dominic broke down the dam, and covered Toulouse with a tide of despotism stained with human blood.*

*Posterity will scarcely believe that this enemy of mankind, after forming a race like himself, first called **preaching**, and then **Dominican friars**, died in his bed, was canonized for a saint, worshipped as a divinity, and proposed as a model of piety and virtue to succeeding generations.*

*Never, says Dr. Geddes, was there such a rabble in the world as a Spanish saint-roll. The first class of them are ideal beings, or pagans, or enthusiasts; **but the last are saints with a vengeance, for all their steps to paradise are marked with human blood.***

*The inquisitors, at first, had no tribunals; they merely inquired after heretics, their number, strength, and riches.*

*When they had detected them, they informed the bishops, who, at that time, had the sole power of judging in ecclesiastical affairs, urging them to anathematize, banish, or otherwise chastise such heretical persons as they brought before them.*

*It is true, says Bishop Burnet, adverting to these times, the church pretended that she would shed no blood; but all this was insufferable juggling. For the churchmen declared who were heretics, and the secular arm was required to be always in readiness to execute their sentence.*

*This was not only claimed by the bishops, but it was made a part of their oath at their consecration, "**that they should oppose and persecute heretics to the utmost of their power.**"*

*Nor were they contented to proceed by the common rules of justice, upon accusations and witnesses; but all forms were superseded, and by virtue of their pastoral authority as if that had been given them to worry their sheep and not to feed them, they objected articles to their prisoners upon suspicion, requiring them to purge themselves of them by oath.*

*And because bishops were not perhaps all so equally zealous and cruel, that bloody man, Dominic, took this work to task, and his order has ever since furnished the world with a set of*

*inquisitors, compared to whom all that had ever dealt in torture's, in any former times, were mere bunglers.<sup>10</sup>*

The empire of Satan combines the religious authority (false prophets) and the civil government (beast power) forming the perpetual basis of human tyranny and power. The former foments the spiritual edicts and pronouncements that transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries and the latter carries out the judgments – usually capital in nature. So, the great tribulation heralds in the most pronounced religious/civil union in human history, having the appearance of peace and plenty but, instead full of corruptions and blasphemies (Revelation 17).

### **PART 3 - The edicts against the Church of God – the tombstones of the Martyrs and eventually Babylon**

The Dark Ages or Medieval period suppresses the truth of the word of God, and restricts direct access to God, while the civil powers bow to a religious tyranny purporting to establish the “kingdom of God” on the earth - a rebirth of the Babylonian mythical systems that mimic Christian doctrine. A rebellious and irreverent power, reinvents the Christian ethic by mixing scripture and human tradition.

Babylon seems to triumph in all the ages, constantly adapting and reinventing herself, gaining followers and effectively spiritually penetrating civil governments and society. Constant change, but holding to traditions of “times and seasons” she opposes the true nature of God and Christ - the beginner and finisher of truth and “the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb. 13:8 and 12:2).”

Born of harlotry, full of pride, hating God, she thrives in autocratic environments, dominating and subjugating any dissent, especially those begotten into the body of Christ through repentance, humility and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Surrounded by ancient myth, false symbols, false holy days, idols, mighty in ritual, bloody, and mysterious-Babylon, from antiquity confounds and enslaves mankind in all institutions. Arrogant, irreverent, proud, and metaphysical she permeates the whole world’s economy, political/power bases, and social structures and attacks the remnant of the eternal truth. But in God’s narrative - even the stones cry out (Luke 19:40).

Although our hearts hurt to hear the injustices of our brothers and sisters, ***we rejoice in their sacrifice as the fodder for the kingdom of God, giving us the legacy for the Church of God today*** – for He told us we would walk as He walked and that the servant was not greater than the master – John 15:20.

The Inquisition starts with a vengeance against the burgeoning and expanding Church of God. Although, primarily located in the old Gaul area of France she influences many European principalities. As the inheritors of the early church doctrines, the Church of God bears up and defies the power of pagan Rome and her numerous alliances. The truth spreads with blood and death, driving them to share the truth throughout the world.

Rising in vengeance in 325 A.D. under Constantine, the world’s systems adapt and adjust her pagan roots and beliefs, seemingly “Christianising” the whole world! The king of this world

buries and befuddles the minds of men to the true origins of the body of Christ. But tracing the death of the saints, the Martyr's Mirror records:

*Of this, H. Montanus gives this account: "The persuasion of the Waldenses or Lyonites obtained, in France as well as in some cities of Italy, secretly as well as openly, according to the condition of the times, for more **than three hundred years, from the year 1170 or 1180 to 1545**, as may be seen in Sleidanus, lib. 16, Comment." H. Mont. Nietigh., page 86.*

*Their, beginning we have fixed, according to the common reckoning of ancient writers, A. D. 1170; **but it appears that they existed long before**; for even as early as the year 1120, people of the same profession declared, **by open writings, their views against the pope, whom they called antichrist, censuring him in many things, as stated above.***

*Moreover, P. J. Twisck gives the following account for the year 1168:*

*"The Waldenses, of whom mention is made for the year 1159, **had at this time so many followers and such great success with their doctrine, in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, that those of their profession, as Guil. Nebriss, writes, numbered as many as the sand of the sea**; who, when they were summoned by the pope of Rome, to give an account of their doctrine, would not appear, saying that they were not obliged to obey the pope, **who was the antichrist and had declared them schismatics.**" Chron. page 479, col. I. A. D. 1199.*

*It is stated that at this time the Albigenses, who were one church with the Waldenses, had so increased in the earldom of Toulouse, that, as **the papists complained, "almost a thousand cities were polluted with them."** Introduction M. M., page 52, col. I, from Baron. A. D 1199, num. 13.<sup>11</sup>*

The power of the Church of God severely slackens the political influence and financial security of Babylon. With reinvented powers Babylon rises to the challenge, and goes forth to hunt and obliterate all of those true brethren as if vermin in the midst of the earth.

The truth, seemingly buried under a bushel, shouts across the ages in triumph of our living God. Though many suffered and died, dispersed and pillaged, the word and truth spread like wildfire into countries, principalities, cities, counties, communities, houses and hearts of men, women and children – **the whole world on fire with the flying ashes of the martyrs.**

Babylon, wrapped in the cloak of Christianity, fosters monasteries, orders, structures, but more dastardly and deceptively, false, impious and blasphemous doctrines that replace God's authority and words with idolatrous stone, edifices, strictures, oaths, and false works having the form of godliness but denying that power (II Tim 2: 3-5).

*With this the lord of St. Aldegonde concurs, when he says: "That, notwithstanding Peter de Bruis was burnt as a heretic, at St . Giles, near Nismes, **their doctrine nevertheless was spread throughout the province of Gascony, into the earldom of Fois, Querci, Agenois, Bourdeloicx, and almost throughout all Languedoc, and the earldom of Jugrane, now called Venice.***

*In Province also this doctrine was almost universally accepted, and the cities, Cahors, Narbonne, Carcassonne, Rhodes, Aix la Chapelle, Mesieres, Toulouse, Avignon, Mantauban, S.Antonin, Puflanrens, Castres, Minerve, Begiers, Beaucaire, Lambes, Pannes, and the country of Bigorre were filled with it, together with many other cities which were favorable to them, as Tarascon, Marseilles, Perces, Agenois, Marmande, and Bordeaux; whereby this doctrine spread still further, from the one side into Spain and England, from the other, into Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Moravia, Dalmatia, and even into Italy.*

As the worldly power of the Inquisition and Crusades rampages through the countryside, the documented death of the innocents becomes starker as she records the testimonies and deeds of the martyrs. ***These words and deeds rise like second scripture, testimonies and epistles in the annals of the Church of God.*** They stand as witnesses against the barbarity of mankind as it emanates from the beginning of time, proceeds to all future eras, and culminates in the full establishment of the kingdom of God.

**These voices call to us from across the decades and centuries into our hearts and minds**, as they rest under the altar of God awaiting the revelation of the sons of God (Rev. 6:10):<sup>12</sup>

*"Indeed in such a manner did this doctrine spread that however sedulously the popes and all their minions exerted themselves, aided by the princes and **the secular magistrates, to exterminate them, first by disputations, then by banishment and papal excommunication and anathemas, proclaiming of crusades, indulgences and pardons to all who would commit violence upon them, and finally, by all manner of tortures, fire, gallows, and cruel bloodshedding, yea, in such a manner that the whole world was in commotion on account of it; yet, they (the papists) could not prevent the ashes from flying abroad, and becoming scattered far and wide, almost even to all the ends of the earth.**"* Introduction M. M., page 52, col. 1, 2.

*The above seems marvelous, but it is not marvelous with regard to the Lord God, with whom nothing is wonderful or impossible. In the meantime, we see how God permitted this grain of mustard seed of the Waldenses, or Poor Men of Lyons, to grow up a large tree, and this in the midst of their persecutions. **Oh, the great power, wisdom and love of God, who never forsakes His people!***

*P. J. Twisck, having finished his account of the twelfth century, concludes as follows, with which we will also conclude our account: "As regard the state and condition of ecclesiastical affairs in the preceding hundred years, we find no special change, nor reformation, except that in this century we have many praiseworthy men who oppose popery with the holy Scriptures, **rejecting images, pilgrimages, masses, and other papal superstition and also infant baptism; concerning which you may consult the years 1145, 1159, 1168, 1182, 1190.***

***Thus the Baptists and many others (who have better views than the papists), and their follower or fellow believers lived for a long period, or eve to this time, in various countries and places, under many severe persecutions."***

*In the 12<sup>th</sup> Century - In the beginning mention is made of this salutary, but bloody century, in which the pious witnesses of the Lord **come in multitudes to receive the crown of martyrdom on the battlefield of Christ.***

The power and mystery of Babylon comes in various guises that reflect the deceptive human heart – for she appears good, holding to the outward appearance of solemnity and devotion, but inside a ravenous wolf. The martyrdom expands while the word of God spreads. Falsehood never supplants the truth, but wickedness exists, (Psa. 10 and Prov. 10) for a time.

“When vileness fills the land the wicked walk about freely” (paraphrased from Psa. 12:8). When any society exhibits the fruits of sin, or break God’s royal law, people break all bonds as if infected by a contagion that spreads into all human institutions and exploits. Peace and harmony tear open the hearts of the innocent and wisdom ceases. But God brings joy to the inner life through His Holy Spirit (Heb. 4:12).

True to the seducing Church’s audacity she publishes, and records the demise of many of the martyrs. Her human familiarity and boldness come from the deceptive and carnal human heart - mood matching with the demons – duplicitous, chimeric, and blasphemous.

Her banner and tombstone read:

*And across her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And after seeing her, I wondered with great amazement. (Rev 17:5-6 FV)*

*2. And he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird; 3. Because all nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury.”*

***4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, My people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues, 5. For her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. (Rev 18:2-5 FV)***

*Here lies powerful Babylon! I brandish the pride of the human heart, and destroy all that stand in my way. For my ancient kingdom and principles adapt, modify, and distill the human freedom of knowledge, and plumb the depths of evil to the thrill of all generations – except those called and chosen by the Mighty God. So we, and the deceiving spirit world, embrace darkness and death!*

The testimonies of the Church of God, counters the harlotry, hierarchy and hegemony of the papacy:

*Four persons, having no good opinion of infant baptism and transubstantiation banished from the bishopric of Treves, A. D. 1105. Some of the followers of Berengarius, in the same bishopric, follow their fellow companions, and are not only banished, but also expelled, one year after,*

*namely A. D. 1106. The persecutions increase in violence; some who maintained the doctrine of Berengarius, burnt alive at Treves and Utrecht (modern day Belgium<sup>2</sup>), in the year 1135.*

*Arnald a lector at Brescia, opposes infant baptism and the mass; on account of which he is persecuted, and, finally, having come to Rome, deprived of his life by fire, A. D. 1145.*

*The teacher of said Arnald, namely, Peter Abelard, follows, in the persecution, in the footsteps of his disciple, and is, by order of the pope, imprisoned in the dungeon of a monastery, where he ends his life, same year as above.*

*Peter Bruis, burnt at St. Giles; Henry of Toulouse, apprehended and put out of the way by the pope's legate; also many other persons put to death at Paris, for the true evangelical doctrine, about the year 1145, 1147.*

*Certain peasants, called Apostolics, put to death by Innocent III against the Waldenses and Albigenses, about the year 1198; to which end, mention is made of three letters which he wrote with regard to this matter; whereupon it followed that, A. D. 1200, five men and three women were burnt at Troyes, in Campania, and some expelled from Metz.*

The martyrdom actions destroy and chastise the testimonies, books and teachings of the Church of God. But some survive, including the Noble Lesson, the Old Latin Bible (Vetus Latina) and some written testimonies and letters. The Inquisition and Crusades, ironically ushers in an era of historical records, kept by the prosecutors – a defiance of Godly scripture – in an attempt to arrest the spreading of the good news:<sup>13</sup>

***Hereafter we shall not have to confine ourselves to such scanty material, in the account of the martyrs, as we have necessarily had to do in some of the preceding centuries, when we, through the absence of ancient histories and records, were frequently compelled to break off our account of the sainted confessors of Jesus Christ prematurely; which often grieved us to the heart.***

***Now, however, comes the salutary, though bloody century, in which abundant matter is furnished us, from which to accomplish our object; the pious witnesses of the Lord now come in multitudes, who willingly suffer themselves to be put to death for the proclamation of the only saving truth; crowns of martyrdom are now proffered to all Christian champions, who have well acquitted themselves on the field of martyrdom, under the bloody banner of Jesus Christ.***

***Excommunication is the beginning of their conflict; then follow fire, sword, and much other dreadful violence; in and under which, they, calling upon God, end their lives, quit the earth, and take their rest under the wings of their Saviour, or under the altar of God, until the number of their slain brethren shall be fulfilled.***

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<sup>2</sup> The name "Belgium" was adopted for the country, the word being derived from Gallia Belgica, a Roman province in the northernmost part of Gaul that, before Roman invasion in 100 BC, was inhabited by the Belgae, a mix of Celtic and Germanic peoples.

For a time, the Church finds solace and comfort in Old Gaul, but true to Christ's testimony in Revelation 2 and 3, the Pergamos and Thyatira era, following in the footsteps of the previous Smyrna church find no refuge from beneficent princes. For the princes fall under the yoke and authority of the papacy.

The Church of God, exposed throughout Europe, suffers from the indignant wrath of the false Church, brandishing the Crusading and Inquisitorial powers, concentrates against "heretics" and Muslims. The Church of God fears the hand of the pope more than that of the Saracens. The core of the Church escapes to the Cottian Alps north of Turin in modern day Italy:<sup>14</sup>

*We then turn, first, to the portal or entrance of the arena of the Christian martyrs, where we perceive that some persons must leave their country, and are banished as heretics for maintaining the doctrine of the apostles, near Toulouse in France, A. D. 1155.*

*Gerard, with about thirty persons, men as well as women, come to Oxford, in England, where they, for maintaining the evangelical doctrine, are branded on the forehead, and scourged out of the city, where they perish from cold! A. D. 1161.*

*Arnold, Marsilius, and Theodoric, together with five other men and two women, burned alive, at Cologne and Bonn, A. D. 1163.*

*Many pious Christians, throughout all France and England, for maintaining their true belief, cast into the fire alive, where they expire under great pain, A. D. 1182.*

*Many Christians in Flanders, put to death by fire for the same reason; many others miserably perish.*

*Here, that which is noted for the year 1105, concerning those who opposed infant baptism, in the twelfth century, claims our attention, namely, that then, under the archbishop of Treves, four persons were banished as heretics, because they had no good opinion of infant baptism, and denied, that in the Supper the bread and wine were changed into the real body and blood of Christ, Merul., fol. 726. P. J. Twisck, Chron. H. Montan., Nietigh., page 83. Jae. Mehrn., B. H., page 592.*

*One year after the death of the last mentioned martyrs, namely, A. D. 1184 or 1185, a decree of Pope Lucius III is published against the Waldenses, who are called by various names.*

*Origin of the inquisition, instituted by Pope Innocent III - We related, for the year 1035, of Berengarius, deacon of Angiers, that he, with Bruno, the bishop of said city, began to teach against transubstantiation.*

*The aforesaid distress among the believers, continued on, through the severe inquisition commenced eleven years before, namely, A. D. 1024; for, although the first inquisitors had departed this life, as by the vengeance of God, it did not remain so, **since Pope Urban IV took up the pen to issue bloody edicts against the orthodox Waldenses and Albigenses who were scattered abroad in all parts.***

***These decrees he caused to be proclaimed to his minions who bore the name of ecclesiastics.*** This is stated in the following words by an ancient papist: In the year 1262, Pope Urban IV made an ordinance against the heretics in Lombardy and in the margraviate of Genoa, and sent a copy of it to the order of the Dominicans in said parts, to persecute the Waldenses and Albigenses, who were mostly scattered there. Bzov., A. D. 1262,. Art. 3, ex Deer. Epist, Alex. 4. also, A. M., Hist., fol. 470, col. 2.

Thereupon as it appears, no small persecution arose · but as to the manner in which the same occurred, and the persons who then suffered for the faith we have not been able to find any account, notwithstanding we have made diligent search. ***No doubt it fell chiefly upon the heads of the Waldenses and Albigenses, since they were mentioned by name in the mandate of the pope.***

A.D. 1270, eight years afterwards, Peter Caderita and William Colonicus, Dominicans, persecuted the (so-called) heretics in the kingdom of Aragon, Bzov., A. D. 1270, ex Surita, lib. 2. A. Mell., Hist., fol. 470, col. 2.

***In the year 1280, the moon was completely changed into the color of blood; which by many was held to signify the very bloody and lamentable state of the church of God; the more so since at that time, not only a dire persecution prevailed, but also a destructive crusade, under the sign of the cross, such as was formerly waged against the Saracens, was undertaken the following year, namely, 1281, by the papists, by order of the pope, against the Albigenses in Spain.*** Compare the large book of Christian martyrs, fol. 470, col. 2, 3, with Bal. Cent. 4, Append. ***ad*** Greg. de Brid. Lington., p. 446, from Everildenas.

P. J. Twisck, having noticed, in the first part of his Chronijck, for the year 1280, the doctrine of the ***Waldenses, whom he calls Waldois, after their leader, Peter Waldus, finally he speaks of their persecutions, saying: "Matthias Illyricus, in his Register of the witnesses of the truth, says, that he has in his possession the consultations of certain advocates of Avignon, also, of the three bishops of Narbonne, Arles, and Aix, and of the bishop of Alban, tending to the extermination of the Waldois, or Waldenses", and written three hundred years previously; from which it is evident, that at that time and before, a great number of the believers were scattered here and there throughout France.***

"We can also infer from the consultations of the aforesaid archbishops, ***that even as their number was great, so was also the persecution against them very cruel; for at the end of this consultation it is written: 'Who is so great a stranger in France, as to be ignorant of the damnatory sentence (thus speak these papists themselves) which has now, for a long time, been most justly used against these heretical Waldois (Waldenses); and should we doubt a matter so notorious and common, which has cost the Catholics so much money, sweat, and labor, and has been sealed with so many condemnations and executions of unbelievers (thus he calls the true believers)?'***"

"Hence appears," writes Twisck, "what massacres of believers occurred at this time, and what cruelties the subjects of antichrist employed against them." "And it can be proved," says Boxborn," even from the testimony of their greatest enemies, that ***they declared, maintained, and testified in the midst of the fire, that they had received this their faith unaltered, from***



***hand to hand, from the times of the apostles; and they continued even to the present time, having never been entirely exterminated."*** P. J. Twisck, Chron., p. 606, col. 1, 2.

Mellinus writes that "A. D. 1283, the Waldenses had again greatly increased in France, as also in other countries throughout Christendom, notwithstanding they had been very cruelly sought out and persecuted up to this time." In the second book of the History of the Persecutions, fol. 470, col. 3, from Vignier, Hist. Eccl., A. D. 1283.

P. J. Twisck gives the following account for the year 1284: "The Waldois or Waldenses, of whom, since the year 1159, much mention is made, increased at this time more and more, in France and other countries of Christendom, notwithstanding that they were craftily sought and cruelly persecuted, and that all diligence and every means had first been employed, utterly to exterminate them; ***which greatly astonished certain bishops and advocates that in so much violence that he not only spared not the living, but not even the dead; for he caused one Herman, who had been one of their principal teachers, to be exhumed twenty years after his death, and his bones burnt to ashes notwithstanding the papists, who were his enemies had in his lifetime, regarded him as a holy man."*** This they did also with the dead bodies of one Andrew and of his wife Guillemette, who were also greatly noted for their remarkable godliness.

The Fratricelli (or Albi-Waldenses) were nevertheless, thought unjustly, accused of many and crimes at Avignon of that time." "They were burnt," he writes, "in great numbers." Chron., fol. 611, 612, from Henr. Boxhorn, fol. 26.

1299 A.D., the Fratricelli, that is, the Albi-Waldenses, who were called Little Brothers, were declared heretics, by Pope Boniface VIII, because their belief was contrary to the Roman church, as we have already shown. Said pope caused these Fratricelli (or Albigenses) to be persecuted with abominable crimes.

***Hence, many of the ancients presume that these slanders were invented against them for the express purpose of making them the objects of the hatred and envy of the people; since they were utterly antagonistic to the doctrine which they professed and with their life.***

***For it is recorded of them, that they called themselves true followers of the apostles, and the true church of Christ, and that they on their part reprov'd the corrupt morals of the prelates.***

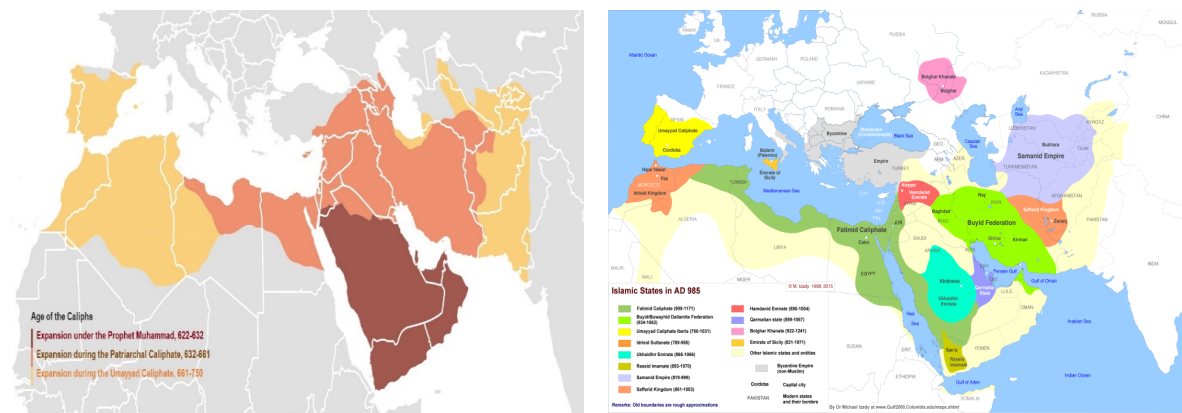
There were also ascribed to them all the opinions or articles of faith, of the Waldenses who, as already shown, also rejected infant baptism, the swearing of oaths, revenge towards enemies, the mass and almost all the superstitions of the Roman church hence it is probable, ***that they were of their persuasion and had only given themselves different names, according to the different places where they resided.*** In the second book of the Hist. of the Persecutions, fol. 471, col. 2, from Trithem., Chron., Hirsaug., A. D. 1299. Also Vignier, A. D. 1298. Hist. Eccl., ex Platina, Sabellico, Mari. Hist. Antonino Bernhardo de Lutzenb. Bai. Cent. 4, Brittan. Append. 2, ad Joan Rufum.

## PART 4 - The Rebel Princes and Early Shelter for the Church of God – side by side with apostasy

Rebel princes support the Church of God, historically of Celtic origin, in Ireland, Britain, Gaul, Cottian Alps, Bohemia, the Baltics, Calabria, and Switzerland. Sheltered by these early civil governments the body of God suffers attacks of vengeance and pride. Babylon strikes at the Church of God's mission and success at preserving the word of God in scripture, while converting many throughout the earth.

Spiritual threats to the religious hegemony of Rome is met by a tyrannical hierarchy and diabolical plan to exterminate "heretical" ideas, the written word, and the people practicing the tenets of scripture. The innocence of scripture and the Christian life speak volumes in all principalities but especially within eastern modern France and Old Gaul, where many princes hold out against the pompous blasphemer, but to their eventual physical demise.

As the new millennium dawns in 1000 AD the false church becomes the dominant power in all principalities. She challenges the threatening Muslim eastern storm as the Caliphs invade and occupy Jerusalem and previous Roman held territories in Carthage, the Balkans, Crimea, Turkey, Spain and to the doorstep of Paris - see early Caliph's and Islamic State's Map.



The Church of God becomes increasingly harassed and despised, although continuously preserved by God. She eventually seeks secluded climes, especially after the vicious assaults in southeastern France.

Monastier comments:<sup>15</sup>

*Ifonorius, a priest of Autun, at the beginning of the twelfth century, speaks of certain heretics, whom he calls Allontani, or Mountaineers, and describes in these few words: "The Mountaineer heretics are thus named from the mountains. In the times of persecution, they concealed themselves in the mountains, and separated from the body of the church." (**Church of Rome**).*

*Eberard de Bethune, about the year 1160, expresses himself in terms but slightly different on the same subject:*

*"They are called," he says, "Mountaineers; because, in a time of persecution, they concealed themselves in the mountains, and for this reason they erred in relation to the Catholic faith."*

*And although this last author does not say that the heretics, whom he calls Wallenses in the twenty- fifth chapter of his book, and represents as missionaries come from, a valley of tears, are the same as those whom he calls Alontani, or Mountaineers, in the twenty-sixth chapter, yet he says nothing to the contrary; for Eberard, in the long list he has made out of all possible sorts of heresy, passes over in silence the Wallenses, whom he had before named, and cites only the Allontani.*

*This omission of the Wallenses can only be accounted for on the supposition that the Wallenses are the same as one of the classes of heretics, whom he there names and describes.*

*This is exceedingly probable, considering the resemblance of the signification in the names Alontani, Mountaineers, and Wallenses, that is, inhabitants of the valleys; and likewise, considering the analogy of the details he gives of the persecutions suffered by the Mountaineers, and those which afflicted the inhabitants of the vale of sorrow, or of tears.*

*We may further add, that the name Alontani was given to a people of Liguria, established in the Alps, adjacent to the Vagienni (at present the inhabitants of the marquisate of Saluzzo), and bordering on the Vaudois valleys.*

*And we need not be astonished that, according to this last explanation, the so-called Vaudois heresy should have extended more to the south in the mountains of Liguria, just as we have seen, in a previous chapter, that it extended more to the east in Biella and Novarra; for nothing is more certain.*

*Let our readers only call to mind what we have said of its conquests in Astesan, in the tenth century. We shall elsewhere have an opportunity of proving, by fresh details, this extension of the Vaudois church beyond the limits within which it is confined at the present day (1800's).*

*An ancient writer, Gioffredo, informs us that the Vaudois heresy, which he erroneously supposes to have proceeded from France, had already extended, in the year 1198, not only into the valleys of Angrogna, Lucerna, and San Martino, in the diocese of Turin, but also in to the plain.*

The mountains shelter them in a majestic refuge keeping her in the womb of the earth as the wolves' chaff and howl. The Church, intensely persecuted and marginalized by main stream society, receives many names, separating her from the world's systems – outcasts, while these false truths make them appear as aliens. So, the Church of God appears to the world – as strangers in a strange land – reflections of Abraham and Christ (Gen. 23; Matt. 10:34)!

Make no mistake, the Anti-Christ, active since the dawn of time, attacks the truth in every generation, while donning a “Christian” surplice, appearing to obey God. Clearly seen by her fruits, extant in the time of Christ and beyond; loving the tree of knowledge of good and evil; defying God, killing all adversaries, foaming out rage without respite day and night (Jude 1:13).

As Monastier continues:

***"Not content," he says, "with remaining hid in the caverns of the mountains, they (the Vaudois) have had the audacity to sow false doctrine in the plains of Piedmont and Lombardy, fixing a centre at Bagnolo, from which circumstance it is believed that some of them have acquired the denomination of heretics of Bagnolo," Rainier Sacco writes, about the year 1250.***

*This is why James, bishop of Turin, desirous of expelling this pestilence from his diocese, organized a persecution against them, after having obtained for that purpose, in the year 1198, a decree of the emperor Otho IV, to which we shall again refer in the sequel.*

***Should it appear surprising- that the Vaudois sect, or rather, the remains of the faithful church, could maintain itself so long without severe persecution, in the ancient diocese of Claude of Turin and elsewhere, in spite of the oppressive tendency of the Romish church, we must repeat what we have said before, in chapter IV of the political agitations and contests in the tenth and eleventh centuries, during which the attention of the heads of the Romish church were turned away from the scattered remains of the faithful church, preoccupied as they were with their worldly interests, and with the dangers and advantages of her position (protected by) secular princes.***

***One general cause which also favoured the preservation of various small companies of the faithful church, was the inherent vital power of Christian principle, which is such that it cannot be altered or perverted wherever it has spread its roots, except by a very slow process. Other special causes were combined with this general and powerful one.***

*Thus, in the first place, the innovations adopted in the popish church, in regard to images, the mass, the real presence, etc., took a considerable time to spread themselves, as history shows.*

***In the second place, for a long time, nothing more was attempted than insensibly to undermine the ancient doctrines, to apologize for novelties, and to refute those who attacked the innovations.***

***We may cite, as examples of this fact, the writings of St. Jerome against Vigilantius, of Jonas of Orleans against Claude of Turin, of Pascase Rathbert against the ancient doctrine of the eucharist, maintained a long time after by Berenger of Tours, and others.***

***In the third place, for a long time it was thought sufficient to excommunicate and anathematize heretics, or those who were thought to be such.***

The Church of God spread as small companies with the binding principle of scriptural faith, following the master Jesus Christ, and could not be defeated by any physical means. Jones notes that the assaults of Jezebel/Babylon were almost always physical and not spiritual, while persecution focuses the people and spreads the word of God.

In fact, when Constantine experienced<sup>3</sup> “conversion”<sup>16</sup> the sudden relaxation of persecution led to a lax and insulated characteristic to the true Church. But this abeyance did not last long. Two excerpts, quoted liberally from Jones<sup>17</sup>, demonstrate firstly the sudden relinquishment of persecution and the terrible results; and secondly, the rise of the church of this world triumphing in secular and religious power (beast and false prophet), against scripture, and irrationally defiant to any sensible defence of true Christianity.

*The extraordinary occurrences of the life of Constantine produced an entire change in the whole of the Christian profession. Its friends were now no longer called to endure patiently the hatred of the world—to take up their cross, and press after a conformity to Christ in his sufferings, and, through much tribulation, to enter his kingdom; but they were to bask in the sunshine of worldly prosperity, enjoying the smiles of the great, and connecting with their profession the riches and honours of this present world—the baneful effects of which began speedily to developed themselves.*

*So long as the Christians were persecuted by the heathen on account of their faith and practices, they were driven to the gospel as their only source of consolation and support; and they found it every way sufficient for their utmost need. The animating principles which it imparted, raised their minds superior to the enjoyments of this world, and in the hope of life and immortality, they were happy, even if called to lay down their lives for the sake of their profession.*

*And herein the power of their religion was conspicuous. It was not with them an empty speculation, floating in the mind, destitute of any influence upon the will and the affections. While it induced them to count no sacrifice too costly which they were called to make for the gospel's sake, they were led by it to exercise the most fervent Christian affection one towards another—to sympathize tenderly with each other in all their sorrows and distresses—and, by bearing one another's burdens, they fulfilled their Lord's new command of brotherly love.*

*This was the prominent feature in Christianity during the first three centuries. The writings of the apostles and evangelists all breathe this amiable spirit, and abound with exhortations to cultivate this God-like disposition; and so conspicuous was the exercise of it among the primitive Christians, that it was commonly remarked by their enemies, and recommended by them as worthy of imitation.*

*Such, however, is the depravity of human nature, that, as they enjoyed any intervals from persecution, they became more profligate in their morals and more litigious in their tempers. But now that the restraint was wholly taken off, by Constantine, the churches endowed, and riches and honours liberally conferred on the clergy; when he authorized them to sit as judges upon the consciences and faith of others, he confirmed them in the spirit of this*

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<sup>3</sup> Constantine – born in Britain to a Roman father and a “Christian” British mother, was schooled in the scripture - from Jowett, but we must consider the nature of this “Christianization” – “It was not Peter who nationally Christianized Rome but Constantine, the great-grandson of Arviragus, and son of the famous Empress Helen, a British Princess.”

world—the spirit of pride, avarice, domination, and ambition—the indulgence of which, has, in all ages, proved fatal to the purity, peace, and happiness of the kingdom of Christ.

***This inconsistent conduct of the leading men among them, in professing a religion, the prominent characteristics of which are humility and self denial, and at the same time aspiring after the pleasures and the honours of this world, seems to have forcibly struck the very heathens themselves.***

Hence, an historian of the latter class, who lived shortly after the time of Constantine, remarks concerning the bishops of Rome, "It would be well if, despising the magnificence of the city, they would imitate some of the bishops of provincial towns, whose temperance in eating and drinking, plainness of apparel, and looking above the world, recommended them to the deity and his true worshippers."<sup>18</sup>

Now they began to new-model the Christian church the government of which was, as far as possible, arranged conformably to the government of the state. The emperor himself assumed the title of bishop—and claimed the power of regulating its external affairs; and he and his successors convened councils, in which they presided, and determined all matters of discipline. The bishops corresponded to those magistrates whose jurisdiction was confined to single cities; the metropolitans to the proconsuls or presidents of provinces; the primates to the emperor's vicars, each of whom governed one of the imperial provinces.

***Canons and prebendaries of cathedral churches took their rise from the societies of ecclesiastics, which Eusebius, bishop of Vercelli, and after him Augustine, formed in their houses, and in which these prelates were styled their fathers and masters...***

The Laodicean characteristic of the Church of God breathes a similar infection – lukewarm, comfortable, and lacking zeal. Until Constantine and not long after, the early Church repeatedly felt the wrath of Roman and other pagan rulers including Diocletian and Maximian. The apostasy comes upon the true Church as she fails to keep the truth and obey the voice of God, lulled into a false sense of security and tolerance of error, repeatedly failing to adhere to the admonition of God in Deuteronomy:

***12. Then beware lest you forget the LORD Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage. 13. You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall swear by His name. 14. You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people who are all around you, 15. For the LORD your God is a jealous God among you, lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you and destroy you from off the face of the earth.***

***16. You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah. 17. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you.***

***18. And you shall do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD, so that it may be well with you, and so that you may go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore to your fathers, 19. To cast out all your enemies from before you as the LORD has spoken.***

**20. When your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What are the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?’ 21. Then you shall say to your son, ‘We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.**

22. And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh and upon all his household, before our eyes. 23. And He brought us out from there so that He might bring us in to give us the land which He swore to our fathers.

24. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes—to fear the LORD our God for our good always so that He might preserve us alive, as it is today. 25. And it shall be righteousness for us if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God as He has commanded us. (Deuter. 6:12 FV)

*In reviewing the history of the Christian church, from the first propagation of the gospel until the reign of Constantine, it can scarcely fail to strike the reader's attention, that the Christian profession is marked, during this period, with a peculiar character, in distinction from what it sustained after the accession of Constantine to the throne, when the Christian religion was taken under his fostering care, and supported by the civil government.*

***The first propagation of the Christian faith was not only unaided, but directly opposed in most instances, by civil governments, in the different countries in which it spread. The publishers of the gospel were, in general, plain and unlearned men, and destitute of all worldly influence and power; their doctrine was, in itself, obnoxious, and their appearance contemptible; nor could they present to the view of men any other inducement to embrace their testimony, than the prospect of life and immortality in the world to come; with the certainty, that through much tribulation believers must enter into the kingdom of God.***

***The success of their doctrine stood in direct opposition to the power of princes, the wisdom of philosophers, the intrigues of courts, the enmity of the pagan priesthood, with all the weight of an established system of idolatry and superstition; it could, therefore, only make its way by sustaining and overcoming all the malice and rage of its enemies.***

*In the view that we have taken of the Christian history during the preceding period, it appears uniformly in harmony with this representation. **The general character of the disciples of Christ is that of a suffering people; and, notwithstanding some intervals of repose occasionally intervening, in general the progress of the gospel is traced in the blood of the saints, and its power and evidence made conspicuous in prevailing against the most formidable opposition.***

*Thus the excellency of its power appeared to be of God, and not of man. While the Christian cause was thus opposed to the world, and made its way by its own divine energy, the general purity of its professors was preserved; for, what could induce men to embrace it, but a conviction of its heavenly origin and importance?*

*So long as the Christian profession was thus situated, its success carried with it its own witness. But the scene is altogether changed, when we view the state of matters after the ascension of Constantine; for then, instead of the teachers of Christianity being called upon to shew their attachment to it, by self-denial and suffering for its sake, we see them exalted to worldly honours and dignity, and the holy and heavenly religion of Jesus converted into a system of pride, domination, and hypocrisy and becoming, at length, the means of gratifying the vilest lusts and passions of the human heart.*

*The consequence of such a change in the state of things may be easily anticipated by those who have any proper views of the corruption of human nature; and it corresponds with matter of fact. For no sooner do we perceive the teachers in the church, who, in former periods, were most conspicuous for sustaining the opposition of the persecuting powers, and animating their flocks to a patient continuance in bearing the cross—no sooner do we see them invested with secular honours, great wealth, and elevated dignity, than the whole object of their lives seems to have been absorbed in maintaining their power and pre-eminence, and aspiring at dominion over the bodies and consciences of men.*

*From the days of Constantine, the corruptions of the Christian profession proceeded with rapid progress. Many evils, probably, existed before this period, which prepared the way for the events that were to follow; but when the influence of the secular power became an engine of the clergy, to be exercised in their kingdom, it need not be a matter of surprise that the progress became exceedingly rapid in converting the religion of Christ into a system of spiritual tyranny, idolatry, superstition, and hypocrisy, and which arrived at its full height in the Roman hierarchy, when, what is called, the church, became the sink of iniquity.*

*That such a display of human depravity as we shall have to detail in the succeeding events of church history, should be exhibited under a profession of Christianity, may very reasonably excite the greatest astonishment.*

*Many, indeed, without discriminating between Christianity and the corruption of it, have found that they conceive a sufficient justification of their infidelity, and in many abominations which have been, and still are, committed under the Christian name. And it must be allowed, that it is one of the most plausible and successful arguments in encouraging and supporting the skeptical state of mind, to paint the Christian system if it appears the engine of priestcraft, and the support of spiritual tyranny, idolatry, and superstition.*

*But genuine Christianity no more accountable for these enormities, than what is called, the religion of nature is for all the absurd and superstitious rites of paganism. **It may be proper, therefore, to observe, that the greatest iniquity that has been discovered in what is called the Christian church, admitting the evil in its full extent, is but the accomplishment of what was before predicted in the sacred scriptures; and, considered in this view, it presents us with a most powerful argument in confirmation, of the prophetic word.***

*The establishment of Christianity by Constantine, the obstruction, which had hitherto operated against the full manifestation of the antichristian power, being removed, the current of events gradually brought matters to that state, in which "the man of sin" became fully revealed, "sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself as God."*



The apostles of the Son of God gave many intimations in their writings of the corruptions which should fall under the Christian profession at a future period. There were not wanting symptoms of this even in their own days, as appears from the following passages.

When the apostle Paul delivered to the elders of the church at Ephesus, a solemn warning to take heed to themselves and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, he adds, as the reason for it **"for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves shall come in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."** (Acts 20:30).

**"The jealousy and fear which he entertained relative to the infiltration of false teachers, is manifest in the following passage: "...if by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 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, therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed into ministers of righteousness." (2 Cor. 11: 3, 13, 14, 15.)**

The same general caution against the effects which should proceed from false teachers, is very plainly given by the apostle Peter. "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you, whose judgment now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not." 2 Pet. 2: 1—3.

To these passages, which, with many others that might be adduced are calculated to awaken the attention of Christians to the dangers they should be exposed to from corrupt teachers, we may add the following, which not only foretells but describes the nature of the apostasy that should take place, and, at a period remote from the time when the predictions were delivered.

**"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth." 1 Tim. 4: 1—3.**

Again, **"This know also, that in the last days perilous time shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God;—having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3: 1—5.**

*But of all the predictions contained in the New Testament, the most particular and express description of the antichristian power that should arise under the Christian name, is the following.*

***"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled; neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember, ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"***

***And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." 2 Thess. 2: 1—10.***

The heart of man yearns for its own way and life, which we know not only leads to death but to many deadly innovations that appear to renew and restore. The deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart (Jer. 17:9) pursues each of us continually, and we need the renewal of God in every one of our thoughts (II Cor. 10:5). So, the plan of Satan boldly passes on the deceptions to each generation from earliest youth, attempting to take the mantle of god and destroy the truth (John 16).

Search the scriptures and find the anger vented against the truth - even within the nations of Israel - so that our own people and ancestors became chattel in the hand of Satan. His attempt to destroy those that hold the truth like Elijah, displays a rage born of the false light that spreads darkness. Our hearts fail in the face of sad examples – Korah, Ahab, Manasseh, Saul, and king Zedekiah. No surprise that the deceptions become even more dastardly, systemic, and pervasive as man regresses when seemingly progressing!

But the Church came under the wing of sympathizers, as they slowly migrate to the hidden valleys, enjoying some protection from the ravaging beast and burgeoning false prophet. Some principalities and power protect our people as the power of the false church infects the heart of the beasts. The dominant power over time, saps the protecting and sweet power of the civil princes.

As Monastier records<sup>19</sup>:

*Of this the councils furnish numerous examples. In course of time they proceeded to much greater lengths; they shut up in cloisters and subjected to severe penance those whom they deemed opponents. But it was hardly till after the power of the popes had reached its height, in the time of Gregory VII (Hildebrand), that here and there a few persons of note, holding opposite opinion, perished by a violent death, either by fire or sword.*

***But systematic persecutions, such as the crusades and the horrible inquisition, are not of earlier date than Innocent III.*** It is, then, easy to understand how fidelity and truth could be so long maintained, especially where circumstances were favourable.

*It will be proper here to notice a circumstance of high importance, which serves forcibly to explain the fact of the preservation of evangelical truth, from the time of Claude of Turin, in the territory which is still occupied by the Vaudois; it is this, that in the most remote feudal times these valleys were governed by a powerful lord, who held his domains directly of the empire, and was himself imbued with Vaudois doctrines.*

*This very important fact is recorded in the work we have already cited of a Roman Catholic author, who was better qualified than any other person to ascertain its truth- the marquis Costa de Beauregard.*

*These are his words : "Besides the earldoms (counts) which sprang from the great marquisates, we cannot doubt that there were others of very ancient date, created by the emperors in favour of the principal barons of this country, and that they had only the simple titles of counts granted to some lords who held them immediately of the emperor."*

*Such were the counts of Castellamonte, Blandra, Lucerna, and Piosasque, to whom the Piedmontese history gives this qualification, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries:*

*"According to this evidence, the counts of Lucerna, lords of the valleys, held immediately of the empire, and were, consequently, independent of every neighbouring prince; and so little was their power inferior to that of the counts and marquises in the vicinity, that in their Valleys, which their normal position rendered easy to defend, they could protect their vassals against every foreign invasion.*

*The same author adds, "We do not see, however, that the princes of Achaie, who were so near them (the Vaudois), persecuted them. It is even believed that some of the counts of Lucerna, immediate vassals of the empire and principal lords of these valleys, at a very ancient period, shared their belief.*

*In the absence of other historical documents, the armorial bearings of the house of Lucerna are sufficient, it appears to us, to prove the fact just stated. They are symbolical; they present a flambeau (Lucerna) emitting a brilliant light in the midst of darkness. **The surrounding device is explanatory - Lux lucet in tenebris, "The light shines in the darkness."***

*These armorial bearings and this device, which the Vaudois of the valleys, even to this day, love to regard as theirs, attest, by their symbolical significance. One document, which certainly exists, would interest the Vaudois in more than one respect, namely, the treaty by which the counts of Lucerna and the marquis of Angrogna submitted to the house of Savoy; and the conditions of this deed were certainly favourable to the Vaudois. **These were the franchises and religious liberties which they have always claimed, but, for the most part, in vain.***

## **PART 5 - Assaults – the Earthly and Godly kingdom - The Church of God testimonial**

Assaults against the truth emerge from reliable records – some from civil sources, some by the hand of the false religious edicts and testimonies, and some from the hands of the persecuted. Historical records primarily found in major documentaries including Martyr's Mirror – published 1632, Waldenses: Anterior to the Reformation – published 1611; and the works of the Church preserved in various libraries of the Europe.

True to prophecy the Church not only survives but thrives in the wilderness for 700 years – see Figure 1. The true Church of God spreads, even as the martyrdom reaches a fever pitch. Some groups unprotected by the narrow defiles and immense precipices of the Alps wander the environs of Europe, under constant assault.

In the communities of ancient Gaul (eastern modern France), the low lands (modern Netherlands), Bohemia (modern Czech republic), Saxony (modern Germany) and Calabria (southern Italy) attacks resound with the most vile instruments of torture and death intending to kill both the true spirit of God and the people who preserve the power of the Holy Spirit.

Although God's people improve communities through peace, joy and industry, the powers of this world fear the threat to their authority.

Some European principalities fracture Babylon, as the reformation storm gains strength in the 1500s. But the power of the civil government and the false church dominates major dominions – Spain spreads her influence through Philip – fresh from the killing fields of the Church of God in France – Merindole. The foaming threats identify the innocent enclaves in old Gaul. As Jones reports:<sup>20</sup>

*Having devoted a former section to the purpose of tracing the rise, spirit, operation, and progress of that infernal instrument of cruelty, known by the name of the inquisition; that we may not wholly lose sight of **the influence of this engine of spiritual despotism**, we shall, for a moment, suspend the immediate narrative of the Waldenses **in** France and Piedmont, in order that we may take a cursory view of the state of affairs, **in reference to religion, in Spain and the Netherlands, at the period at which we are now arrived, namely, about, twenty years after the Reformation by Luther.***

*It is scarcely necessary for me to state, that, in the succession of **kings by whom Spain had been governed for about the space of three hundred years**, the popes of Rome had generally found a race of obsequious princes, seldom reluctant to yield their concurrence with any measures that might be proposed for the destruction of heretics **(the Church – chattel for funding of empires and worldly ambition.)***

*But it was now the misfortune of that country to possess a monarch whose zeal for the extirpation of excretal pravity, surpassed even that of popes and cardinals. This monarch was Philip II son of the Emperor Charles V and of Isabella, daughter of Immanuel the great, King of Portugal.*

*He was born on the 27th of May, 1527, and educated in Spain, under ecclesiastics noted for their bigotry, which may account for several of those features in his character that afterwards appeared so prominently in his conduct. He was the most powerful monarch of the age; for, besides the government of Spain, he possessed the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; the duchy of*

*Milan, Franche Compte, and the Netherlands, or, as they were then generally termed, the Low Countries.*

*These provinces, which, on account of their situation, are called the Netherlands, had been long governed by their respective princes, under the titles of dukes, marquises, or counts; and under the administration of the princes of the house of Burgundy, they had flourished in trade, commerce, and manufactures, beyond any other European state.*

*No city, in those days, except Venice, possessed such extensive commerce as Antwerp. It was the great mart of all the northern nations. Bruges was little inferior; and in the city of Ghent there were many thousand artificers employed in the woollen manufacture, long before the art was known to the English, from whom the wool was purchased by the industrious Flemish.*

*In consequence of the constant intercourse which subsisted between Germany and the Netherlands, we may naturally suppose that the doctrines of the Reformers would be early propagated from the former to the latter country; and, accordingly, in the month of May, 1521, even before the days of Philip, his father, the Emperor Charles V has published an edict, in which all the penalties of high treason were pronounced against heretics.*

This severe persecution harkens to the earlier era of Smyrna in the 300s A.D when Jezebel in all her splendour and earthly desires allies with the Roman civil government, seemingly to improve the lot of all man. But, true to the heart of all men, she incrementally pollutes the doctrine of Christian simplicity and other-worldliness.

As Jones sends out a resounding insight from the late 300s A.D.<sup>21</sup>:

*The scriptures were now no longer the standard of the Christian faith. What was orthodox, and what heterodox, was, from henceforward, to be determined by the decisions of fathers and councils; and religion propagated not by the apostolic methods of persuasion, accompanied with the meekness and gentleness of Christ, but by imperial edicts and decrees; nor were gainsayers to be brought to conviction by the simple weapons of reason and scripture, but persecuted and destroyed.*

*It cannot surprise us, if after this we find a continual fluctuation of the public faith, just as the prevailing party obtained the imperial authority to support them; **or that we should meet with little else in ecclesiastical history than violence and cruelties, committed by men who had wholly departed from the simplicity of the Christian doctrine and profession; men enslaved to avarice and ambition; and carried away with views of temporal grandeur, high preferments, and large revenues.***

*To dwell upon the disgraceful cabals, the violent invectives, and slanderous recriminations of those ruling factions, would afford little edification to the reader, and certainly no pleasure to the writer. Were we disposed to give credit to the complaints of the orthodox against the Arians, we must certainly regard them as the most execrable set of men that ever lived. They are loaded with all the crimes that can possibly be committed, and represented as bad, if not worse, than infernal spirits.*

The Churches of God, constantly beset by the civil and religious doctrines, ebb and flow in scriptural adherence, attempting to keep their spiritual garments clean and pure. Confusion reigns in history, as the false Church “champions Christianity” over pagan pursuits. The nominal Church grows exponentially, with the support of Rome. But, in doctrine mixes the name of Christ and seemingly aligned doctrines of the Saturnalia with Christ to form a Christ Mass – and with many other Babylonian symbols, doctrines and rituals – see Two Babylons – Alexander Hislop – [click here](#).

Other echoes of the early primitive Church of God align with Novatus and the battle against the infernal duplicity of the false church (infant baptism, trinity, and idolatry through the mass and popery), but a warning to the Church of God today, as Jones records:

*The following is the account given of Novatian by the late Mr. Robert Robinson, in his Ecclesiastical Researches, p. 126 ; and I the more readily submit it to the reader, because none who knew Mr. Robinson, can, for a moment, suspect him of having any undue predilection for the principles of Novatian.*

*"He was," says he, " an elder in the Church of Rome, a man of extensive learning, holding the same doctrine as the church did, and published several treatises in defence of what he believed. His address was eloquent and insinuating, and his morals irreproachable. He saw with extreme pain the intolerable depravity of the church.*

*Christians within the space of a very few years were caressed by one emperor, and persecuted by another. **In seasons of prosperity many persons rushed into the church for base purposes. In times of adversity, they denied the faith, and reverted again to idolatry. When the squall was over, away they came again to the church, with all their vices, to deprave others by their examples.***

*The bishops, fond of proselytes, encouraged all this; and transferred the attention **of Christians from the old confederacy for virtue, to vain shows at Easter (Passover), and other Jewish ceremonies, adulterated too with paganism.** On the death of bishop Fabian, Cornelius, a brother elder, and a violent partisan for taking in the multitude, was put in nomination.*

*Novatian opposed him; but as Cornelius carried his election, and he saw no prospect of reformation, but on the contrary a tide of immorality pouring into the church, he withdrew and a great many with him.*

*Cornelius, imitated by Cyprian, who was just in the same condition, through the remonstrances of virtuous men at Carthage, and who was exasperated beyond measure with one of his own elders named Novatus, who had quitted Carthage, and gone to Rome to espouse the cause of Novatian, called a council and got a sentence of excommunication passed against Novatian.*

***In the end Novatian formed a church, and was elected bishop. Great numbers followed his example, and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted and flourished through the succeeding two hundred years. Afterwards, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners, and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names, and a succession of them continued till the Reformation.***

*But the Novatians said, you may be admitted among us by baptism—or, if any Catholic has baptized you before, by rebaptism; but if you fall into idolatry, we shall separate you from our communion, and on no account readmit you. God forbid we should injure either your person, your property, or your character, or even judge of the truth of your repentance or your future state; but you can never be readmitted to our community, without our giving up the last and only coercive guardian we have of the purity of our [fellowship.]*

*Whether these persons reasoned justly or not, as virtue was their object, they challenge respect, and he must be a weak man indeed, who is frightened out of it because Cyprian is pleased to say, they are the children of the devil."*

***The doctrinal sentiments of the Novatians appear to have been very scriptural, and the discipline of their churches rigid in the extreme. They were the first class of Christians who obtained the name of (Cathari) Puritans, an appellation which doth not appear to have been chosen by themselves, but applied to them by their adversaries; from which we may reasonably conclude that their manners were simple and irreproachable.***

*The increase of the Christian profession in the world, must always be an interesting topic with those who rightly estimate the importance of the gospel to human happiness; but every one must be aware of the difficulty there is in arriving at certain calculations on the subject. The reader, however, will require no apology from me for subjoining, in this place, a short extract from Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

*"Under the reign Theodosius," says he, "after Christianity had enjoyed, more than sixty years, the sunshine of imperial favour, the ancient and illustrious church of Antioch (in Syria) consisted of one hundred thousand persons; three thousand of whom were supported out of the public oblations. The splendour and dignity of the Queen of the East, [the name then given to Antioch] the acknowledged populousness of Caesarea, Seleucia, and Alexandria, and the destruction of two hundred and fifty thousand souls in the earthquake which afflicted Antioch under the elder Justin, are so many convincing proofs that the whole number of its inhabitants was not less than half a million," Vol. 2 Chapter 15.*

*Thus in those three cities alone there were half a million of nominal Christians. The number of inhabitants included in the whole of the Roman Empire at that period, was one hundred and twenty millions; and if we extend the computation to that multitude, **we should be led to conclude that there were among them twenty-four millions that professed the Christian religion. We must, however, keep this consideration always in view, that Christianity had, at this time, been sixty years established by law as the religion of the empire, and consequently was not a little corrupted from its original purity.***

The doctrines of the true Church, attacked by religious pretenders who are ripe and full of avarice, falter in the face of the nominal Christian denominations. But she holds to the simplicity of the good news and states:

1. *That bishops were not distinguished from presbyters or elders, by any divine right, for that, according to the New Testament, their office and authority were absolutely the same.*
2. *That it was wrong to offer up any prayers for the dead, which it seems was become customary in those days.*

As the nominal Christians challenge the principles of scripture:

1. ***That there was no authority in the word of God for the celebration of Easter (Passover), as a religious solemnity; and***
2. ***That fasts ought not to be prefixed to the annual return of days, as the time of Lent and the week preceding Easter.***

The people of God did not imbibe the thoughts of the theological universities. But, true to scripture drank from the pool of the holy word of God, employed as weavers, loom makers, farmers, cobblers, and shopkeepers (I Cor. 1:27). Forward 1200 years, Jones continues concerning the inquisition and crusades:<sup>22</sup>

*In the execution of this edict, which Charles, from time to time, renewed, all the fury of persecution was exercised; and it is affirmed by several contemporary historians, **that, during his reign, fifty thousand of the inhabitants of the Netherlands were put to death on account of their religious principles (F. Paul's history of the Council of Trent).***

*Before the Emperor Charles V had resigned the reigns of government to his son Philip, great numbers of his subjects had begun to retire from the provinces of the Netherlands and to transport their families and effects to the neighbouring states; and when he was informed of this, by the regent, who was his sister and queen dowager of Hungary, **his heart relented for the calamities of his people, and he dreaded the consequences of depopulating a country from which he had often received the most effectual assistance and support.***

*But these considerations had no influence on his son Philip. He republished the edicts of his father, and ordered the governors and magistrates to carry them into rigorous execution.*

The beast and false church chase more into the valleys of the Vaudois in the Cottian Alps. But many escape to the Netherlands, and other parts of Europe. The lowlands of Europe – Netherlands is a hive of political and religious partisanship, with Spain, Germany and France vying for dominance.

William I, of Orange, Catholic, with some protestant leanings (Calvinist), uses diplomacy to weaken the effects of the Inquisition. The full brunt of the persecution does not subside until the end of the 30 years war – 1648 – eventually ridding the lowland and other principalities of the curse of the Inquisition and Crusading Babylon.

Over many centuries, the anti-Christ wars against the Church of God, eventually overtaking the people in the Waldensian valleys (1655). The anti-Christ kicks away at the Church in the very shadow of the protestant movement - amid false promises and failed treaties - brother and sister, one after the other are tried and martyred.



The political alliances with the mixture of Catholic attachments embodies the deceit of the human heart – power, wealth, and influence ebb and flow, consistent with the previous 4<sup>th</sup> century ecclesiastical power of the world, calling themselves the “ancient faith” that fights “heretics”.

As Jones records:<sup>23</sup>

*In these edicts it was enacted, **that all persons who held erroneous opinions in religion, should be deprived of their offices, and degraded from their rank. It was ordained, that whoever should be convicted of having taught heretical doctrines, or of having been present at the religious meetings of heretics, should, if they were men, be put to death by the sword; and if women, be burned alive; (this is contradicted in the Martyr's mirror as women were usually drowned and the men burned at the stake).***

*Such were the punishments denounced even against those who repented of their errors and forsook them; while all who persisted in them were condemned to the flames. And even those who afforded shelter to heretics, in their houses, or who omitted to give information against them, were subjected to the same penalties as heretics themselves.*

*And to all these causes of discontent, Philip added another by increasing the number of bishoprics from five to seventeen, which was the number of the provinces. **These new bishops were regarded as so many new inquisitors, and their creation was considered as an encroachment on the privileges of the provinces,** and a violation, on the part of the king, of the oath which he had taken at his accession, to preserve the church in the condition in which he found it.*

*They were, therefore, strenuously exhorted to maintain the purity of their ancient faith; and for this purpose, to execute vigorously the several edicts published for the suppression of heresy.*

*The reply of the deputies of the states to this speech, contained the warmest sentiments of loyalty, but it was also accompanied with intimations, that they had expected the foreign troops would have been immediately transported to Spain, that they were unable to find any reason for keeping them any longer in the Netherlands, but such as filled their suspicion that the inquisition was about to be established in the Netherlands, excited the most disquieting apprehensions.*

*Some of the deputies did not scruple to remonstrate openly, that the Netherlands had never been accustomed to an institution of so much rigour and severity: that the people trembled at the very name of the inquisition, and would fly to the remotest corners of the earth rather than submit to it: that it was not by fire and the sword, but by the gentlest and softest remedies, that the evil complained of must be cured.*

*And when one of his ministers reported, that, by persisting in the execution of those edicts, he might kindle the seeds of rebellion, and thereby lose the sovereignty of the provinces; he replied, "That he had much rather be no king at all, than have heretics for his subjects."*

*His religion was, of all superstitions, the most intolerant; his temper of mind, which was naturally haughty and severe; his pride, which would have been wounded by yielding to what he had repeatedly declared he would never yield; his engagements with the Pope, and an oath*

*which he had taken to devote his reign to the influence of the Popish faith and the extirpation of heresy; above all, his thirst for despotic power, with which he considered the liberties claimed in religious matters by the Protestants as utterly incompatible; all these united causes, rendered him deaf to the remonstrances which were made to him and fixed him unalterably in his resolution to execute the edicts with the utmost rigour.*

*He shewed himself equally inflexible with regard to the new bishoprics; nor would he consent, at this time, to withdraw the Spanish soldiers. In order, however, to lessen the odium arising from his refusal, he offered the command of these troops to the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont, the two ablest and most popular noblemen in the Netherlands.*

*The Prince of Orange, so well known in history by the name of William the First, was the representative of the ancient and illustrious family of Nassau in Germany. From his ancestors, one of whom had been Emperor of Germany, he inherited several rich possessions in the Netherlands; and he had succeeded to the principality of Orange by the will of Rene Nassau and Chalons, his cousin-german, in the year 1541.*

*From that time the late Emperor had kept him perpetually about his person, and had early discovered in him all those extraordinary talents which rendered him afterwards one of the most illustrious personages of the age. It does not appear, that, before the assembly of the states, Philip had any just ground for his suspicions of William's conduct; and there is only one circumstance recorded to which they can be ascribed.*

*The prince having been sent to France as an hostage for the execution of some articles of the peace of Chateau-Cambresis, had, during his residence there; discovered a scheme formed by the French and Spanish Monarchs for the extirpation of the Protestants.*

***The inquisition had been introduced into Spain about a century before this time, as hath already been noticed in a former section of this work ; and it met with the entire approbation and countenance of Philip, who had imbibed, in all its virulence, that spirit of bigotry and persecution which gave it birth.***

***He regarded heretics as the most odious of criminals; and considered a departure of his subjects from the Roman superstition, as the most dreadful calamity that could befall them.*** He was, therefore, determined to support the inquisitors with all his power, and he encouraged them to exert themselves in the exercise of their office with the utmost vigilance.

*The zeal and diligence of these men corresponded to the ardour with which their sovereign was inflamed; yet so irresistible was the spirit of enquiry and the force of truth, that the opinions of the Reformers had found their way into Spain, and were embraced openly by great numbers of both sexes, among whom were several priests and nuns.*

The council of Trent shrouded with Jesuits and the Propaganda movements – [click here](#) - of the Catholic church powerfully chills the new light that dawns on the doorstep of many civil authorities. The slaughter of the innocents – the Waldensian churches –brings tremendous carnage – 55,000 in a few short years with faux trial after trial, torture, and death in the public square.

An atmosphere of distrust and betrayal pervades communities as brothers, sisters and friends testify and expose the innocent, receiving rewards of property, money and protection.

But, many like Jacques Mesdagh (1567; William Tyndale in the same area - 1536) – testify to the wonderful joy and truth of the good news, and power of God's word in bringing many into the kingdom of God. Jacques' letter to his sister could have been written to all churches – exhorting the truth of God through love, perseverance and tenacity. Shackled for 20 months – with three others – then burned at the stake<sup>24</sup>.

The exploits of the Martyrs of God extend the book of Acts. Will this someday be scripture, but now a prayer for to all of us? He prays for his sister, and all Christians that come after him; knowing that he will soon leave the earthly temple of the flesh and gain, at Christ's return, the heavenly one!

*This Jacques Mesdagh was apprehended (with three others, as he writes) on the 1st of March, 1566, and was afterwards, on the 8th of November, 1567, burnt with three others, for the Word of God, at Kortrijck, in Flanders, in the market place before the city hall, having been confined, with iron fetters on his feet, for more than twenty months.*

*He was from Capelle te Poele, a league and a half from Ypres. With him died a young single man, named Willem Aerts, and two other men, one of whom was Joos Kasteel, from the vicinity of Kortrijck, and the name of the other was Karel. All four were of very good cheer and valiantly testified to the truth, and confirmed it with their death.*

*I, Jacques Mesdagh, imprisoned at Kortrijck for the Word of God and the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, apprehended the 1st of March, 1566, wish you my dearest and much beloved chosen sister, from the bottom of my heart and from my inmost soul, that you may always prosper, and be well in soul and body; and grace, mercy, peace, joy, love, a living spiritual hope, a true evangelical mind and trust, a true unfeigned faith which works by love, and the illumination, comfort and communion of the Holy Ghost, be unto you as a grace from God the heavenly Father, and through our Lord Jesus, by whom this grace has come to us; for Paul says: **"The grace of God [that brings salvation] hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope, of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity , and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"** (Tit. 2:11-14);*

*For He came and preached the Gospel of peace to us who were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Therefore we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, whom the builders rejected ( Eph. 2 :17, 19, 20; Matt. 21 :42); who His own self bare our sins, in His own body, on the tree, that we, being dead to sin , should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we were healed.*

*For we were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be praise, glory and dominion, and thanks for ever and ever. Amen. I Peter 2:24, 25; I Tim. 6:15; Revelation 1-5, 6.*

*This I wish you, my dearest chosen sister in Jesus Christ our Saviour, whom I love from the depth of my heart and from my inmost soul, as an affectionate and friendly greeting, **and for a perpetual remembrance, my dear lamb, since it may easily happen that we shall soon have to separate here; for it seems that the abominable beast thirsts greatly for our blood. Rev. 13:1.***

***But I hope that though we must now separate here for the Lord's name, we shall nevertheless hereafter meet together in life eternal, where there will be nothing but joy and gladness, which will endure for ever and ever; there tyrants will not be able to separate or harm us; for when they have killed the body, they have no more that they can do, as Christ Himself says. Luke 12:4.***

*Hence, my affectionately and much beloved sister, be not afraid of their threats, neither be troubled. Even as the Lord also spake through the prophet Isaiah: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation."*

*For "I am he that comforteth you: who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" Isa. 51 :7, 8, 12. **"For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise." Malachi 4:1, 2.***

*"And everlasting joy shall be upon their head, they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Isa. 51:11. "Yea, the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. 13:43. "And they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7:16, 17. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Rev. 21:4. "For he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death; and he shall inherit all things, and receive the crown of life."*

*Therefore, O my dear and chosen sister Susannah, let us always faithfully adhere to Christ our Bridegroom, even unto death, so that hereafter we may altogether receive the crown of life, and may hear, in the great day of the Lord, the welcome voice: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" when He shall say to the others: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:34, 41.*

*Oh, what a great difference will then be between them that obeyed and feared the Lord, and those who did not obey or fear Him; **the latter will have their part in the lake which will burn with fire and brimstone: which is the second death; but the former in eternal life. Rev. 21:18; John 3 :16.***

*For he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. Christ also said: "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find [or keep] it." **Hence, my dearest and much beloved sister, whom I love from all my heart, let us herein always be of good courage and***

*cheer in the Lord, though the tyrants deprive us of our temporal life for the Lord's name, and separate us; for we know, says Paul, that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. II Cor. 5:1; Hebrews 11 :10.*

*O my dear and much beloved sister, that we had put off this body of our earthly house in Christ Jesus, and were thus at home with Him, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body; for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come, as the apostle says. Phil. 3:21 ; Heb. 13 :14.*

*Oh, that we were there in the beautiful and delightful city, which is full of all good things, where they will need neither sun nor moon, nor the light of a candle, to give them light, for the glory of God shall lighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever. Rev. 21:23; 22 :5.*

*But we must here first go the narrow way, as Christ Himself said (Matthew 7:13, 14), before we can enter there; **for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; and still fewer, alas! who desire to walk it, since sometimes it is so hard for the flesh.***

*For here in this wicked world not much besides tribulation and suffering is promised to those who desire to walk the narrow way, to follow Christ, and to live godly, in this vale of tears, according to their weak ability, for, in the first place Paul expressly says: "**All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.**" II Tim. 3:12. "**For truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter; yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.**" Isa. 59:14, 15.*

*O my chosen sister, whom I love in God since the Lord has given us so much grace that we have found the way of peace, this is the true grace of God wherein you stand, says Peter. Oh, let us always walk faithfully therein unto the end, according to our feeble ability, though we must here for a short time have tribulation and suffering for the name of Christ; for we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22.*

*And also Christ Himself says: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33. He also says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Verses 20-22.*

*Thus are also we with child, and in travail. so that we can scarcely draw our breath, as is also written in the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 26: 18 – **from Old Saxon Bible**); but when we too have here brought forth all tribulation and sorrow, and have put off our body in the Lord, we also shall hereafter rejoice with tongues unspeakable, though we are now here in the pangs of delivery, **my dear and much beloved sister, for the name of Christ namely, in tribulation and suffering for a short time, and hated of all men; for Christ Himself says: "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."** Matt. 10:22. And Paul, also, says: "**For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.**" Phil. 1:29.*

*But, my very dear and chosen sister in the Lord, whom I love from true, unfeigned, godly and brotherly love, it will hereafter not be to our detriment, all that we have suffered here for the name of Christ; for He will reward us for it with joy most abundantly; for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. II Cor. 1:5. For it is a faithful saying. Paul also says, "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us." II Tim. 2:11, 12. **And Christ Himself says, "If we confess him before men, he will also confess us before his Father, which is in heaven."***

*Hence, my dear lamb, let us always give diligent heed, that we here, in no wise forsake Christ our Bridegroom, on account of the sufferings which men may inflict upon us; for the time that we have to spend here is very short, compared with eternity. **Though we should be compelled all the days of our life to lie in a dark dungeon for the name of the Lord, it could not yet be compared to eternity. and to the glory which shall be revealed in us; for Paul says: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Rom. 8:18; II Cor. 4:17, 18.***

*Therefore, O my most beloved sister, let us not look at that which is temporal and perishable; but let us always wholly renounce ourselves, and daily take our cross upon us, to follow Christ faithfully and willingly in all that may come upon us for His holy and glorious name's sake; and think and look on the reward and the beautiful promises, which will endure forever. **Let us herewith always comfort ourselves with the beautiful promises of the Lord, which He has given His own who fear and love Him, and obey Him in everything unto the end.***

*Thus, my dear and much beloved sister Susannah, let us constantly obey Him in all things, to do His divine will unto the end, according to our weak ability, and always wait with great patience for His beautiful promises, as did all the pious, holy men who died according to faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

*They had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth and were obedient to their God.*

***For by faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.***

*And by faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; stemming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Heb. 11.*

Thus my affectionately and much beloved chosen sister, let us, too, always be obedient to God our heavenly Father, even unto death, and also rather choose as did Moses, to suffer affliction with the people of **God for a little season, here in this vale of tears, and to look at the beautiful promise which is to be realized hereafter; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. I Cor. 2:9.**

Oh, see, my dear sister, how richly those are rewarded who love and fear God. Oh, why should we not fear and love the Lord with all our hearts, who will so richly reward us for it, since not a single word of His promises shall fail, for He is so faithful that promised it; though we must suffer tribulation and persecution here for a little while, for the name of Christ our Lord.

For if the holy men and prophets, and the apostles, had to suffer, yea, Christ Himself, who is one Head and Master, how much more ought we, who are poor, sinful and frail men to suffer, if we want to be found little members of His body ; for the members are surely not better than the head, nor the servant greater than his lord, says Christ Himself. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings, they will keep yours also. **If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15: 20, 18, 19. And John, also, says in his epistle: "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life." I John 3:13, 14.**

See, my dear lamb, how it has been told us before that we must be hated and reviled of the world. Hence, let us not be surprised, though this comes upon us in this evil, wicked, perverse, and blind world for the name of Christ; but let us rejoice therein, that we are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy, as the apostle Peter says: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." I Pet. 4:13, 14.

And Christ says: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven." Matt. 5:11, 12.

**He also says: "Blessed are they that weep now: for they shall laugh." Luke 9:21. Oh, see, my dearly beloved chosen sister, what consoling words, again, these are, for those who are here reviled and persecuted for the name of Christ, and have tribulation and suffering.**

Oh, how can we grieve on this account, or become weary or faint, when this comes upon us for the name of Christ; seeing so great comfort and reward are promised hereafter to those who are faithful to Him unto death, as is written. Rev. 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." O my dear lamb, console and rejoice yourself with the comforting Scriptures left us for the refreshing and strengthening of our mind and faith, **when you are persecuted and driven from city to city, and they inflict tribulation and suffering upon you for the name of Christ, as may easily happen yet, since I hear that written: "In those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it ; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them; and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image: and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 9:6; 14:11; 20:15.**

***Then they will get their reward for having thus lorded it over the little flock, and lived after the thoughts of their wicked hearts, and tormented and persecuted the people and slain those who desired to live, according to their weak ability, according to the word and doctrine of the Lord.*** But they who have suffered for the truth and the Word of God, shall then be much better off and happier than those who have persecuted them, and inflicted tribulation and suffering upon them, and lived in wickedness and iniquity; for when the Lord will begin to say to them : "I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth ; "for not every one," Christ further says, "that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Luke 1, 3:27, 28; Matt. 7 :21.

O my affectionately and greatly beloved sister, let us always well see to it, and take good heed to ourselves; that we always do the will of the Father, according to our weak ability even unto the end, so that we may not hear with the others: "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity," and thus with them receive reward in the fiery lake which will burn with fire and brimstone; which is the second death (Revelation 21 :8); but that we may enter into the kingdom of heaven with all the elect children of God, where it will endure forever and ever. All that we have suffered here, and this for a short time, for the name of the Lord, namely, persecution, tribulation, or affliction, will then in no wise be to our detriment.

O my most beloved, always be resigned and patient in all tribulations and sufferings which may come upon you for the name of Christ; and let us ever diligently watch and pray, and prepare ourselves, till Christ comes, and constantly "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself," lest ye faint in your distress, and be wearied in the way of truth, and in the love of Christ, on account of all that men may do unto you.

But always think of Christ's great love toward us, how much He suffered for us poor sinful men on the tree of the cross, and shed His blood for us, as the four evangelists testify in order to redeem and save us; for, ***surely He "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows ... the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."*** Isa. 53:4.

O my dear beloved sister, if Christ so loved us that He suffered for us in the flesh, let us arm ourselves likewise with the same mind, as Peter says, I Peter 4 :1. And also Paul: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5-8.

And "though he was the Son of the living God, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" for He said Himself: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38); and though He prayed His Father to take the bitter cup from Him, He nevertheless said: "Not what I will, but what thou wilt." Mark 14:36.

Behold, my dear lamb, how Christ our Head abased and humbled and utterly renounced Himself, and was obedient to His heavenly Father, even unto the death of the cross, and became poor for our sakes ( II Cor. 8 :9), that He might in all things be an example unto us (I Pet. 2 :21),



*and redeemed or reconciled us in the body of His flesh through death ( Col. 1 :21, 22) ; and we have the forgiveness of sins, through His blood, according to the riches of His grace. Eph. 1:7. Hence my dear sister, let us also, in return, love Christ even unto death, and always walk in love, **as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. Eph. 5:2.***

*Therefore let us also willingly deliver up ourselves for His holy name; always wholly forsake ourselves; renounce our own will and mind; abase and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God ; no longer live to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again (II Cor. 5:15) and always be obedient to Him, constantly fearing and serving Him all the days of our life, in all righteousness and holiness (Luke 1 :74, 75), as obedient children, so that we may not resort to former lusts, in which we were when we did not yet know Christ, even as Peter says: "But as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written : Be ye holy; for I am holy." I Pet. 1:15, 16; Lev. 19 :2.*

*"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace," says Paul. For, know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey; his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? **Hence, as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members purpose rather to lay down my life, though it be tomorrow, than to forsake the truth.***

***For I am still willing to resign my life for Him who gave it me, if it shall come to this; and, again, if it be His divine will, that I am to remain in iron bonds yet for a long time, I will also gladly suffer it for His holy name; for He suffered so much for us. And I cannot fully thank or praise the Lord for the great grace, mercy, and the benefits which He has shown me in prison; and for patience, that the lying in bonds has so little affected me-it seems to me that you could hardly believe how little it has affected me.***

*I am not conscious, it seems to me, that I was imprisoned, or that it lasted too long, or that I was thus imprisoned; eternal praise, glory and thanks to the Lord, for His abundant grace and mercy. However I have sometimes wished, if it could have been, to be with you, if it had been for the good of my soul, and the Lord had permitted it; and this chiefly because of the love which I have towards you, and you to me.*

*My dear lamb, the Lord be praised, I have never grieved much on account of it, since it was for the name of the Lord, and I know that we must once separate here. Though we should be together here a hundred years yet, the time of separation would nevertheless come, and it is better to die honorably than to transgress the law of God and live in disgrace.*

*And Christ, also, said: "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall preserve it. But whosoever loveth father or mother, or sister, or brother, or wife, or children, more than me, the same is not worthy of me." Luke 17:33; 14:26.*

*Therefore, my dearest, when it comes so far that we are apprehended and put into bonds, everything must be forsaken for the sake of His holy will and name, if we wish to be of His number (Rev.6:11); for he that does not forsake all that he has cannot be His disciple.*

*Thus, my affectionately and so greatly beloved sister, when we think on and well consider these words, why should we not gladly forsake all that we have for the name of Christ, and why should we be sad, burdened or troubled, when this comes upon us for the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, since Christ Himself has foretold it. **I cannot fully thank and praise Him for His great, unspeakable grace and mercy, which He daily shows me, that my mind and purpose are so gladly, joyfully and tranquilly fixed upon the Lord. It is at present as well with me according to the spirit, as it ever was, I think; praise, glory, honor, and thanks be for ever to the eternal, almighty, merciful God, for His great grace and kindness, that He, through His Holy Spirit, so strengthens and comforts me, poor, simple, weak, frail servant, in my mind and purpose; and I pray God, always to strengthen, confirm and comfort me by His Holy Spirit, unto the end, and also all those who fear Him, and to give us what is most needful to us all for the salvation of our souls.***

*Herewith I will commend you to the Lord, and take affectionate leave, with the comforting and delightful Word of His grace, from you, in regard to this matter, for this time. O my dearest S.J.H., excuse my simple letter and the small talent I have received from the Lord; **for I have written it from true, unfeigned, godly and brotherly love, which I bear to you, my dear, chosen sister, of which the Lord is my witness, who knows all hearts, and tries the reins, and before whom all things are naked and open. Jer. 17:10; Acts 15:8. And all that I have here written to you, my dear lamb, I wish also, from the bottom of my heart, as a heartfelt and affectionate greeting, and for a perpetual memorial, to my deeply beloved father and brother, whom I both love so affectionately.***

***Let all of you pray the Lord for me that I may accomplish and finish what I have begun, to my soul's salvation, to His praise and honor, and to the edification of my fellow men. I trust to pray the Lord most diligently for you, according to my weak ability. Greet one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen. I Pet. 5:14.***

***This last has been written in the year 1567, the ninth day of September, by me, Jacques Mesdagh, after being imprisoned for eighteen months, in iron bonds, for the testimony of Jesus Christ our Lord, for the sake of the Word of God, and for the right truth. Herewith I take cordial leave from you. Adieu, dear friends.***

## **PART 6 - Growth and Threatening Destruction - *The ashes of the martyrs have become the seed of the True Church***

A letter (1557) from Sleidanus – a documentarian of the reformation and representative of England at the Council of Trent – [click here](#) - states the early **“rebellion” of the Church of God and her adamant adherence to both Testaments – the Word of God, especially the Ten Commandments.**

His testimony resounds at the Council of Trent and against the counter-reformation – endeavouring to protect the innocent lambs of God. The intense spiritual and physical persecution lies at the flying feet of the Mother of Harlots, and her minions who, with rage continue to pillage the valleys of Piedmont in the mid 1500s.

Even though in seclusion at this time, and hunted from the surrounding principalities they continue to witness in all the communities of Europe.

As Jones<sup>25</sup> records the words of Sleidanus:

*The following account of this matter, given by Sleidanus Continuator, appears to me of too much importance to be omitted in this place. "There was in Piedmont," says he, "a valley called by the name of Perouse, and St. Martin. Inhabited by about fifteen thousand souls, whose ancestors, about four hundred years since (**of much greater antiquity**), had, upon the preaching of Waldo, Speronus, and Arnald, made a defection from the church of Rome, and had, at times, been severely treated for it, by the French, under whom they had been.*

*But by the last treaty they were assigned to the Duke of Savoy. This people about the year 1555, had embraced the Reformation, and had suffered it to be publicly preached, though it was forbidden by the council at Turin, which, the year following, sent one of its own members, to inquire after the offenders and to punish them.*

*To whom the inhabitants delivered the confession of their faith- **Declaring that they professed the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testament, and comprehended in the Apostles' Creed; and admitted the sacraments instituted by Christ, (Baptism and the Passover) and the ten commandments, etc.***

*That they believed the supreme civil magistrates were instituted by God, and they were to be obeyed, and that whosoever resisted them, fought against God (**unless outside the law of God!**). They said they had received this doctrine from their ancestors, and that if they were in any error they were ready to receive instruction from the word of God, and would presently renounce any heretical or erroneous doctrine which should be so shewn to them.*

The body of Christ lives by the words of the Bible – sustained by scripture and the Holy Spirit. The word of God challenges human concepts and systems, especially the arrogant false Romish beliefs. The living words of scripture stand on the solid edifice and rock of the Church of God and master Jesus Christ, bravely challenging the testimonies at the Council of Trent.

Their testimony and example harken to the primitive Church that Christ founded well before Waldo, Arnald and others, right back to the Acts of the Apostles. The reformation/counter-reformation struggle emerge from the spoliations of the truth of God. But the civil and religious battles erroneously link scripture to the world's systems; not unlike the syncretic culture that the Assyrians unfurl in Samaria after the captivity of the northern ten tribes (II Kings 17:27).

Only abusive power assails the word and people of God, and then only for a season. The Romish church drunk with the blood of the saints, enriches her armies, lands, buildings and ruffians with the land and possessions of the Church. Remember even the disciple's recoil when Christ says the rich do not easily enter the kingdom of God as He affirms the commitment to the new covenant and baptism:

***29. And Jesus answered and said, "Truly I say to you, there is not one who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and for the gospel's,***

***30. Who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time: houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the age that is coming, eternal life (Mark 10:29-30 FV).***

The inquisitors, especially intent on removing the teachers and pastors of the Church of God and replace them with monks, friars, and priests of Babylon, desire, over time, to draw them into the fold of the imitators. Jones <sup>26</sup>records the early human desire of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, to seek inspiration and revelation through penance, and monkish seclusion:

*But this observation is not just; the church of Rome has not so much accommodated itself to human weakness, as it has abused that weakness, **by taking occasion from it to establish an endless variety of ridiculous ceremonies, destructive of true religion, and only adapted to promote the riches and despotism of the clergy, and to keep the multitude still hoodwinked in their ignorance and superstition.***

*Multitudes came in process of time to **impose upon themselves vows of abstinence, poverty, celibacy, and virginity, solemnly engaging in an uninterrupted observance of those virtues, as they accounted them, to the end of their lives.***

*Every attentive reader of the scriptures must see that they are far from countenancing this piece of superstition. **Both Christ and his apostles kept up a free and open intercourse with the world, and their writings abound with instructions to Christians, not to withdraw themselves from society, and shut themselves up in cloistered cells in a state of seclusion, but to fill up their respective stations usefully in civil society, performing all the social and relative duties of life in the most exemplary manner.***

***Man was made for action; powers were given him for exertion, and various talents have been conferred upon him by Providence, as instruments not of doing nothing, but of doing good, by promoting the happiness both of the individual and of society.***

*Egypt, the fruitful parent of superstition, afforded the first example, strictly speaking, of the monastic life. Anthony, an illiterate youth of that country, in the times of Athanasius (**4<sup>th</sup> century**), distributed his patrimony, deserted his family and house, took up his residence among the tombs and in a ruined tower, and after a long and painful noviciate, at length advanced three days journey into the desert, to the eastward of the Nile, where discovering a lonely spot which possessed the advantages of shade and water, he fixed his last abode (see [Desert Fathers](#)).*

What is the Christian merit of seclusion from the main body of the Church? The true Church, in the wilderness for over 500 years continues to excite missions and testimony! The community impact reverberates to our time, and ironically leads to severe persecution. Avoiding the foibles of mysticism and human philosophy, the true Christians continue as aliens, while spreading the vital eternal life's blood of endurance and spiritual wealth to future generations! Not in the enclaves of despotic, dastardly, and foul monasteries that breed the idolatrous pretence of godly appearance, while fostering culturally embedded and morally corrupt perversions. Those pretences of Christian discipline perpetuate abominable behaviour to each generation – from the Babylon of antiquity to the Babylon of today!

The Dominican crusading power attacks the innocent with some thrown into ship galleys that travel the world; others recant and turn to the Romish Church, but many are prosecuted as heretics. The monasteries with hives of armies and soldiers stand at the valley entrances to unleash the force of the edicts with vitriolic attacks.

Although pacifist, the Church defends the valleys from constant deception and onslaught and defeats many attacks during this period, arousing the ire of Babylon. More often our people sought refuge further and deeper within the Alps, in caves, in forests and in valleys, restraining the main military bodies.

The perseverance and mission of the Church of God carries the freedom banner of God, and repeatedly testifies against the ritualistic counterfeit; bringing liberty and freedom to the heart, mind and community. The wisdom of pacifism and Christian culture screams from the housetops and mountain pinnacles through the valleys and cascades off the heads of the devilish intruders!

As Jones<sup>27</sup> expresses the testimonies of the Council of Trent:

*...A solemn disputation was appointed, concerning the sacrifice of the mass, auricular confession, tradition, prayers and oblations for the dead, and the ceremonies of the church and her censures; **all which they rejected, alleging that they were human inventions, and contrary to the word of God.***

***This confession was sent by the Duke of Savoy to the King of France, who about a year after returned an answer: that he has caused it to be examined by his learned divines; who had all condemned it as erroneous and contrary to true religion; and, therefore, the king commanded them to reject the confession and to submit to the holy church of Rome; and if they did not do so, their persons and estates should be confiscated.***

*But they, on the contrary, were resolved to stand by their former confession. They were, therefore, commanded not to admit any teacher who was not sent by the Archbishop of Turin, or the council there; and that if any teachers came among them from Geneva they should discover or apprehend them, upon pain of death, and loss of all they had.*

*For three years after this, the Waldenses were let alone and in no way molested; but this year, 1560, the Duke of Savoy, much against his will and inclination, was drawn by the Pope to make war upon them. In the beginning of March, Jean de Carpuignan, and one Mathurim and his wife were apprehended and burnt, and several of the neighbouring valleys were plundered, and many of the inhabitants put to death.*

*About sixty were sent to the galleys, and some recanted and professed the Roman Catholic religion. After this, Thomas Jacomet, a Dominican, was sent with one Turbis for his assistant, who was a bloody man, to inquire diligently and severely into all that were suspected; but the nobility interposing, there was no great severity shewn.*

*The monks of the abbey of Pignarol, which was seated in the entrance of the valley, on the other side, kept a parcel of soldiers in pay; and entrapping as many of these poor people as they could, as they passed to and fro, they used them very cruelly.*

Some others of the nobility did the same thing; and a sedition following upon it, they fined the poor inhabitants one thousand six hundred crowns. **Upon this a sharp war ensued, which ended in the ruin of the aggressors of the Church of Rome.** The pastor of Perouse was taken and burnt with a slow fire, together with many of his flock, and the inhabitants were despoiled of all they had, and forced to flee to the mountains.

Being thus enraged with hard usage, in the month of July, fifty of them set upon one hundred and twenty soldiers belonging to the abbey of Pignarol, put them to flight, and slew the greatest part of them. About four hundred more of their party coming up, they took the abbey of Pignarol, and delivered all their people which were imprisoned there.

In October following, news being brought that the Duke of Savoy was sending an army to destroy them; **they resolved, that it was not lawful to take arms against their prince, but that they would take what they could carry away, and betake themselves to the mountains, and there await the good pleasure of God, who never forsakes his own, and can turn the hearts of princes which way he pleases.**

There was not one man amongst them who repined against this decree. In aftertimes they had pastors who taught them otherwise, and told them it was not their prince, but the Pope that they resisted, and that they fought not for their religion, but for their wives and children.

The 2nd of November the forces of the Duke of Savoy entered their borders, and the soldiers attempting to get above them, they betook themselves to their slings, and maintained a fight against them **(though they were but few in number)** the space of a whole day, with no great loss.

At last the general finding they were not to be forced, gave them leave to petition the Duke of Savoy, "That they might live in peace, assuring him that nothing but utter ruin could have forced them to take arms against him: for which they humbly implored his highness' pardon, **and begging the liberty of their consciences, and that they might not be forced to submit to the traditions of the church of Rome; but might, with his leave, enjoy the religion they had learned from their ancestors.**"

This petition was seconded by the Duchess of Savoy, who was a merciful princess, and had great power over the affections of the duke. **It being ever her judgment that this people were not to be so severely used, who had not changed their religion a few days ago, but had been in possession of it from their ancestors so many ages.**

Upon this they were to be received to mercy; but the soldiery fell upon them when they suspected nothing, and plundered them three days together. The general seemed to be much concerned at this breach of faith: **yet after this they were fined eight thousand crowns, which they were forced to borrow on great usury, and they were also commanded to bring all their arms into the castles which the duke had garrisoned in their country.**

**And at last they were commanded to eject all their pastors (which was submitted to with the tears of their people) that they might avoid the fury of the soldiers.** The general

*pretended not to be satisfied that their pastors were in reality gone, and when they suffered them to search their houses, the soldiers plundered them again, and then burnt their town. There was one town called Angrogne, in a valley of the same name, where the general pretended to shew them more favour, and agreed that they should have one pastor left them.*

*But they forced him also to flee into the mountains afterwards, and plundered his house, and all his neighbours, and then enjoined the Sindicks (***or chief magistrates***) to bring in the pastor; threatening that otherwise they would burn and destroy the whole territory; and when they had so done they withdrew.*

*In the mean time their messengers were gone with their petition, mentioned above, to the duke at Vercelli, where they attended forty days before they could get an audience, and then they were forced to promise they would admit the mass, and when the prince had, upon these terms, forgiven their taking arms against him, they were commanded to ask pardon too of the Pope's nuncio, which at last they did.*

*During their absence, the inhabitants of Angrogne had permitted no sermons but in private, that they might not exasperate the prince, or make the affairs of their deputies more difficult. **But they resolved when these were returned to exercise their religion openly, and not to give anything to the maintaining of the soldiers, whether their request was granted or denied.***

*In the beginning of January the deputies returned, and when their principals understood what had been done, they wrote to the rest of the valleys to give them an account of it; and desired a public consultation or diet; at which it was resolved that they should all join a league to defend their religion, which they believed was agreeable to the word of God.*

*Professing in the mean time to obey their prince according to the command of God, and that they would, for the future, make no agreement or peace, but by common consent, in which the freedom of their religion should be saved.*

*Upon this they became more confident, refused the conditions offered by the Duke of Savoy, and the promises made by their deputies. **And the next day they entered into the church of Bobbio, and broke down all the images and altars,** and then marching to Villare, where they intended to do the like, they met the soldiers, who had heard what was done, going to plunder Bobbio, stopped them, and with their slings so pelted them, that they were glad to shift for their lives, and left these reformers to do the same thing at Villare.*

*The captain of Turin attempting to quell this outrage was beaten, and the duke's officers were glad to seek to their pastors for a passport. After this they beat the captain of Turin in a second fight. **By this time the whole army drew into the field, and the inhabitants of these valleys not being able to resist them, the soldiers burnt all their towns and houses, and destroyed all the people they took.***

*In these broils, Monteil, one of the Duke of Savoy's chief officers, was slain by a lad of eighteen years of age; and Truchet, another of them, by a dwarf. The Duke of Savoy had sent seven thousand soldiers to destroy this handful of men; and yet such was their desperation, and the advantages of their country, that they beat his soldiers wheresoever they met them.*

***And in all these fights their enemies observed that they had slain only fourteen of the inhabitants, and thence concluded that God fought for them.*** So the Savoyards began to treat for a peace, which at last was concluded to the advantage of these poor despicable people.

***The duke remitted the eight thousand crowns they were to pay by the former treaty, and suffered them to enjoy their religious liberty: so that he got nothing by this war but loss and shame, the ruin of his people on both sides, and the desolating of his country.***

This calm, however, only lasted about four years; for, in 1565, at the importunate request of the Catholic party, an edict was issued, enjoining every subject throughout the ***dominions of the Duke of Savoy, not conforming to the church of Rome, to appear before the magistrates of their several districts, within ten days after its publication, and there either declare their readiness to go to mass, or quit the country in two months.***

The magistrates were, at the same time, directed to take particular cognizance of such as refused compliance, and to transmit information thereof to his highness. The Protestant princes of Germany, having received information of this tremendous blow which now threatened the Waldenses, very humanely interposed with the Duke, for the purpose of warding it off. The [Elector Palatine of the Rhine](#), in particular, addressed a letter to him, which he transmitted by the hands of one of his counsellors.

I regret that its length, (for it occupies seven pages in folio) renders its entire insertion here impracticable; but some judgment may be formed of the noble sentiments that it breathes throughout from the following extracts:

"I plainly see," says the Elector Palatine, "whither the designs of your highness's counsels tend. It is to drag these poor people to prison, and there, by means of torment, to constrain them to confess some treason, that so a pretext may be afforded for destroying all the churches of the valleys, as seditious, and to condemn them as disturbers of the public peace.

***But let your highness recollect, that there is a God in heaven, who not only beholds the actions of men, but who also tries their hearts and reins, and to whom all things are naked and open.***

***Let your highness beware of wilfully fighting against God, and of persecuting Christ in his member; for though he may bear it for a while, to try the patience of his saints; he will, nevertheless, in the end, chastise the persecutors of his churches and people with horrible punishments.***

***Let not your highness suffer yourself to be abused by the persuasions of the Papists, who may possibly promise you the kingdom of heaven, and eternal life, as a reward, in case you banish, imprison, and exterminate your subjects.***

But the infliction of cruelties, and inhuman actions, are not the highway to the kingdom of heaven- there must be some other found out. Your highness may see what success has attended the last forty years of persecution.



***What advantage have those, who called themselves Catholics, derived from all the fires, swords, gibbets, prisons, tortures , and banishments, which they have exercised in Germany, England, France, and Scotland!***

***No; the history of both the Jews, and the primitive Christians abundantly shews that in the concerns of religion the power, authority, or severity of men avail nothing. Do we not find that those who have persecuted, banished, or delivered up unto death, the Christians, have been so far from gaining anything thereby.***

***On the contrary they have increased their number, insomuch that it has become a proverb- "The ashes of the martyrs are the seed of the Christian church." In this respect the church resembles the palm tree, which, the more it is weighed down, the loftier it rises."***

***He assured, that true religion is nothing else than a firm and settled persuasion of the existence of God, and of his will, as revealed in his word, imprinted on the mind by the Holy Spirit, which having once taken root, cannot easily be eradicated by tortures and torments-for those who are the subjects of it, will sooner endure the worst that can befall them, than embrace anything which appears to them contrary to religion and godliness.***

Being ordered to surrender arms and pay monetary homage, speaks to the nature of man's government that springs from a deceptively wicked heart. Babylon installs her idols in the valleys and in the churches, but only temporarily as the brothers and sisters remove and destroy many, cleaning the land of these abominations.

What causes true liberty and peace? Worshiping the true uncarved God in obedience based on His knowledge, says the prophet and saviour – the way, truth and life - *And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own bloods (Rev. 1:5 FV).*

Christ, as our brother, King and Saviour rescues us from the immortal destructive destiny of breaking the royal law, through repentance, baptism, and obedience. The kingdom of God presents true liberty from the ways of this world – slavery, tyranny, darkness and death. How can death and darkness be attractive? It is the here and now, fabricating temporal kingdoms ruled by the prince of darkness and the destroyer (Eph. 6:12 and Rev. 9:11).

But human history perceives the Church of God as the destroyers of “art and civilization”, instead the harlot creates “Christian” edifices apparently marking Babylon as “eternal”, chastising the idol smashers as “vandals” or a people that destroy valuable art works – [whether idols or not](#).<sup>28</sup>

*Protestants destroyed Catholic trappings in exactly the same way early Christians had destroyed (or modified) pagan trappings, and for exactly the same reason - according to the Bible they were idolatrous.*

*In England, William Dowsing was commissioned by the government to tour East Anglia to destroy images in churches. His detailed record of his work in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire survives:*

*“We broke down about a hundred superstitious Pictures; and seven Fryars hugging a Nunn; and the Picture of God and Christ; and divers others very superstitious; and 200 had been broke down before I came. We took away 2 popish Inscriptions with Ora pro nobis and we beat down a great stoning Cross on the top of the Church.”*

*Just as Christians have suffered more persecution at the hands of Christians than at the hands of any other group, so Christian churches and icons have suffered more iconoclasm at the hands of Christians than at the hands of any other group.*

**The religious and civil foundations of our liberties, founded by Christ and sown by the Churches of God strike at the short-lived falsehoods. In our lands we inherit a land of refuge from the source of ancient persecutions that seek to stamp out man’s amazing promise and destiny within the truth of God. Satan lurks in the shadows and halls of modern society, stealthily steeling liberty and peace. With no earthly refuge left our people will again, like Thyatira, seek God in earnest, when the great final persecution the whole world by storm (Rev. 17:5).**

**The ashes of the martyrs do not weigh down the Church, but build it, reflecting our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The Church presaged the modern democracies: freedom of worship, scripting the foundation of the modern constitutions. What is the legacy of the present Church? None other than the coming Kingdom of God!**

#### ***PART 7 - Man’s hand reaches for peace – Away unjust Babylon!***

##### ***Founding Democracy and Freedom of Worship - from the blood of the dead true martyrs***

Their legacy and voices must be heard and re-recorded, for these troubled times loom on our horizon, and in heightened and aggravated tones. The Church of God’s legacy underpins modern democracies of the earth; the protection of private property rights; procedural and natural law; separation of church and state; and the entrepreneurial industrial drive reflective, NOT of Rome or Greece, but the nation of Israel - the first and only nation blessed with the laws of God.

God blessed the nation of Israel planting the laws and land that could form a nation of priest/emissaries to the whole world, expressing the freedom that only God can bequeath (Ex. 19:6). As the Christ, as the God of the old covenant, through Abraham, blesses and guides them with the force of the agreement from Sinai. But their disobedience leads to eventual rebellion, collapse, captivity, and scattering.

The sacrifice and resurrection of Christ establishes the new nation under God the Father, with spiritual blessings, so we trek the narrow path to the kingdom. Christ, as the second Adam, endows the second covenant that can live within the temple of our flesh (1 Cor. 6:19). The Church of God inherits true freedom from the spiritual, first born King!

That freedom flees from mankind and worldly aspirations. Resurrected saints become citizens in the new Eden! (I Thess. 5:3). For He alone defines the standard of behavior, and stands as the ultimate judge of all nations and each one of us. The successive suffering of the martyrs identifies true Christians as they experience and testify of the Godly ethic of scripture to the whole world. The testimony of a full Christian, expresses joy and every day prays for the realization of the kingdom. Begotten children of God, with faith, speak the deepest desires and

passions of Christ, that extends to a thousand generations (Ex. 20:6)!

Hendrick Alewijns – burned at the stake February 9, 1569; and tortured on the rack gave a confession to the inquisitors and, along with fellow martyrs, speaks to his children, now orphans, and the future children of God. He gives a penetrating treatise begging our patient adherence, without vengeance, to the scripture. Avoid a false journey in the broad way, but hold to the narrow way, as orphans in Christ!<sup>29</sup>

***And now, dear friends, brethren and sisters, I again commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace (as the salutation of Paul), which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. Be saluted, strengthened, comforted, and of good cheer in the Lord.***

***Watch and pray.*** By me, HENDRICK ALEWIJNS, and my fellow prisoners, all of us of good cheer. Farewell. Given in November, A. D. 1568.

*Yes, dear friends, before this letter left my hands, two of us were brought before the court; dear Gerrit Jans Duynherder, our pious brother and myself. And behold, we are kept in durance, as sufficiently sentenced, and both of us expect to die very soon now.*

*O Lord O Lord! Into Thy hands, O faithful Creator! We commend our soul and spirit. Amen.*

***O beloved Church of God, take care of my three poor, dear little orphans that are without parents, without possession, or inheritance.***

***Adieu, my dear children; adieu, all my friends. This is going before you all, and following after my Lord Christ, in His footsteps. Lord, assist Thy servants unto the last, unworthy and unprofitable though they be.***

And Hans Marijns, martyred together with Hendrick, speaks to the Church of God from a heart rich with the Holy Spirit, as he now sleeps beneath the throne of God awaiting the revealing of the sons and daughters of God (Rev. 6):

*Grace, peace and joy from God our heavenly Father, wisdom, righteousness and truth, through Christ Jesus His beloved Son our Lord and Saviour; together with the comfort and illumination of the Holy Ghost; these I wish you, much beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, as a friendly greeting and eternal adieu in this sad world, where nothing is to be found but every sorrow of heart.*

***I trust to go and rest, with all the elect saints of God, under the altar, and hope to wait for you there: to this end may the Lord grant us His grace, and may He keep me, miserable sinner, unto the end, as I hope and trust He will do. Amen.***

*Know, much beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, that we are all well yet, the Lord be praised; and it is still the purpose of us all, to adhere to the holy truth of the Lord all the days of*

*our life, for which we can never fully thank the Lord. O dear brethren and sisters, how could we fully thank Him, that He so loves me unworthy one!*

***I hope by His grace, that I shall suffer for His holy name, and I trust to hear with all the beloved saints of God, "Come, ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34.***

***O dear brethren and sisters, what beautiful promises are given to them that overcome, "That they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; that they shall be of the household of God; that they shall eat of the hidden manna, and of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. 3:12; Matthew 13:43; Eph. 2:19; Rev. 2:17; 2:7.***

***O why should I write you much; I hope and trust, that you yourselves are all taught of God. Hence, dear brethren and sisters, I know of nothing special to write you, save that we should always take heed well to keep that which is committed to our trust, that no man take our crown, for Peter says, "The devil walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." I Tim. 6:20; Rev. 3:11; I Peter 5:8. O we shall be well rewarded, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Herewith I will commend you all unto the Lord, and to the rich Word of His grace, which is able to build us all up for His heavenly kingdom. Amen.***

*And I kindly pray you, also to see to my child a little as much as you can. I have also requested this of the sister at Vlissingen, and of Christian. You may advise together as is best; for I must now part from it, so that I cannot take care of it. But I am heartily satisfied with this, and am ready to forsake not only wife and child, but also body and life, if the Lord will only keep me, as He has hitherto done, and will yet do.*

*Written on the third of February, in the year 1569, after I have been advised of my sentence. Farewell altogether, and be valiant always. I trust that we shall see one another again.*

*By me, Hans Marijns, your unworthy brother in the Lord, with what is in my ability for your best, for this time.*

The words and fervent prayers sink deep into the psyche of the Christian. The testimonies, as eternal markers on earth and in heaven, speak to the future resurrection of the just and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The people of God - hide but speak, travel but share, in jail but testify, vilified but defend, and persecuted but patient. Holding to the truth of the word of God, spreading the promise of the coming kingdom of God - a kingdom, as we live in time, far away, but coming as sure as the sun rises and sets every day.

A people in this world, but not of this world's political systems, hold to the doctrines of scripture kept by Christ and the apostles – the Decalogue including the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath, Passover and all seven holy days which portray the destiny and history of mankind.

The Church originates and speaks the truth based on the apostles and the Rock of Christ, keeps adult Baptism, while not being swallowed up by the enticing archetypes of Babylon (see <https://logosherald.com/archetypal-polytheism-babylonian-pagan-gods/> ). The early Church,

from the 300 – 700 A.D. after the rise of the anti-Christ, caught between ambitious powers – witnesses the pervasive rise of idolatry, Sunday worship, infant baptism, and the false authority of the papacy and in all its blasphemies. Called the Novatians and later the Donatists – the Church grows in Carthage, North Africa, castigates the eastern and western branches of the false Church – split over the authority of the pope and the worship of idols:<sup>30</sup>

*The Donatists appear to have resembled the followers of Novatian more than any other class of professors in that period of the church, of whom we have any authentic records; but their origin was at least half a century later, and the churches in this connexion appear to have been almost entirely confined to Africa.*

*They agreed with the Novatians in censuring the lax state of discipline in the Catholic church, and though they did not, like the former, refuse to readmit penitents into their communion, nor like them condemn all second marriages, they **denied the validity of baptism as administered by the church of Rome, and re-baptized all who left its communion to unite with them.***

*In doctrinal sentiments they were agreed with (some of) both the Catholics and the Novatians; while the regard they paid to the purity of their communion, occasioned their being stigmatized with the title of Puritans, and uniformly treated as schismatics by Optatus and Augustine, the two principal writers against them, in the Catholic church.*

*The Donatists are said to have derived their distinguishing appellation from Donatus, a native of Numidia, in Africa, who was elected bishop of Carthage about the year 306. **He was a man of learning and eloquence, very exemplary in his morals, and, as would appear from several circumstances, studiously set himself to oppose the growing corruptions of the Catholic Church.***

*The Donatists were consequently a separate body of Christians for nearly three centuries, and in almost every city in Africa, there was one bishop of this sect and another of the Catholics. **The Donatists were very numerous, for we learn that in the year 411, there was a famous conference held at Carthage, between the Catholics and the Donatists, at which were present 286 Catholic bishops, and of the Donatists 279, which, when we consider the superior strictness of their discipline, must give us a favourable opinion of their numbers, and especially as they were frequently the subjects of severe and sanguinary persecutions from the dominant party.***

*The emperor Constans, who reigned over Africa, actuated by the zeal of his family for the peace of the church, sent two persons of rank, Paul and Macarius, in the year 348, to endeavour to conciliate the Donatists, and if possible to restore them to the communion of the Catholic church. **But the Donatists were not to be reconciled to such an impure communion! To all their overtures for peace, they replied. Quid est imperatori cum ecclesia? That is, "What has the Emperor to do with the church?" An excellent saying certainly, and happy had it been for both the church and the world, could all Christians have adopted and acted upon it.***

*Optatus relates another maxim of theirs, which is worthy of being recorded. It was usual with them to say, "Quid Christianis cum regibus, aut quid episcopis cum palatio?" "What have Christians to do with kings, or what have bishops to do at court? These hints are strikingly illustrative of the principles and conduct of the Donatists, who had among them men of great learning and talents, and who distinguished themselves greatly by their writings.*

***But I pass on from this brief mention of them to notice the state of things during this period in the Catholic Church. The introduction of images into places of Christian worship, and the idolatrous practices to which, in process of time, it gave rise, is an evil that dates its origin soon after the times of Constantine the Great; but, like many other superstitious practices, it made its way by slow and imperceptible degrees.***

***The earlier Christians reprobated every species of image worship in the strongest language; and some of them employed the force of ridicule to great advantage, in order to expose its absurdity. When the empress Constantia desired Eusebius to send her the image of Jesus Christ, he expostulated with her on the impropriety and absurdity of her requisition in the following striking words—***

***"What kind of image of Christ does your imperial Majesty wish to have conveyed to you? Is it the image of his real and immutable nature; or is it that which he assumed for our sakes, when he was veiled in the form of a servant. With respect to the former, I presume you are not to learn, that "no man hath known the Son but the Father, neither hath any man known the Father but the Son.""***

Church of God merchant missions spread the word of God both in writing and oral testimony. Sometimes as minstrels singing the news in the streets and gathering places, with teachings from scripture. Sometimes two by two as itinerant business people selling their own produce and handiwork, while sharing scripture.

Captured, hunted and harangued in all these endeavors, true to an apostolic mission, they serve only to spread the good news. False spiritual principalities cloaked as earthly powers declare them heretics and disrupters of the common peace. Instead of debate and proof from scripture the heavy hand of Satan attempts to confuse, befuddle and destroy the truth. This preponderant power reviles the doctrines that denounce the papacy, infant baptism, the supposed saints of Babylon, idols, sexual promiscuity and deviancy.

The beating foul heart of Babylon flourishes in her monkeries and monasteries. In the 1500s the severest persecution culminates in attacks in many principalities throughout Europe including the Netherlands, Bohemia, Frankish Gaul, the Valleys of the Waldensians, Calabria in Southern Italy, and the Baltic States. Some, thrown into ships galleys the good news spreads to the whole world, and our ancestors find reprieve in new lands.

The storm clouds of Babylon wreak vengeance in the hearts of the powers of this earth and principalities, of sanguine temperament, blush and chaff under the iron hand of Rome. Some rebel, as the truth of God surfaces and captures the hearts of reformers, adventurers and entrepreneurs.

Jones highlights the Sleidanus' record of the Elector of Palatine of Rhine's letter to the Duke of Savoy (and his beneficent wife) continues to harangue the false church.<sup>31</sup>

***"By the grace of God, evangelical truth now shines in such splendour, that the errors and deceits of the Bishop of Rome and all his clergy, are sufficiently known in a manner, by all men; nor must the Pope think, henceforward, to abuse the world, as he has done in former times.***

*I, therefore, beseech your highness, whom I understand to be of a sweet and gentle disposition, that you would lay these things to heart, and not further molest these poor people for the sake of their religion, nor refuse them the free exercise of it, but rather allow them the liberty of assembling in public for the worship and service of God; in doing which you will readily discover the falsehood of the charges brought against them by their adversaries, and have a proof of their loyalty and obedience.*

***Your highness is not ignorant what evils were brought upon France (Merindole and the Albigenses – see historical reference - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albigensian\\_Crusade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albigensian_Crusade)) by their violence, in banishing and persecuting [the Christians there], what a flame was raised, which in a manner consumed the whole kingdom, and what ruin ensued, all which has been appeased by one single edict, granting liberty of conscience; the result of which is, that the most entire peace and tranquillity reigns among them, though they profess different forms of religion.***

*And, indeed, the plain truth is, that, if your highness, out of complaisance to the Bishop of Rome, the cardinals, prelates, and others who are interested in the Roman religion, are resolved still to continue to persecute these poor people, **you will unquestionably experience the same evils that have come upon other kingdoms.***

***Nothing that is violent is of long duration;*** and we must not always follow the wolf into the wood. Poverty and hunger are no inconsiderable torments, nor is it an easy thing to lead so long and miserable a life in exile, when deprived of one's goods and estates.

*It is the height of injustice and misery to be compelled to submit to the tyrannical yoke of the Bishop of Rome, and to be prohibited worshipping God according to his word. **And it is wholly intolerable for good and faithful subjects to be accused as rebels or seditious persons.***

*"I learn, not without much grief, that scarcely anything has yet been done in regard to the things which your highness promised my Junius by word of mouth<sup>4</sup>, **and that those poor wretches who are kept in the galleys on account of their religion,** whose names he delivered in to your highness, are yet detained; from which I plainly perceive that these are the doings of your highness's counsellors, who are carried away with deadly hatred against our religion, of which I have proof, not merely by hearsay, but in the actual case of two who have been lately banished.*

The 1600s religious wars of Christian fighting Christian for the sake of Christianity ravages the principalities of Germany ([30 years war 1618-1648](#)); and the hidden but powerful true Church in the Piedmont (1655 massacre). But seemingly a dawn begins to rise and Rome's power wanes and weakens, which [incites Jesuits, the Propaganda](#) and anti-reformation movements extant to this day<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> For understanding this, the reader must notice, that the elector has before this time, by means of one of his ministers, whose name was Junius, he interceded with the duke, in behalf of the Waldenses, and that the latter has promised to redress her grievances, which, however, the Catholic clergy and the duke's own ministers had successfully managed to prevent.

<sup>5</sup>In Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden, England, and Scotland there had been simultaneous and impressive declarations by voice and pen that the Papacy was the specified Antichrist of prophecy. The symbols of Daniel, Paul, and

Cromwell and the world, shocked from religious lethargy react to the travesties in the valleys of the Piedmont, sending emissaries to appeal to the local and kingly authorities, many of which seek refuge in denial. The brief republic of Britain challenges the monarchical despotism of Europe and the Romish church, planting seeds to flourish in the coming centuries – “Build a new civil foundation to overthrow the foul mother of harlots!”

Sleidanus continues:<sup>32</sup>

*“But let me tell you, in a word, that this severity is neither well-pleasing to God nor man, nor is it the way to bring men to the true knowledge of God. **Which must be done by persuasion and an appeal to the scriptures- not by persecution.** Your highness may probably tell me, that our religion has been long condemned but I ask, by whom, and how?*

***By him who has violated and corrupted all rights, human and divine, making himself both party and judge, and who has lately, at the Council of Trent, confirmed all his idolatries, and all the superstitions and abuses that have been introduced into the church (false).***

*Let your highness carefully examine the Holy Scriptures, and you will find this to be the case. Never suffer yourself to be deluded by those deceivers, who maintain their idolatries and superstitions merely **to serve their own bellies, and that they may lead the lives of epicures.***

*Let your highness well consider, that you must one day appear before the tribunal of Christ, to bring an account of the souls of your subjects, and where it will avail you nothing to say, "I thought so," or, "I esteemed it to be so." God has revealed his will in his word, and it is his pleasure that we should follow the same without turning either to the right hand or to the left.*

*The word of God is also clear and plain; let your highness only hear and embrace it, and you will easily find out the truth. I say all this, as one who wishes well to your highness's soul, as much so that I do to that of my own, and I pray the Lord incessantly, that it may please him to enlighten your understanding, **and call you home to his true light, that you may discern truth from falsehood, and that thus having a knowledge of the horrible abuses of the church of Rome, you may serve God in sincerity and truth.***

Persecuted footsteps embark from the European ships to establish colonies in North America. A dream of liberty rises from the deaths and cries of the bloodied soil of Europe. The arrogant white horse of the Anti-Christ has rent, but not destroyed, the ancient fabric of the True Church. The noble thoughts of liberty, fraternity and freedom break forth from their lips, with great promise. But, what bears this vast enterprise and sets the course for a new world? Did the prayers of the mighty martyrs stay the hand of Satan and give us a semblance of religious liberty and time to continue in the nurture of His great faith, and then sow seeds for others?

Capitalism, communism, monarchies, fiefdoms, and all man-made Satan powered regimes will fail. Today, we cross the threshold of massive political, social, environmental and economic

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John were applied with tremendous effect. Hundreds of books and tracts impressed their contention upon the consciousness of Europe. Indeed, it gained so great a hold upon the minds of men that Rome, in alarm, saw that she must successfully counteract this identification of Antichrist with the Papacy, or lose the battle.<sup>[12]</sup>



upheaval. The Church of God and scripture warns that a world, without the true God a cataclysmic era will rise. A vengeance beats in the heart of God, that only belongs to Him - the King of Kings and His soon coming kingdom – (Rev. 12:10).

Sleidanus chides the pope and civil governments, but God, eventually, chastises the author of confusion, the prince of the power of the air, and accuser of the brethren, who animates the world.

Sleidanus concludes:<sup>33</sup>

*"I therefore beseech your highness to give us a pledge of that esteem, which you have for us, by delivering those poor people that are now in the gallies, and recalling those that have been recently banished by the senate that you promised my Junius and myself by your letters.*

*Have compassion upon so many wandering exiles, deprived of all their property and effects. Call them home, and restore them to their houses and habitations: and **grant both to them, and to the other inhabitants of your highness's country, the public exercise of their religious worship, which they esteem more necessary than their daily food.***

*Absolve such of these poor people of the valleys as have been falsely accused, that so they may all live in peace and tranquillity under your highness's government. Make such articles of peace with them as may be preserved inviolate-support them in the quiet exercise of that religion which you have permitted them, and defend them in the same, bridling and restraining the bitter hatred which their governor Castrocaro exercises towards them.*

*And warn him to molest them no more for the future, as he has hitherto done; enjoin upon **him** that he refrain from falsely imputing to them crimes and accusations, **by means of which he thinks to varnish over his tyranny; for such things are altogether unsuitable to the office of a magistrate and a governor, who ought to be a father to those that are committed to his charge.***

*Do not render yourself an instrument to the Pope and his creatures, of gratifying their insatiable desires to spill the blood of Christians. **Countenance not their cruelty and inhumanity against those who are in no wise perverse, but real Christians, and who have nothing more at heart than to serve God purely live uprightly under your highness's government,** to whom they are ready to yield all that obedience and fidelity which is your due, and to lay themselves out (their property, their persons, and their lives, if necessity calls for them) for your service.*

*The great and all-powerful God guide and govern your highness by his Holy Spirit, and preserve and defend you long in health and safety."*

**PART 8 - Holders of the doctrines of the Primitive Church in the face of immense persecution; During the fury of the Crusades/Inquisition, the Protected Church sends Missions into all Europe**

We return to the crusading inquisitor, in the midst of Europe, fighting the true Church of God, declaring them heretics, though their ancient history is clearly known and documented. As

presented the Church finds refuge and sustenance in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, Bohemia (another wilderness housing Peter Waldo<sup>6</sup> and many true brethren – from 1100s), the Baltic States, Netherlands, Southern Italy - Calabria (decimated in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century).

History records the names of the Church outside the mainstream of the world, as heretics. The worldly system of religion castigates them as blasphemers of the truth, as Christ was treated. Jones records their authenticity<sup>34</sup> and practised beliefs, divorced from the false and imitating church.

The following words spoken within each of the principalities held sway by Babylon. The worldly prophet attributes to the true Church a “shallow heritage”. Pompously, the religious system of Babylon assumes an ancient inheritance, but unseen by most throughout history, her crumbling foundations form the structures of the defiant and arrogant demonic powers.

The power of “telling” and “accusing” comes in the “naming”. For the dominant and predominate power, in the name of Satan casts the true brethren into the fire and water of death. As the accuser, he brings confusion, stalking the truth as a roaring lion, and the prince of the power of the air (speaking his-story) Eph 2:2:

***Because they would not observe saints' days, they were falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also, and called "Insabbatati or Insabbathists."*** As they denied transubstantiation, or the personal and divine presence of Jesus Christ in the host, or wafer exhibited in the mass, they were called "Arians".

***Their adversaries, premising that all power must be derived from God through his vicegerent the Pope, or from an opposite and evil principle, inferred that the "Waldenses" were "Manicheans," because they denied the pope's supremacy over the emperors and kings of the earth.***

***In Languedoc, the Catholics pretended that the origin of these heretics was recent, and that they derived their name of Vaudois, or "Waldenses", from Peter Waldo, one of their barbes or preachers, whose immediate followers were called Waldenses; but this was rather the renovation of the name from a particular cause, than its original: accordingly it extended over that district only, in France - where Peter Waldo preached.***

***For in other districts the people who were branches of the same original sect, as in Dauphine, were, from a noted preacher, called Josephists in Languedoc, they were called Henrician's- and in other provinces, from Peter Bruys, they were called Petrobrussians.***

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<sup>6</sup> Peter Waldo – not as founder of the Church but rather coming from COG – from Muston – Israel of the Alps - as giving his name and, in part at least, his knowledge of the truth to Waldo, instead of deriving theirs from him - as forming a connecting link between the primitive church and the churches of the Reformation; and follows in body of this document.

<sup>7</sup> " Dr. Mosheim traces the derivation of this word to a kind of slipper which they wore, as a distinguishing badge of the sect, and Gibbon has adopted his opinion. But I agree with Mr. Robinson in thinking it very unlikely that people who could not descend from their mountains into neighbouring states, without hazarding their lives, through the furious zeal of inquisitors, should tempt danger by affixing a visible mark on their shoes. The above opinion, therefore, appear much more probable.

Sometime they received their name from their manners, as "Catharists," (Puritans) **(recall the name given the Donatists and Novatians in earlier times)** and from the foreign country whence it was pretended they had been expelled, they were called "Bulgarians" or Bougres.

In Italy they were commonly called Fraticelli, that is, "men of the brotherhood," because they cultivated brotherly love among themselves, acknowledging one another as brethren in Christ. ***Sometimes they were denominated "Paulicians", and, by corruption of the word, "Publicans," considering them as sprung from that ancient sect which, in the seventh century, spread over Armenia and Thrace.***

And which, when persecuted by the Greek emperors, might emigrate into Europe, and mingle with the Waldenses in Piedmont.

In the early days (300-600 A.D.) of the anti-Christ they traversed the oceans from Carthage (former Israelite lands) and mingled with the spiritual body in the northern Alps. Continually persecuted, driven from their homes, they migrate to a place of refuge, central to the European continent.

Sometimes they were named from the country or city in which they prevailed, as Lombardists, Toulousians, and Albigenses. All these branches, however, sprang from one common stock, and were animated by the same religious and moral principles.

Albigenses became latterly their common name in France, from the great number of them that inhabited the city of Alby, and the district of Albigeois, between the Garonne and the Rhone; but that name was not general and confirmed till after the council of Alby in the year 1254, which condemned them as heretics.

***Their number and prevalence in that country are ascribed to the patronage and protection which they received from Roger count of Alby, after they had been persecuted in other countries.***

***Some writers have laboured to prove that the Waldenses and Albigenses were quite different classes of Christians and held different principles and opinions; but there seems no solid ground for maintaining such a distinction.***

When the Popes issued their fulminations against the Albigenses, they expressly condemn them as Waldenses; their legates made war against them as professing the faith of the Waldenses; the monks of the Inquisition formed their processes of indictment against them as being Waldenses.

***The people persecuted them as being such, and they uniformly adopted the title when it was given them, and even thought themselves honoured by it. To this may be added, that historians do not trace their origin to any local causes in Albigeois, and about Toulouse, but represent them as emigrants from other regions. Neither do they represent their origin as recent before the council of Alby, but as strangers from adjacent countries about a hundred years before.***

Further, the provincial councils of Toulouse, in 1119, and of Lombez, in 1176, and the general counsels of Lateran in 1139 and 1179 do not treat of them, nor condemn them as Albigenses but as heretics, and when they particularise them, they denominate them "bons hommes"- (i.e. good men)-" cathari"- " paterini"-

*publicani," etc. which shews that they existed before they were generally known as Albigenses.*

*It is also proved, from their books that they existed as Waldenses, before the times of Peter Waldo, who preached about the year 1160.*

The word of God, given in both testaments and covenants always stands as the rock in all generations. For without the word of God we evaporate from time, just as the former Israelites went into captivity forgetting that their builder and maker is God. The plight of human destiny cursed by the choices of Adam and Eve undone, firstly by Abraham, and then Christ!

***Perrin, who wrote their history, had in his possession a New Testament in the Vallese language, written on parchment, in a very ancient letter, and a book entitled, in their language, "Qual cosa sia l'Antichrist"-that is, "What is the anti-Christ?" under date of the year 1120, which carries us back at least twenty years before Waldo.***

***Another book entitled, "The Noble Lesson"-is dated A.D. 1100. Their enemies confirm their great antiquity - Reinereus Saccho, an inquisitor, and one of their most cruel persecutors, who lived only eighty years after Waldo, admits that the Waldenses flourished five hundred years before that preacher.***

Gretzer, the Jesuit, who also wrote against the Waldenses, and had examined the subject fully, not only admits their great antiquity, but declares his firm belief that the Toulousians and Albigenses condemned in the years 1177 and 1178, were none other than Waldenses.

*In fact, their doctrines, discipline, government, manners, and even the errors with which they have been charged (by the Catholics) shew that the Albigenses and Waldenses were two branches of the same sect, or that the former were sprung from the latter.*

***From the death of Claude, bishop of Turin, who may not improperly be termed the Wickliffe of that city, to the times of Peter Waldo of Lyons, a considerable period intervened, during which, the history of the disciples of that great man is involved in much obscurity.***

***They seem to have had no writers among themselves capable of detailing their proceedings during this period; or, if any records of their ecclesiastical history were committed to writing, the zeal of their adversaries hath prevented their transmission to our times.***

*In the writings of their enemies, indeed, we have abundant proof of their existence, as a class of Christians separated in faith and practice from the Catholic Church, and of the multiplication of their numbers; but of their proceedings in the formation of churches, and of their order, worship, and discipline, we are very imperfectly informed.*

*Of the Catharists, in Germany, and of the Paterines, in the duchy of Milan, etc. during this period, both of which held the same principles as the Waldenses, we have already taken some notice in the preceding chapter. But it was not till the twelfth century that the Vaudois appear in ecclesiastical history as a people obnoxious to the church of Rome.*

And even then it seems, in great measure, to have been occasioned by the indefatigable labours, the ardent zeal, and the amazing success which crowned the ministry of Peter Waldo of Lyons, whose followers first obtained the name of Leonists, ***(Leo = Lion in Latin)*** and who, when persecuted in France, fled into Piedmont, incorporating themselves with the Vaudois.

***The following is the account which Mr. Robinson gives of this intricate article of ecclesiastical history, and as it appears to myself more probable than any other that I have seen, I incline to admit it as the true one:***

***"In the twelfth century, towards the close, a great reformation was begun at Lyons, under the auspices of a merchant there, who procured a translation of the four Gospels from Latin into French, and who both preached himself and engaged others to do so in various parts of the country.***

***Reinerius Saccho thought all the believers (Credenti) sprung from this stock; and he therefore calls them all Leonists. Whether the merchant received his name (Valdus) from the Vaudois, or whether they received theirs from him is uncertain; the former is the more probable opinion of the two, and the fact seems to be that, till then the Vaudois were (comparatively speaking) few and obscure, and the Leonists at once numerous and popular."***

That the Vaudois and Leonists soon incorporated themselves together; that the Vaudois communicated their name, which passed for that of a low, rustical and obscure people to the Leonists; and that the Leonists emboldened the Vaudois to separate openly from the church.

This view of things in part reconciles the opinion of the Catholic bishop, Bossuet, with that of Dr. Allix and other Protestants. Bossuet says, the separation of the Vaudois was for a long time a mere schism in the church, and that Waldo was the parent.

***Protestants deny this, and say that the Vaudois were the parents of the Leonists. It should seem the Vaudois were the first, and that they continued in the church a sort of party till Waldo emboldened them to separate, and so became not the founder of the party, but the parent of their separation."***

But the history of Peter Waldo, his exemplary life, his zeal in the cause of truth and virtue, the noble sacrifices which he made to religious principle, and the extraordinary success which crowned his labours in the promulgation of the gospel of peace, entitle him to somewhat more than an incidental mention in the history of the times in which he lived.

***He was an opulent merchant in the city of Lyons a city which, in the second century of the Christian era<sup>8</sup>, as we have formerly seen, was blessed with the clear light of divine truth-where Christ had planted a numerous church to serve as a pillar on which his truth was inscribed, or a candlestick on which he had placed the lamp of life.***

But the lamp had long been extinguished, and the pillar removed. Lyons, in the times of Peter Waldo was sunk into a state of the grossest darkness and superstition. ***About the year 1160 the doctrine of transubstantiation, which sometime afterwards***

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<sup>8</sup> Lyon, in the center of the Celtic nation (Gaul) and launching place for the Waldenses;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Lyon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Lyon)

***Pope Innocent III confirmed in a very solemn manner, was required by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men.***

***A most pernicious practice of idolatry was connected with the reception of this doctrine. Men fell down before the consecrated wafer and worshipped it as God; an abomination, the absurdity and impiety of which forcibly struck the mind of Waldo, who opposed it in a most courageous man.***

*But although the conscience or common sense of Waldo revolted against this novel piece of superstition, he seems not to have entertained, at that time, the most distant idea of withdrawing himself from the communion of the Romish church, nor indeed to have had much sense of religion upon his mind.*

*God, however, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and who turns them as the rivers of water, had destined him for great usefulness in his kingdom. To him, also, whatever means seem necessary for effecting his purposes in the world, are equally at command. An extraordinary occurrence in providence was the means of awakening the mind of Peter Waldo, to the "one thing needful".*

*One evening after supper, as he sat conversing with a party of his friends, and refreshing himself among them, one of the company fell down dead on the floor, to the consternation of all that were present. **Such a lesson on the uncertainty of human life, and the very precarious tenure on which mortals hold it, most forcibly arrested his attention.***

*The Latin Vulgate Bible was the only edition of the Scriptures at that time in Europe (**this can be easily disproven but Waldo adds Biblical translations and other documents**). But that language was inaccessible to all, **except one in an hundred of its inhabitants.***

*Happily for Waldo, his situation in life had enabled him to surmount that obstacle. **"Being somewhat learned," says Reinerius, when speaking of him, "he taught the people the text of the New Testament in their mother tongue."** The sudden death of his friend led him to think of his own approaching dissolution, and under the terrors of an awakened conscience, he had recourse to the Holy Scriptures for instruction and comfort.*

***There, in the knowledge of the true character of God, as the just God and the Saviour, reconciled towards sinners through the blood of atonement, he found the pearl of great price a way of escape from the wrath which is to come.***

*The belief of the testimony which God hath given of his Son, diffused peace and joy into his own mind; raised his views and conceptions above "the smoke and din of this dim spot which men call earth," and led him to look for glory, honour, and immortality, even eternal life in the world to come.*

***But Christian love is an operative principle. It expands the mind in which it dwells, and fills it with generous sentiments with supreme love to God, and the most disinterested benevolence to man.***

*Waldo was desirous of communicating to others a participation of that happiness which he himself enjoyed. He abandoned his mercantile pursuits, distributed his wealth to the poor as occasion required; and, while the latter flocked to him to partake of his alms, he laboured to engage their attention to the things which belonged to their everlasting peace.*

***One of the first objects of his pursuit was to put into their hands the word of life; and he either himself translated, or procured some one else to translate the four Gospels into French; and the next was to make them acquainted with their sacred contents.***

*Matthias Illyrius, a writer who prosecuted his studies under Luther and Melancthon, and was one of the Magdeburgh centuriators, speaking of him, says, "His kindness to the poor being diffused, his love of teaching, and their love of learning growing stronger and stronger, greater crowds came to him, to whom he explained the scriptures. He was himself a man of learning; so I understand from some old parchments nor was he obliged to employ others to translate for him as his enemies affirm."*

*But whether Waldo himself translated these Scriptures or employed others to do it, or, which is most probable, executed it himself with the assistance of others, certain it is, that the inhabitants of Europe were indebted to him for the first translation of the Bible into a modern tongue<sup>9</sup> since the time that the Latin had ceased to be a living language a gift of inestimable value!*

The scripture in the common vernacular and sometimes the lingua franca<sup>10</sup>, always available and vigilantly preserved by the Church of God. God's church, existential through the power of Christ, writes and speaks His word in the native tongue, preserving and sustaining all humanity through each Godly generation! The false church covers, hides, darkens and buries the word, as does any autocracy or hierarchy, impotently attempting to remove spiritual freedom!

Jones continues:<sup>35</sup>

***As Waldo became more acquainted with the Scriptures, he began to discover that a multiplicity of doctrines, rites, and ceremonies which had been introduced into the national religion, had not only no foundation in the word of God, but were most pointedly condemned in that book.***

***Inflamed with zeal for the glory of God, on the one hand, and with concern for the souls of his fellow sinners on the other, he raised his voice loudly against them, condemning the arrogance of the Pope, and the reigning vices of the clergy.***

***Nor did he satisfy himself with mere declamation against what was wrong in others. He taught the truth in its simplicity, and enforced its practical influence on the heart and life; and by his own example, as well as by an appeal to the lives of those who first believed in Christ, he laboured to demonstrate the great difference there was between the Christianity of the Bible and that of the Church of Rome.***

***The consequences of all this may be easily supposed by a reflecting mind. The Archbishop of Lyons heard of these proceedings, and became indignant. Their***

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<sup>9</sup> The Bible was always available to God's Church in the vernacular – reference the Vetus Latina as example - <http://www.vetuslatina.org/> and <http://cal-itsee.bham.ac.uk/itseeweb/vetuslatina/links.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Whereas a vernacular language is the native language of a specific geographical community, a lingua franca is used beyond the boundaries of its original community, for trade, religious, political, or academic reasons. For example, English is a vernacular in the United Kingdom but is used as a *lingua franca* in the Philippines, alongside Filipino. Arabic, French, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Hindustani, and Russian serve a similar purpose as industrial/educational lingua francas, across regional and national boundaries. – see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingua\\_franca#:~:text=A%20lingua%20franca%20is%20any,for%20communication%20between%20language%20groups](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingua_franca#:~:text=A%20lingua%20franca%20is%20any,for%20communication%20between%20language%20groups).

***tendency was obvious; the honour of the church was involved in them, and, in perfect consistency with the usual mode of silencing objectors among the catholic party, he forbade the new reformer to teach any more on pain of excommunication, and of being proceeded against as an heretic.***

Waldo, one of the few outspoken and historically recognized true Christians, escapes martyrdom, eventually traversing the Alps and the Waldensian enclaves to reside and plant the Church of God in Bohemia. Persecution, the motivating mission force that reaches into every corner of the world. Is this part of the final testimony through the martyrs as the good news spreads to the whole world before Christ returns? (Matt. 24: 9-14 FV)

***9. Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10. And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another; 11. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; 12. And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold.***

***13. But the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved. 14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come.***

Waldo replied, that though a layman, he could not be silent in a matter which concerned the salvation of his fellow creatures. ***Attempts were next made to apprehend him; but the number and affection of his friends, the respectability and influence of his connections many of whom were men of rank; the universal regard that was paid to his character for probity and religion; and the conviction that his presence was highly necessary among the people whom he had by this time gathered into a church and had taken oversight.***

Operated so strongly in his favour, that he lived concealed at Lyons during the space of three whole years. ***Information of these things was then conveyed to Pope Alexander III who no sooner heard of such heretical proceedings than he anathematized the reformer and his adherents, commanding the archbishop to proceed against them with the utmost rigour.***

***Waldo was now compelled to quit Lyons; his flock in a great measure followed their pastor; and hence a dispersion took place not unlike that which arose in the church of Jerusalem on the occasion of the death of Stephen.*** The effects were also similar.

Waldo himself retired into Dauphiny, where he preached with abundant success; his principles took deep and lasting root, and produced a numerous harvest of disciples, who were denominated Leonists, Vaudois, Albigenses, or Waldenses; for the very same class of Christians is designated by these various appellations at different times, and according to the different countries or quarters of the same country in which they appeared.

***Persecuted from place to place, Waldo retired into Picardy, where also success attended his labours. Driven from thence, he proceeded into Germany, carrying along with him the glad tidings of salvation; and, according to the testimony of Thuanus, a very authentic French historian, he at length settled in Bohemia, where he finished his course, in the year 1179, after a ministry of nearly twenty years.***

***He was evidently a man of very singular endowments; and one of those extraordinary persons whom God in his providence occasionally raises up and***



***qualifies for eminent usefulness in his kingdom; but he has met with no historian capable of doing justice to his talents and character. Numbers of his people fled for an asylum into the valleys of Piedmont, taking with them the new translation of the Bible.***

The Inquisition, in full swing, persecutes, with the civil governments of Spain, Savoy, France, Britain and German states. Monastier, a Waldensian pastor, writes in the 1800s of the continuous, unbroken line of the Church of God, its power in many communities, especially blossoming in 1200's Frankish Gaul (land of the Celts) with ancient doctrines of the primitive church.

Their name – Vaudois/Waldenses<sup>11</sup> applied with rigour by Babylon but other names derisively applied against all supposed heretics, but always calling themselves the ***Church of God***.

**The Church prospers in France and comes under the first attacks of the Inquisition/Crusades. Although the Church was protected to some degree by the civil powers they eventually fled, but spread the good news, in many European quarters. The celebration of the Mass, birthed in ancient Babylon – commands that God repeatedly come to earth at the behest of the Pope and his prevaricators. Idolatry enslaves the heart and mind of man, and [demons run the communities](#).**

**The Bible in the vernacular, always a Church of God endeavour, permeates the communities of Europe - in this era through Peter Waldo.<sup>36</sup>**

*Historical clearness, and, what is still more important, truth, **equally demand an exact knowledge of the origin of the name Vaudois, which was given to reputed heretics of the twelfth and following centuries, in France, the north of Italy, and Germany.***

*Three principal etymologies have been proposed: According to some, it is derived from Waldo, whose disciples were called the Poor Men of Lyons, with which epithet it may be considered as synonymous.*

*According to others, Vaudois is derived from vaux (valleys), as Vallenses from the Latin word vallis, a valley, and Valdenses (most generally used) from vallis densa, a thick, or shaded valley.*

*Lastly, in the opinion of others, the name Vaudois was a term of reproach, synonymous -with sorcerer<sup>12</sup>.*

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<sup>11</sup> From Jones – History of Waldenses - From the Latin word Vallis, came the English word Valley, the French and Spanish Valle, the Italian Valdesi, the low Dutch ,Valleye, the Provencal , Vaudois, the ecclesiastical Valdenses, Ualdenses, and Waldenses. The words simply signify Valleys, inhabitants of Valleys, and no more.

<sup>12</sup> From the Noble Lesson the Romaunt word Vaudes is used - For a long time, this word Vaudes was taken to be only a variation of Vaudois; but it is now acknowledged to contain a cruel reproach, and to be equivalent to an accusation of sorcery. The word Vaudes has, in fact, in the Romance language, the meaning of sorcerer, and has not yet ceased to be used in that sense in the patois of the canton de Vaud.

Noble Lesson extract - "If there be any one who loves and fears Jesus Christ, who will not curse, nor swear, nor lie, Nor be unchaste, nor kill, nor take what is another's, nor take vengeance on his enemies, They say that be is a *Vaudes* and worthy of punishment."

***Before the terrible scourge of Babylon enters the eastern Frankish territory in the 1200s*** - Peter the Venerable, abbot of Clugny, attributes to Pierre de Bruis the five following points of doctrine, which he states in his ninth letter, entitled, "Against the Petrobrusians," and addressed to the archbishops of Arlus and Embrun, as well as to the bishops of Gap and Die.

*Re (Pierre de Bruis) denies that children, before they arrive at years of intelligence, can be saved by baptism, or that the faith of another person can be useful to them, since, according to those of his opinion, it is not the faith of another which saves, but the faith of the individual with baptism, according to our Lord's words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."*

***The second point consists in this-that we ought not to build either temple or church, but we ought to overturn the existing edifices of this kind; that consecrated places are not necessary for Christian devotion, because God, who is invoked, understands and hearkens to those who are worthy of being heard, whether in a tavern or a church, a market-place or a temple, before an altar or in a stable.***

***The third article enjoins the cutting in pieces of the sacred crosses and burning them, because they have the form of the instrument which was made use of to torture, Jesus Christ, and so cruelly to deprive him of life; the cross is not worthy of adoration or veneration, or any kind of supplication; on the contrary, by way of retribution for the sufferings and death of Christ, it merits all dishonour, such as being cut in pieces and burned.***

*Bruis not only denies that the true body and blood of the Lord are offered daily and continually in the church by the sacrament, but declares that this sacrament is nothing, and ought not to be offered to God.*

***He (Bruis) ridicules sacrifices, prayers, alms, and other good works performed by living believers on behalf of such as are deceased, and affirms that these things cannot be of the slightest use to the dead.***

*The Magdeburgh Centuriators, who have extracted and collected the different points of doctrine professed by the heretics of the south of France, in the twelfth century, mention some other articles of faith beside; for example, on the Lord's supper, "That the body and blood of Christ were not offered in the theatrical mass, and that it was not an oblation made for the salvation of souls.*

*"That the altars ought to be destroyed; that the doctrine of the change in the sacramental elements is false; that the sacred supper ought not now to be given to men, because it was once given by Christ to his apostles" (speaking of the Passover supper).*

*Evidently, this last opinion is incorrectly reported, since, as we shall see by the testimony of St. Bernard, the so-called heretics of the south of France partook of the supper – Passover without a meal (I Cor. 11:17).*

*It certainly related to the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which was offered only once, and which need not and cannot be repeated.*

***On Marriage: "That the priests and monks ought to marry, rather than be the prey of lust, or give themselves up to impurity." (what a blight this has been on the culture of the World foisted again and again from the ancient halls of Babylon).***

*On Chants and Instruments of music: "That God is mocked by the chants which the priests and monks repeat in the temples; that God cannot be appeased by monkish melodies."*

*On Meats: "That it is allowable to eat meat on Sundays and other days."*

*On the Holy Scriptures: "A rumour is prevalent" said the abbot of Clugny, "that they do not receive the whole canon; that is to say, all the writings of the Old and New Testament;" he also said, " that they received only the Gospels."*

*But here we beg to observe, that so grave an accusation as that urged by the venerable Peter against the heretics, of not receiving the whole canon of Scripture, rests on a very weak foundation, nothing more than "a prevalent rumour."*

*Such a charge requires much stronger evidence than mere rumour to establish it. He also says, "They believe in one canon; they do not grant the same authority to the fathers as to the Holy Scriptures." The same centuriators have also extracted from the writings of St. Bernard the errors which he noticed in the apostolic heretics - we translate the passage:*

*"The Apostolicals or Henricians; their doctrines, according to St. Bernard, as far as they can be ascertained, are:*

- 1. "That infants ought not to be baptized;*
- 2. That they (the apostolicals- false church) have the power of consecrating daily the body and blood of Christ at their table, to nourish themselves, since they are themselves the body of Christ and his members;*
- 3. That virgins alone are allowed to marry, because God created man and woman virgins;*
- 4. That continence must be sought by marriage;*
- 5. That the fire of purgatory does not exist. The reason is, that the soul when separated from the body passes into a state of repose or damnation;*
- 6. That we must not pray for the dead;*
- 7. That we ought not to ask for the intercession of departed saints;*
- 8. That a man who lives in sin ought not to be a bishop;*
- 9. That they do not acknowledge the church of Rome or pontificate; but assert that they, themselves, are the church;*
- 10. That swearing or oath-taking is forbidden."*

## **PART 9 – Reverberations over Millennia**

***And all the world was amazed and followed the Beast***

***And they worshipped the dragon, who gave his authority to the beast...***

***If anyone gathers into captivity he shall go into captivity.***

***If anyone kills with the sword, he must be killed with the sword –***

***Here is the endurance of the saints - (FV – Rev.13: 3,10)***

The ancient and primitive Church of God holds to the doctrines of Jesus Christ, His teachings and admonitions to repel the attacks of Babylon's pernicious and ravaging assaults; and she does - over successive generations.

Apostasy always knocked at the door of the Church seeking openings that could infect the binding resistance of the mighty Holy Spirit – both corporately and individually. Jezebel –

ruthless, cunning, drunk with the blood of the saints – brings nations, and princes together in testimonies of force against the innocent, yet bold body of Christ.

The early Church consistently felt the wrath of the false Church as the latter sought worldly power and influence through avarice, and religious imitation – as Christ pronounced against the Pharisees – white washed sepulchres – glistening and polished white on the surface but inside ravenous, and rotting bones.

As Jones records the fulminations of the false church from 300-700 A.D.:<sup>37</sup>

*The emperors of Rome and Constantinople, who professed Christianity, had now been lavishing on the clergy riches, immunities, and privileges, during three succeeding centuries (300-700 A.D.); and these seducing advantages had contributed to a relaxation of discipline, and the introduction of such a mass of disorders as wholly destroyed the spirit of the Christian profession.*

***Under the dominion of the Barbarian kings, the degeneracy increased, till the pure principles of Christianity were lost sight of in the grossness of superstition, in consequence of which, men were led to endeavour to conciliate the favour of heaven by the same means that satisfied the justice of man, or by those employed to appease their fabulous deities.***

*As the punishments due for civil crimes, among the Barbarian conquerors, might be bought off by money, they as tempted, in like manner, to bribe heaven, by benefactions to the church, in order to supersede all future inquest.*

***They seem to have believed, says the Abbe de Mably, that avarice was the first attribute of the Deity, and that the saints made a traffic of their influence and protection.***

The pervasive power of Satan and the demons in the world reflects the unbridled selfishness and pride of life, which John warned against (I John 2:16). The world's system of governance – physical and spiritual – imitates the true union of the Holy Spirit and the spirit in man, but the former defies the prominence of the honour and respect due God, as demanded by the first commandment – having no other gods before Him.

If we do not hold to the one True God then we WILL have other gods that rush in to fill the void and short circuit the vine of eternal life. No such human state incorporates a belief system void of “a” god. Christ emphatically warns against false prophets that plague the earth for they will not attract the few but the many. Blasphemy, checkmated by the first of the Ten Commandments, enthralls with phony freedoms, including Atheism which colours all falsehoods, for the most irreverent power comes through tyranny and despotism, which characterizes Lucifer and his ancient rebellion.

The most deceptive sin of all – PRIDE- fills celebrities, and underpins rebellion and blasphemy – the modus operandi of Babylon! Pride comes before a fall (Prov. 16:18). Babylon is fallen is fallen! (Rev. 17, Isa. 21:9, and II Thess. 2:4).

12. “Son of man, lift up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13. You have

*been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the turquoise, and the emerald, and gold. The workmanship of your settings and of your sockets was prepared in you in the day that you were created.*

*14. You were the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so; you were upon the holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15. You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you.*

***16. By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled your midst with violence, and you have sinned. Therefore I will cast you as profane from the mountain of God, and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire. 17. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I will cast you to the ground; I will lay you before kings, that they may behold you.***

*18. By the multitude of your iniquities, by the unrighteousness of your trade, you have profaned your sanctuaries; therefore I brought forth a fire from your midst; it shall devour you, and I will bring you to ashes upon the earth, before the eyes of all who see you.*

*19. All who know you among the people shall be astonished at you; you became a terror, and you will not be any more.” ’ ” (Ezek. 28).*

Jones continues:

***"That treasury is poor," said Chilperic, king of the Franks, "Our riches are gone to the church; the bishops are the kings." And true it is, that the superior clergy, by the influx of wealth and the acquisition of lands, combined the influence of worldly grandeur with that of religion insomuch that they were often the arbiters of kingdoms, and disposed of the crown, while they regulated the affairs of the state.***

***Historians have exhibited to us the most melancholy picture of the universal darkness and ignorance, which, at the beginning of the seventh century, had overspread all ranks of men. Even the ecclesiastical orders scarcely afforded an exception to this general description. Among the bishops, the grand instructors and defenders of the Christian church, few, we are told, could be found whose knowledge and abilities were sufficient to compose the discourses, however mean and incoherent, which their office sometimes obliged them to deliver to the people.***

Darkness shrouds the earth with false knowledge, enslaved by superstition, lies, and false symbols and patterns of markedly laughable, unjust and immoral characteristics. Witness the “talking ass” story that ironically recalls Balaam’s story of prophetic defiance against the people of God. The people empathize with a “talking ass”. You will know them by their fruits (Matt. 7:15):

*The greater part of those, among the monastic orders, whom the voice of an illiterate age had dignified with the character of learning, lavished their time and talents in **studying the fabulous***

***legends of pretended saints and martyrs, or in composing histories equally fabulous, rather than in the cultivation of true science, or the diffusion of useful knowledge.***

***The want even of an acquaintance with the first rudiments of literature was so general among the higher ecclesiastics of those times, that it was scarcely deemed disgraceful to acknowledge it. In the acts of the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, many examples occur, where subscriptions are to be found in this form: (religious superficial patronage)<sup>13</sup>***

*"He is the good Christian," says he, "who comes often to church, and brings his oblation to be presented on God's altar; who presumes not to taste of the fruits he hath gathered, till he hath first made his offering of them to God; who, on the return of the sacred solemnities, for many days preceding, observes a sacred continence, even from his own wife, that he may approach God's altar with a safe conscience; and who can repeat from memory the creed and the Lord's prayer."*

***So much for his good Christian; on which the learned translator of Mosheim very properly remarks, "We see here a large and ample description of the character of a good Christian, in which there is not the least mention of the love of God, resignation to his will, obedience to his laws, or of justice, benevolence, and charity to men, and in which the whole of religion is made to consist in coming often to the church, bringing offerings to the altar, lighting candles in consecrated places, and such like vain services."***

*But let us hear this Luminary of the seventh century once more. "Redeem your souls," says he, "from the punishment due to your sins, whilst you have the remedies in your power. Offer your tithes and oblations to the churches—light up candles in the consecrated places, according to your abilities—come frequently to church and with all humility pray to the saints for their patronage and protection; which things if ye do, when at the last day ye stand at the tremendous bar of the eternal Judge, ye may say confidently to him, "Give Lord, because I have given."*

*In several churches of France, a festival was celebrated in commemoration of the Virgin Mary's flight into Egypt—it was called the feast of the ass. A young girl, richly dressed, with a child in her arms, was placed upon an ass superbly decorated with trappings.*

*The ass was led to the altar in solemn procession—high mass was said with great pomp—the ass was taught to kneel at proper places—a hymn, no less childish than impious, was sung in his praise; and when the ceremony was ended, the priest, instead of the usual words with which he dismissed the people, brayed three times like an ass; and the people, instead of the usual response, brayed three times in return.*

***"Everything sacred in religion," says Voltaire, when treating of this period, "was disfigured in the West, by customs the most ridiculous and extravagant.***

***The festivals of fools and asses were established in most churches. On days of solemnity, they created a bishop of fools; and an ass was led into the body of the church, dressed in a cape and four cornered cap. Church dances, feastings on the altar, revelry and obscene***

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<sup>13</sup> White's Bampton Lectures, Sermon 2, and quotes, p. 6

*farces were the ceremonies observed on those festivals, and in many dioceses these extravagancies were continued for seven centuries.*

*Were we to consider only the usages here related, we should imagine we were reading an account of Hottentots or Negroes; and it must be confessed that in many things we did not fall much short of them."*

God's people drink scripture and act on its tenets, circumcising their hearts, under the ruler ship and authorship of Jesus Christ and God the Father. The true people of God express the will of God throughout history and with the power and influence of martyrdom trace their tenacity and perseverance. Meanwhile the world engorges itself with profligate farce and fallacy, to the applause of the multitude.

Perrin writing of the 1100's affirms the blackness of man's heart throughout history, and when the righteous rule the people rejoice (Prov. 29:2).<sup>38</sup>

*As "the goodly fellowship of the Prophets," and in the glorious company of the Apostles, "both have passed away from the church (forcefully against) the rest that remains of the people of God"—and as, according to our poet's characteristic definition— "A Celebration is the highest style of man."*

*I know not a more honorable privilege, than to be numbered, even in our comparatively pacific times and country, among the descendants of "the noble army of Martyrs," in the anterior ages of the suffering persecuted Churches, during that direful period when "all the world wondered after the Beast," to whom "the Dragon gave his power, and his seat, and great authority."*

*Of that exemplary and numerous "Household of Faith," you are a member. You have your noble ancestry and their Christian kindred among the Huguenots, those Confessors and Martyrs who were expatriated by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes—and those proscribed Christians "of whom the world was not worthy," require not any other terrestrial title to their enumeration in the catalogue of the "Two Witnesses."*

*The volume which I now present to you does not record the diabolical transactions of that long protracted hail storm and pestilence, during the prevalence of which, the elite France, hundreds of thousands of the Lord's disciples were tortured to death for his sake; and an equal multitude more either fled or were driven from their Gallic habitations into every other country where their gracious Master provided them a refuge.*

But this History of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Vaudois, comprises the narrative of the similar Papal atrocities by which those elder brethren of the Huguenots, the Christians of the Alpine valleys, were desolated and slaughtered.

The protestant Church emerges from the hardiness of the Church of Thyatira, but imbibes the fornication of Babylon. The Church of God rejoices in a respite from the conflagration of centuries. The light of the glorious gospel shines throughout the known world, infiltrating communities and principalities beyond the bounds of the Alps. In a diversity of languages,

the Word and doctrines of the coming kingdom of God emerge from the shadows and murkiness of the Dark Ages.

Notice that the **message of Christ in Revelation to the churches is to the angel of each church**. Under the cover and refuge of the powers of heaven, we find true spiritual refuge.

The ashes and seeds of the martyrs always bear fruit and God's people are known by their obedience to God. For the fruit establishes the temporal constitutions of modern democracies that rely on the resiliency and peace of a "God chosen" people holding to a new ideal - separation of church and state. Again, true freedom emanates from God.

The Perrin introduction continues:<sup>39</sup>

***In this connection, our national American annals, at the most interesting period of the early existence of our Federal Republic, furnish a remarkable and impressive commentary of the promise which was included in the message of the man of God to Eli the high priest "Now the Lord says, those who honour me I will honour."***

*In the history of South Carolina, Ramsay thus narrates:—"Three of the nine Presidents of the old Congress who conducted the United States through the revolutionary war, were descendants of French Protestant Refugees, who had migrated to America in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantes— Henry Laurens, of South Carolina, John Jay, of New York—and Elias Boudinot of New Jersey,".*

*Thus is most emphatically verified the unerring testimony of the Psalmist—"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and that walketh in his ways. The children of thy servants. O my God, shall continue, and he established before thee—for the generation of the upright shall be blessed."*

*"The holy Church throughout all the world," and every Waldensian both in America and Europe who evangelically fraternizes with you in "the maintenance of Protestantism exults in the certainty that the dawn of that long anticipated and intensely desired morning will speedily appear; when "the angel shall come down from heaven, with great power, and the earth shall be lightened with his glory." Rev. 18:1—8.*

*Then shall the angel cry "mightily with a strong voice, Babylon the Great has Fallen, is FALLEN!"—and "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"—*

*"The cross-capped towers, the gorgeous Vatican,  
The impious mass-house, Babylon itself,  
Yes all that it inherits shall dissolve  
And like that unsubstantial pageant faded,"  
The flitting nunnery of Rome's fantastic shows,  
"Leave not a wreck behind."*

*That you will be on earth to join "the voice of the great multitude, "Who, on beholding that most sublime and joyous catastrophe, will resound:*



*"Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth"—does not accord with my prophetic chronology; but that in the general assembly and church of the first-born who came out of great tribulation, and who washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," we may hear of that glorious emancipation of " the whole world that lieth in wickedness," is the sincere prayer of Your Fellow Soldier in the Faith - the Editor – 1843.*

If we step back into the epochs before the inquisition and crusades, the ground of the embattled Church of God rumbles along encountering the pompous false church. The latter, in a miry mixture with civil monarchies winces from the threat to her dominion. The Thyatira Church of God and its covering angel retreats within the failing shelter of the reformation. She cowers in partial protection from the synagogue of Satan.

The diversity of the renaissance - philosophies, and human doctrines cast as the enlightenment, sweeten the Godly endeavor, adding industry and science as refuges to the masses. Manufactured environments, migration to urban rather than agrarian pursuits occur over 200 years introducing sea-changes to human endeavor.

The previous religious powers seem to suffer at the humanist scientific pursuits, now taking over mankind. But the idealistic revolution reflects a distant, previous generation, when the truth of scripture and godly knowledge reveals a common theme. Did we lose a millenium?<sup>40</sup>

***While the Christian world, as it has been the fashion to call it, was thus sunk into an awful state of superstition—at a moment when "darkness seemed to cover the earth, and gross darkness the people"—it is pleasing to contemplate a ray of celestial light darting across the gloom.***

***About the year 660, a new sect arose in the east, under the name of Paulicians<sup>14</sup>, which is justly entitled to our attention.***

***Gibbon*** writes at his house a deacon, who, having been a prisoner among the Mahometans, was returning from Syria, whither he had been carried away captive.

***From this passing stranger, Constantine<sup>15</sup> received the precious gift of the New Testament in its original language, which, even at this early period, was so concealed from the vulgar, that Peter Siculus, to whom we owe most of our information on the history of the Paulicians, tells us, the first scruples of a Catholic, when he was advised to read the bible, was, "it is not lawful for us profane persons to read those sacred writings, but for the priests only."***

***Indeed the gross ignorance which pervaded Europe at that time rendered the generality of the people incapable of reading that or any other book; but even those of the laity who could read, were dissuaded by their religious guides from meddling with the bible.***

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<sup>14</sup> It is much to be regretted that of this class of Christians, all our information is derived through the medium of their enemies. The two original sources of intelligence concerning them are Photius, Contra Manichaeos; and Siculus Hist. Manicheor.

<sup>15</sup> This is not Constantine of 325 A.D.

*Constantine, however, made the best use of the deacon's present—he studied his New Testament with unwearied assiduity and more particularly the writings of the apostle Paul, from which he at length endeavoured to deduce a system of doctrine and worship. "He investigated the creed of primitive Christianity," says Gibbon<sup>16</sup>, "and whatever might be the success, a protestant reader will applaud the spirit of the inquiry."*

*The knowledge to which Constantine himself was, under the divine blessing, enabled to attain, he gladly communicated to others around him, and a Christian church was collected. In a little time several individuals arose among them qualified for the work of the ministry; and several other churches were collected throughout Armenia and Cappadocia.*

*It appears from the whole of their history to have been a leading object with Constantine and his brethren to restore, as far as possible, the profession of Christianity to all its primitive simplicity.*

*Their public appearance soon attracted the notice of the Catholic party, who immediately branded them with the opprobrious appellation of Manichaeans<sup>17</sup>; but they sincerely condemned the memory and opinions of the Manichaean sect, and complained of the injustice which impressed that invidious name on them." There is reason, therefore, to think, that they voluntarily adopted the name of Paulicians, and that they derived it from the name of the great apostle of the Gentiles.*

*Constantine now assumed or received the name of Sylvanus, and others of his fellow labourers were called Titus, Timothy, Tichicus, etc. and as the churches arose and were formed in different places, they were named after those apostolic churches to which Paul originally addressed his inspired writings, without any regard to the name of the city or town in which they assembled for worship.*

*The labours of Constantine—Sylvanus, were crowned with much success. Pontus and Cappadocia, regions once renowned for Christian piety, were again blessed with a diffusion of the light of divine truth. He himself resided in the neighbourhood of Colonia, in Pontus, and their congregations, in process of time, were diffused over the provinces of Asia Minor, to the westward of the Euphrates.*

***"The Paulician teachers," says Gibbon, "were distinguished only by their scriptural names, by the modest title of fellow-pilgrims; by the austerity of their lives, their zeal and knowledge, and the credit of some extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit. But they were incapable of desiring, or at least of obtaining the wealth and honours of the Catholic prelacy. Such anti-Christian pride they strongly censured."***

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<sup>16</sup> Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire Volume 10. Chapter 54

<sup>17</sup> Mani born to Jewish Gnostic Christians in Persia, sought mystical or individual experience through a tolerant and collaborative set of beliefs - Other than incorporating the symbols and doctrine of dominant religious traditions, Manichaeism also incorporated the symbols and deities of indigenous traditions, in particular the [Hindu](#) deity [Ganesha](#) into its fold, demonstrated by the image available in the article, "Manichaean Art and Calligraphy" by Hans-Joachim Klimkeit. Mani was claiming to be the reincarnation of the Buddha, Lord Krishna, Zoroaster and Jesus depending on the context in which he was carrying out his preachings. Such strategic claims fostered a spirit of toleration among the Manichaeans and the other religious communities and this particular feature greatly assisted them in gaining the approval of authorities to practice in different regions along the [Silk Road](#).<sup>[25]</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manichaeism>

*Roused by the growing importance of this sect, the Greek emperors began to persecute the Paulicians with the most sanguinary severity; and the scenes of Galerius and Maximin were re-acted under the Christian forms and names.*

*"To their excellent deeds" says the bigoted Peter Siculus, "The divine and orthodox emperors added this virtue, that they ordered the Montanists and Manichaeans (by which epithets they chose to stigmatize the Paulicians) to be capitally punished; and their books, wherever found, to be committed to the flames; also that if any person was found to have secreted them, he was to be put to death, and his goods confiscated." A Greek officer, armed with legal and military powers, appeared at Colonia, to strike the shepherd, and, if possible, reclaim the lost sheep to the Catholic fold."*

*By a refinement of cruelty, Simeon (the officer) placed the unfortunate Sylvanus before a line of his disciples, who were commanded, as the price of their own pardon, and the proof of their repentance, to massacre their spiritual father. They turned aside from the impious office; the stones dropt from their filial hands, and of the whole number, only one executioner could be found; a new David, as he is styled by the Catholics, who boldly overthrew the giant of heresy." This apostate, whose name was Justus, stoned to death the father of the Paulicians, who had now laboured among them twenty-seven years.*

The false church brings material wealth and eternal promises to the fiefdoms, duchies, and monarchies of the world. The Crusading inquisitor, proclaiming a holy war against the Saracens and Muslims, attacks all outside her power and control, bringing her wrath against the Church of God - in valleys, mountains, and plains from the Urals to the Atlantic; from the Baltic to Mediterranean.

Apostasy can seep into the wounds of the Church of God, sometimes glacially. The innovations and novelties take hold, appealing, in their deception (e.g. infant baptism, the mass, and idolatry). The imitation attracts the powers of this world. Babylon enticed by riches, power and pomp seeks to overcome and wear down the saints of the Church of God.

24. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise. And another shall arise after them. And he shall be different from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. **25. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change the set times and the laws. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and one-half time.** (Dan. 7 FV)

A later pastor of the Waldensian Church, Monastier records the historical plight of the people of God:<sup>41</sup>

*St. Bernard cites besides, several other points of doctrine and opinions of the apostolicals. Among other things he says, "That they depreciate the orders of the church: they do not receive its institutions. They despise its sacraments, and do not obey its commandments."*

*He remarks that these doctrines have been collected by his own research, partly from altercations or disputes, and partly from the lips of those who had returned to the papal church. **On the other hand, we may remark that there is reason to apprehend that prejudice and animosity have more than once led to incorrect and unfavorable reports of the doctrines of those who were looked upon as heretics.***

*The reader will have already had reason to make this observation for himself; for evidently many of the heretical opinions as given by Pierre de Clugny and St. Bernard are incomplete, and presented in a false light; and we need only compare analogous opinions together, to be convinced that such is the case.*

*A contemporary author, whom we have already mentioned, Heribert, a monk of Angouleme, says of the heretics of Perigord and Perigueux in particular:*

***"In the country of Perigueux, a multitude of heretics have appeared, who pretend to lead an apostolic life. They neither eat meat nor drink wine oftener than once in three days, and then very moderately. They bend their knees a hundred times a day. They do not take money. Their sect is very perverse and secret. They set no value on the mass, and say that the wafer is not to be taken, but a bit of bread.***

***They adore neither the cross, nor the image of Jesus Christ; but rather hinder those who would. A great many people have been already seduced; not only nobles who abandon their wealth, but also scholars, priests, monks, and friars."***

***The annalist de Morgan, in Thomas Gale, under the date of the year 1163, expresses himself nearly in the same manner. He adds a remarkable instance of the power of persuasion, and of the Christian life which they possessed; it is the only one we shall report:***

*"If ignorant persons," he says, "come to them, at the end of eight days they become so accomplished, that they cannot be surpassed either in information or exemplary conduct."*

***The religious and evangelical movement did not remain confined with the limits of the south of France - manifestations very similar, although presenting, as they are reported, some points of difference, appeared along the Rhine, in Flanders, Burgundy, Lower Brittany, and elsewhere.***

***Evervin, writing to St. Bernard about the heretics discovered at Cologne, of whom a great number were burned, and the rest returned to the church, expresses himself as follows:***

***"You know, my lord, that, on returning to the church, they have told us that they are a very great multitude, spread almost everywhere, and that they have in their ranks some of our ecclesiastics and monks. And those who have been burned, have urged in their defence, that this heresy has been propagated secretly from the times of the martyrs to the present day, and has existed in Greece and some other countries."***

*Let our readers only call to mind what we have said of its conquests in Astesan, in the tenth century. We shall elsewhere have an opportunity of proving, by fresh details, this extension of the Vaudois church beyond the limits within which it is confined at the present day.*

*An ancient writer, Gioffredo, informs us that the Vaudois heresy, which he erroneously supposes to have proceeded from France, had already extended, in the year 1198, not only into the valleys of Angrogna, Lucerna, and San Martino, in the diocese of Turin, but also in to the plain:*

"Not content," he says, " with remaining hid in the caverns of the mountains, they (Vaudois) have had the audacity to sow false doctrine in the plains of Piedmont and Lombardy, fixing a centre at Bagnolo, from which circumstance it is believed that some of them have acquired the denomination of heretics of Bagnolo," (Bagnolonses,) as Rainier Sacco writes, about the year 1250.

This is why James, bishop of Turin, desirous of expelling this pestilence from his diocese, organized a persecution against them, after having obtained for that purpose, in the year 1198, a decree of the emperor Otto IV., to which we shall again refer in the sequel.

***Should it appear surprising that the Vaudois sect, or rather, the remains of the faithful church, could maintain itself so long without severe persecution, in the ancient diocese of Claude of Turin and elsewhere, in spite of the oppressive tendency of the Romish church, we must repeat what we have said before, in chapter IV of the political agitations and contests in the tenth and twelfth centuries, during which the attention of the heads of the Romish church were turned away from the scattered remains of the faithful church, preoccupied as they were with their worldly interests, and with the dangers and advantages of their position as secular princes.***

One general cause which also favoured the preservation of various small companies of the faithful church, was the inherent vital power of Christian principle, which is such that it cannot be altered or perverted where it has planted its roots, except by a very slow process.

***Other special causes were combined with this general and powerful one. Thus, in the first place, the innovations adopted in the popish church, in regard to images, the mass, the real presence, etc., took a considerable time to spread to spread themselves, as history shows.***

***In the second place, for a long time, nothing more was attempted than insensibly to undermine the ancient doctrines, to apologize for novelties, and to refute those who attacked the innovations. We may cite, as examples of this fact, the writings of St. Jerome against Vigilantius, of Jonas of Orleans against Claude of Turin, of Pascase Ratbert against the ancient doctrine of the eucharist , maintained a long time after by Berenger of Tours, and others.***

***In the third place, for a long time it was thought sufficient to excommunicate and anathematize heretics, or those who were thought to be such. Of this the councils furnish numerous examples. In course of time they proceeded to much greater lengths; they shut up in cloisters and subjected to severe penance those whom they deemed opponents.***

***But it was hardly till after the power of the popes had reached its height, in the time of Gregory VII (Hildebrand), that here and there a few persons of note, holding opposite opinion, perished by a violent death, either by fire or sword.***

***But systematic persecutions, such as the crusades and the horrible inquisition, are not of earlier date than Innocent III.*** It is, then, easy to understand how fidelity and truth could be so long maintained, especially where circumstances were favourable. It will be proper here to notice a circumstance of unification, the antiquity of evangelical truth in the valleys of Piedmont.

***They attest that from the time "when the name of Lucerna was given to the most considerable part of these valleys, and to its then count, that is, from the tenth or eleventh century, according to the testimony of the marquis Costa, a long time before Waldo, the light of the gospel shone in darkness, in the midst of the Romish superstitions which had spread over almost all the kingdoms of the west.***

***We believe, then, that we have proved, as far as the absence of more precise documents will permit, that the Vaudois of Piedmont are not a sect which owes its origin to Waldo, an accidental phenomenon of the twelfth century, an isolated religious movement, but a branch of the primitive church preserved by a striking Divine intervention, flourishing apart in the midst of the rubbish which had covered the trunk that once nourished it, and had crushed and withered all the other branches.***

The church of the valleys was a young infant, that had escaped, unperceived, from the disaster which deprived its parent of life, and had lived concealed in desert places, among the valleys and rocks, till the day when it involuntarily attracted attention; while its sisters, magnificently attired, forgot in slavery and corruption the memory of their pious and faithful mother; and, by their levity and dissoluteness, forfeited the incorruptible inheritance which the Lord intended to have secured to them by his atoning death.

For further illustration of the subject, we proceed to report the traditions of the Vaudois church. The Vaudois have a twofold tradition respecting their origin: one, more general; the other, more in detail; and both very exact. ***In all the persecutions they have passed through, from the fifteenth century and later, in the appeals they have made at different times to their sovereign, the Vaudois have always, as formerly, maintained that the religion they followed had been preserved from father to son, and from generation to generation, from time immemorial: *Ila ogni tempo, e da tempo Immemoriale*, ("from all time, and from time immemorial,") is the language of their appeals.***

***Moreover, not only the Vaudois of Piedmont, but all those who have laid claim to the name, in all places, have constantly maintained that they received their way or religious belief from Leon, an associate and contemporary of Sylvester, bishop of Rome, under the emperor Constantine the Great.***

***This tradition, under its second form, is more precise than the first, and rests on a historical basis. "We read, in fact, in the Fasciculus Temporum, "The temporalities of the church which the prelates began to possess about this time, (the time of Sylvester and Constantine,) often occasioned violent altercations among the doctors; some asserting that***

**it was just and advantageous for the church to have an abundance of temporal goods and worldly honours, and others maintaining the contrary."**

*That is, as we believe, of the Vaudois: "That, in the times, of persecution, they concealed themselves in the mountains, and separated themselves from the body of the church, or wandered from the Catholic faith." Should any one hesitate to regard this quotation as a confirmation of tradition, we would appeal to another by father Moneta, professor and inquisitor at Bologna, about the year 1244.*

*Speaking of the Vaudois, in whom he was disposed to see only recent sectaries, this author expresses himself as follows:-"It is evident that they take their origin from Valdecius, a citizen of Lyons, who commenced this work a little more or less than eighty years ago: thus they are not the successors of the primitive church, and therefore not the church of God."*

*But if they assert that their way was prior to Waldo, let them show it by some testimony. By this passage we see, that if Moneta combats the antiquity of the Vaudois church, he nevertheless testifies that those reputed inheritors regarded themselves as successors of the primitive church, as the church of God, and consequently maintained that their way was prior to Waldo. This quotation clearly shows that about the year 1244, eighty years or more after Waldo, the Vaudois of Piedmont refused to admit the recent origin that was assigned them, and took their stand on a direct descent from the primitive church.*

**PART 10 - The Crusades and Inquisition, as a deadly force, spread the seeds of Martyrdom; While the tenets of true Christianity and Church of God governance bring forth modern Republics**

## Facing the re-invention of Babylon and her bloody credos



### **THE DIASPORA OF THE CHURCH OF GOD 100-1800**

**Southern Italy, Bohemia, Baltics, Netherlands, France, Britain, Saxony, Switzerland, Basque, Greece, Old Gaul, North Africa**

The Church of God, never a small influence, spread into the heart of communities, moving the Godly missions by persecution, but also witness through mercantilism. The true and false church have always existed, since Eden, side by side. One called and chosen by God - through repentance and obedience follows the will of God; and the other false and deceptive prophets, full of irreverent defiance, that appear good and fruitful but not bearing the fruits of the Almighty God.

The false prophets and civil governments defy God. He tries and seals the saints, giving time for repentance, preparing them for the kingdom of God (Rev. 2:21; II Peter 3:9). The governance of God the Father and Jesus Christ, work in His called and chosen ones. A foretaste of that nurturing power thrives in the weekly and annual Sabbaths and Holy Days, adult baptism and the Passover – the portal of the kingdom.

But we see through a “glass darkly” (I Cor. 13:12). The true nature of God, although under constant assault, sheds His Holy Spirit life into His children. The Holy Spirit is the power of God, not a separate part of the godhead. Satan aspires to that pinnacle and profanes God’s name from the beginning (Ezek. 28). God has given us the keys to eternity through obedience – a gate to the way, the truth and the life, along that narrow path.

Man can never find peace on his own. Instead, in the absence of God, enforces unity through the tyranny and deception (Isa. 59:8). Violence gains the kingdom of God (Matt. 11:12)! God calls out imitation and hypocrisy as the false aspirations born of arrogance and mockery. For whatever a man sows, he reaps (Gal. 6:7).

The Noble Lesson and other Waldensian writings link inextricably with scriptural passages. But, tumultuous assaults from Jezebel steal some true chosen ones away, turning them into the enemy. From the beginning, the assault on the truth continues unabated and surfaces in the nature of Thyatira, in Revelation 2 and 3.



The Inquisition and the Crusades fades, demarcated by duchies, principalities, and fiefdoms, sometimes forcefully, retooling kingdoms to come “closer” to the truth – a renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century) especially in:

- a. Spain (1512);
- b. United Kingdom (1707);
- c. France, under Louis XIV (1643);
- d. with Italy and Germany, even more fragmented, ruled by the unravelling Holy Roman Empire<sup>18</sup> after the 30 years war (1618-1648); and the
- e. Collapse of the Holy Roman Empire (1700s).

The Church of God worn and wearied by attacks continues to drive the emerging thought of the day, asserting, like Israel under the Old Covenant, the principles of fraternity, liberty, and equality (under God) - worth a quote from Perrin’s editor:

***The Christians who resided in the valleys of Piedmont and their immediate vicinity, were the only people who either understood or enjoyed the privileges of civil and religious freedom.***

***In truth, the Waldenses, when divine Providence did not mysteriously permit their ruthless persecutors to ravage their country, exemplified, as the cardinal principles of their social organization in civic affairs, the self-evident truths upon which the primitive Puritans of New England established their common wealth, and which, in the Declaration of the Fourth day of July, 1776, became the chief cornerstone of the American Federal Republic.***

But let us see what invigorates the Holy Spirit in man, unknown to the deceptive human heart, and animated by the heart of God. The gold mine of His people expresses true joy and harmony. They see a land, afar off, expressive of their eternal journey down the rugged rewarding narrow path!

***<sup>42</sup>With few steps we shall make a long journey, and our course will be not less wonderful than sad.***

*The places through which we will first travel are the mountains of Lombardy, near Novaria. In the midst of our journey, we will come to the cities Crema and Steyer, in Austria, Zuidenitz, in Poland, and Marseilles, in France. Thence we propose to proceed into Bohemia; and at last to finish our journey in the countries on the Baltic Sea – see Diaspora map.*

***What will we meet on our way, dear friends?***

***Certainly nothing that is pleasing to the flesh; for fire and flames shall threaten us on our right hand, and deep waters on our left.***

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<sup>18</sup> Voltaire touted that the Holy Roman Empire was neither Holy, Roman or an Empire

*Between them there is nothing but bloody scaffolds, gallows, wheels, stakes and countless horrible instruments of death and torture, which cause men to die slowly, as by a thousand deaths.*

*The company is composed altogether of bodies burned, drowned, beheaded or otherwise murdered; so that our footsteps must tread through the midst of skulls and dead men's bones; to say nothing of the crimson blood, which seems to flow in rivulets, yea, sometimes in large streams, along the ways which we must travel.*

*Nevertheless, our heart is full of joy, and we are delighted with this journey, and draw life in the valleys of death; for here is the portal of heaven, the door of the blissful palace, which is indeed strait, yea, on the posts of which flesh and blood remain; but through which is the entrance into the spaciousness of the heavenly halls, and into the infinite and ever-blooming garden of the blessed paradise.*

*Here are heard, with the ears of faith, as near by the glad voices of the holy angels,<sup>19</sup> to which no singing of nightingales in earthly groves can be compared; nay, the most lovely instruments of music, when compared with these sound harshly and unpleasantly to the ear.*

*There are also beheld, as with unclouded eyes, the majesty of God, Jesus, the Saviour of the world, and the heavenly societies. We dare not further speak of it, <sup>20</sup>for human ear hath not heard nor eye seen; neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. I Cor. 2:9.*

*All this is there perceived in the soul, though the bodies suffer great distress; but this is soon over. Have we no reason, then, to long for this journey? Certainly. Hence, let us go on. The Lord guide us and show us the right way, that we may not only begin well, but also finish well.*

*O ye slain and martyred multitudes, who have testified with your blood to the name of your and our God, we have come to behold your martyrdom, and to make it known, by writings, to our fellow brethren; not that we intend to make a pilgrimage to the places of your death, to salute you in the manner of worship, or to bring you an oblation, after the manner of the priests, by no means for this would profit neither you nor us; but we seek to bring to remembrance your good examples. With this we will begin.*

*Note -Before we approach the sad mountains and fields of the miserable, but nevertheless well comforted martyrs, it will be necessary to give an account respecting the mode of the inquisition which, having commenced in the preceding century already, had continued even to this time, and was the cause of all the harm and distress which now came upon the believers, and through which they had to suffer, first in their consciences, and then in their bodies, yea, were subjected to the most bitter and cruel death.*

*In the preceding century, for the years 1214 and 1215, we showed the beginnings of the inquisition; we now come to its progress and extension.*

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<sup>19</sup> "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14).

<sup>20</sup> And (he) heard unspeakable (unrevealed) words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. II Cor. 12:4.

*"As regards the deceitful course," says the translator, "which the afore-mentioned inquisitors were wont to take in the execution of their office, we would have no knowledge, save what some believers who escaped the Spanish Inquisition, could have told us concerning it."*

Nothing remains hidden that will not be revealed (Luke 8:17). The testimonies, as shown previously, surface in the annals and records of the City and Municipal halls:<sup>43</sup>

*But it was not the will of God that these, their wives, should remain hid, and that we should obtain no copies thereof, written by themselves. Behold, then, the cunning artifices of the inquisitors, which served them for rules and instructions, in conducting the processes against the Waldenses.*

### ***RULES OF THE INQUISITORS***

- 1. It is not Permitted or advisable to dispute concerning the faith in the presence of the laity.*
- 2. No one is to be regarded as converted if he will not accuse all those whom he know; to be such as he is.*
- 3. He who does not accuse those who are such as he is, must be severed from the church as a diseased member; that the sound members may not become corrupted by it.*
- 4. After any one is delivered to the secular judge, great care must be exercised, that he be not allowed to prove his innocence, or show his harmlessness before the people; for if he is put to death, the people will take offense; and if he is discharged, the (Catholic) faith will be endangered.*
- 5. Care must be taken not to promise his life before the people, to him who is condemned to death (namely, if he indicates his willingness to become converted); seeing that no heretic would allow himself to be burned, if he could escape by such a promise; and if he should promise conversion before the people, and his life would not be granted him thereupon, the people would take offense at it, and think that he were put to death unjustly.*
- 6. Observe: The inquisitor must always take the deed for granted, without any consideration, and ask the questions only in regard to the circumstances of the matter, not saying: Have you made confession to the heretics? But, how often have you made your confession to the heretics? Again, do not ask: Have they slept in your house? But, in what room of your house did they sleep? And the like.*
- 7. The inquisitor may look into a book, as though he noted down in it, the life and conduct of the accused, together with everything in regard to which he is interrogating him.*
- 8. **The accused must be threatened with death, if he will not confess,** and be told that his doom is sealed; that he must regard his soul, and, first of all, forsake his heresy; "For," it shall be said, "you must die; accept with patience whatever shall befall you." If he then answer: "Since I must die, I would rather die in this my faith, than in the faith of the Roman church," rest assured, that previously he only pretended to be desirous of becoming converted; and therefore he must then be brought to justice.*
- 9. **The thought is not to be entertained of overcoming the heretics by skill of learning, or knowledge of the Scriptures, since the learned men are much sooner***

***confounded by them; the result of which is, that the heretics are then still more confirmed and encouraged, seeing they thus outwit even those who are educated.***

10. It is to be well observed, that the heretics never speak right out, and that, when compelled by much questioning, they generally allege that they are simple and unlearned men, and, hence, know not how to answer; and that, seeing that the bystanders are moved to compassion for them, as though they were wronged, regarding them as simple and harmless people, they take courage from this and pretend to weep, as poor, miserable men, and, imploring their judges, make strenuous efforts to free themselves from the inquisition, saying; "My Lords, if I have erred in any matter, I will gladly accept the penance for it; but assist me to free myself from this reproach, in which I have fallen through hatred and envy, without having transgressed." (***In the testimonies and records this statement bears all falsehoods, for the martyr rarely grovels or bows to the inquisitor.***)

11. But the courageous inquisitor must then in no wise be moved by such entreaties nor give credit to such dissimulations.

12. Moreover, the inquisitor shall announce to them beforehand, that they will gain nothing by swearing falsely (from necessity); since they (the lords) have matter enough to convict them by witnesses; and that therefore they need not think that by means of swearing they will escape sentence of death; but it must be promised them, that as far as they voluntarily confess their error, they shall obtain mercy; for in such perplexity many are found, who confess their errors, in order to escape.

"Behold," says the writer of this inquisition, "these are the cunning artifices formerly employed by the inquisitors throughout Europe, against the Waldenses," etc. In the second book of the first part of the History of the Waldenses, by J. P. P. L., pages 62, 63, 64.

Note.-About this time (A. D. 1303) Peter Johannis taught that the pope was the antichrist, and the Roman synagogue the great Babylon. About his martyrdom, however, we have not been able to learn anything. See P. J. Twisck, Chron., p. 643, col. 2, from Georg. Pac., cap. 11.

So, the Church of God, sublimated by society and community, live and die as outcasts and the dredge of the earth. The only refuge lies in the bosom of their God. For a time the physical deep valleys and narrow defiles of the Alps held the main body of the Church (Psa. 23). But within God's time, for the time is short (I Cor. 7:29) they soon move to the rest of the world. Their brethren in other parts of the world, became open game for the hunter. Another warning to us today!

As Van Braght records from the earliest ancient records:<sup>44</sup>

*As the moon, notwithstanding her substance and body never perish, is not always seen in her full light by the human eye, either, because she sinks beneath the horizon, or, being too close to the sun, is obscured by him, or, being far from the sun, is darkened by the shadow of the earth, which is called an eclipse; even **so it is with the substance and appearance of the church of God on earth.***

***The latter, though never perishing entirely, does not always show herself in her full form, yea, at times she seems to have vanished altogether, yet not in all, but only in some places, either through the slothfulness of some people, who, from want of regard, or for some other reason, neglect the external, manifest commandments of God, or on account of some misconceptions or errors that have arisen, and whereby sometimes many of the true believers have been perverted, and seduced from the true worship of God; or in consequence of persecution, violence and tyranny, exercised against the faith and the practice of it, on account of which the pious are compelled to hide and, as outcasts from mankind, seclude themselves in forests, wildernesses, and solitary places; so that its characteristics, light and virtue could not be seen, much less known, by the common world.***

Whenever, in the New Testament, the coming of Christ is spoken of, there is generally, yea, universally, meant by it His last coming to judgment. "Then . . . they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1:7; also I Cor. 11:26.

When the church of God of the Old Testament was in Egypt, it could not observe its divine worship, but had to request permission "to go three days journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord." Ex. 8:26, 27, compared with Ex. 10:26.

During the forty years that this same people was in the wilderness, such remarkable events happened that all their children remained uncircumcised, not receiving circumcision until they had become old, and arrived in the land of Canaan, at mount Ararat. Josh. 5:2-8.

In the time of Elijah this church was so greatly obscured on account of persecution, that he thought that he alone was left, though God had reserved to Himself seven thousand persons who served Him, and had not bowed their knees to Baal. I Kings 19:14, 18; Rom. 11:3, 4.

When this people had been carried away into Babylon, the house of God, at Jerusalem, where divine worship was wont to be made, lay waste, and the stones of the sanctuary were scattered in all the streets; yea, among the people in Babylon, matters were in so bad a condition, in regard to religion and the songs of praise with which they were wont to worship God, that they had hung their harps on the willows that were planted there by the rivers, Ps. 137:1-4; for which reason they were numbered among the dead and among those that go down to the grave.

After the Babylonian captivity, in the time of the Maccabees, many of the church of Israel, because of the existing danger, hid themselves in caves, in order that they might keep the Sabbath.

***All these obscurations, like sad eclipses in the divine worship, have happened in the church of God of the Old Testament, before the birth and advent of Christ into this world; and much more might be said in regard to this, if it were necessary, but we consider it sufficient to have made simple mention of it from time to time.***

***The same took place also after the advent of Christ in the church under the Gospel, which was composed of Jews and Gentiles; she too, could not always raise her head with safety, but was oft times, like the sun behind clouds, concealed from the common sight of men.***

*Even in the time when Christ dwelt bodily among men, and had risen from the dead, His disciples, the chief members of His church, sat concealed, with closed doors, for fear of the Jews. John 20:19.*

*After the ascension of Christ, the very numerous church which was at Jerusalem, dispersed, on account of persecution, through the land of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles; so that this distinguished church, which, it appears, was the chief one on the face of the earth, had to sojourn secretly in a strange land. Acts 8:1.*

***Afterwards, when the emperor Domitian had banished John, the holy apostle and evangelist, for the Gospel's sake, to the island of Patmos, the Holy Ghost revealed unto him the future state of the church of Christ, namely, that she would have to flee into the wilderness, on account of the persecution of Antichrist, and there be fed by God, a thousand two hundred and threescore days, which, reckoned according to prophetic language, means as many years. Rev. 12:6-11.***

***Whether we begin to reckon these years from the death of the apostles; or with the year 300, when the so-called patriarchs had their origin; or with the year 600; or a little later, when Mohammed rose in the east among the Greeks, and the pope in the west among the Latins, and raised no small persecution against the defenseless and innocent little flock of the church of Christ, so that all who did not wish to be devoured, either in soul or in body, had to hide themselves in deserts and wildernesses; let it be reckoned as it may, say we, a very long period is to be understood by it, which has extended to this, or about this time.***

*Here the rose has blossomed very gloriously among the thorns. Song of Sol. 2:2. Here the dove that was in the clefts of the rock and in the secret places of the stairs, let her sweet voice be heard. Verse 14. Here the Lord said, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (Song of Sol. 4:12). Here the Son of God has fed, sustained and preserved His church against the sentence of worldly and carnal minded men, who, because they are carnal, cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God.*

*But lest any should misconstrue our preceding proposition, let it be understood, that when we speak of the obscuration, concealment, or the becoming invisible, of the church of God, we do not mean the church in general, or in all places, for the church in general has never been obscured and hidden in all places at the same time; but we mean thereby some parts of the church in general, namely, some particular societies, belonging to the body of the general church which is spread over the whole earth.*

*In the clefts of the rock and in the secret places of the stairs, that is, in persecutions and in solitary and strange regions; just as "among the thorns" signifies, in the power of evil-minded and bloodthirsty tyrants.*

***It must be stated, also, that by the term, general church, we do not understand all the churches which bear the Christian name; but only those who express the Christian name by their upright faith and pure observance of the Christian and Evangelical commandments.***

***Now the question arises, whether our church of the present day, called the Anabaptists, has truly descended, and derived her succession, from the aforementioned church of God which has existed from the beginning, and kept the commandments of God in purity.***

*But, in order to do this briefly and in the best manner, we shall leave untouched the time and conditions of the church from Adam to Christ, as being an undisputed point; and only examine the time and condition of the church after the advent of Christ; for the point of difference relates solely to those who and which, by virtue of true succession, have a right to the same.*

*From the Latin word succedo, that is, to go under, or to take the place of one, is derived the word, succession, which we, though improperly, have mixed into our Dutch language. The various branches proceeding from this root, that is, the numerous words taking their origin from it, together with their significations, we leave untouched; in general we understand by it, to follow any one in his place, right, or reign.*

*There is a twofold succession, natural and spiritual, political and ecclesiastical, or civil and ecclesiastical; but we have to speak here only of the spiritual and ecclesiastical, and not of the natural, political, or civil, succession; for only the former, and, by no means, the latter, belongs here.*

*Now, as succession is of twofold nature and kind, so also is each kind of the same twofold and distinct in itself. This will be shown plainly in the spiritual and ecclesiastical succession.*

***In order to present this in a clear light, we say that the ecclesiastical succession may be considered in two ways: firstly, with respect to the, succession of persons; secondly, with respect to the succession of doctrine.***

*There is not only a natural and spiritual succession, which could be considered as indifferent only; but both, the natural and the spiritual, can be good or bad, for both we find either the one or the other.*

*But we purpose to speak here only of a spiritual succession, and moreover, of such an one that is good. This we shall consider with regard of good persons as well as to good doctrine. The latter is a sign and evidence of the former, so that the former cannot subsist without the latter. **Where the latter is, the former need not be looked for so carefully.***

***But where both are found in truth and verity, it is not to be doubted that there is also the true and genuine church of God, in which God will dwell and walk; which has the promise of an eternal and blissful life; and about which the holy Scriptures glory and teach so much.***



*Here the words of Tertullian are applicable. He says, "The Christian church is called apostolic not just because of the succession of persons, but on account of the kinship of doctrine, since she holds the doctrine of the apostles." Lib. de praescript, etc.*

*The twelve tribes of Israel, considered as a whole, were but one church; but with respect to certain parts who had remained on the other side of the Jordan namely, Reuben Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (Jos . 22:1-5); the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who dwelt in Jerusalem, and formed also a part; and the residue of the multitude of Israel, who dwelt by the cities of Samaria, it could very properly be said, that Israel consisted of three churches: (1) on the other side of Jordan; (2) at Jerusalem; (3) in Samaria, etc.*

*Even so there is but one church, which, keeping the true faith, is scattered over many places; but with respect to the multiplicity of places where they dwell, they may be called many churches."*

*This doctrine everyone who boasts of the true succession, must prove from the true apostolic writings, as the means by which the church was originally instituted, subsequently established, and maintained through all times (we speak of the Christian and evangelical church). Therefore, this doctrine must necessarily, also in these last times be the mark of the true succession.*

*Now, if this is united with the common succession of teachers, we have everything that is necessary for the demonstration of the true church. This stands so fast that it cannot reasonably be disputed, much less, refuted.*

*The question now will be, in what church the true apostolic doctrine has been held from the beginning, and is still held; which is a privilege boasted of by many. We leave it to them, and content ourselves with the testimony of our conscience, compared with the holy Gospel of Christ and the faith of the holy church, of which mention is made, throughout, in the ancient church histories.*

*To give evidence, then, of the faith professed by us, we declare, that we believe in our heart, and confess with our mouth.*

*The Church of God held to the Creed of scripture and taught successive generations obedience to the word and the favor of grace in salvation and overcoming.*

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

- 1. I believe in one God, the Father, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth.*
- 2. And in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, our Lord.*
- 3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary.*
- 4. Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*
- 5. Rose from the dead on the third day.*
- 6. Ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the almighty Father.*
- 7. From whence He will come to judge the living and the dead.*
- 8. I believe in the Holy Ghost.*



9. I believe in a holy general Christian church, the communion of saints.
10. Forgiveness of sins.
11. Resurrection of the flesh.
12. And an eternal life.

***This is the most ancient and simple creed, which, it appears, was confessed already in or about the time of the apostles; and for which many, yea the greater part of the first Christian believers, have sacrificed their lives.***

*But as, in the course of time, the true and simple meaning of the confession set forth was assailed and disputed by the contradiction and perverse interpretation of contentious and, not less, erring persons going under the name of good Christians; the true believers of the church of God were compelled, as often as this happened, and necessity required, to declare how they understood and interpreted this or that article.*

***"Let no man glory in men," says Paul, I Cor. 3:21. We may not glory, therefore, in the succession of eminent persons, if they do not derive their eminence from the eminence and truth of the word of God. The prophet Jeremiah, going further yet in this point, has cursed that man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm. Jer. 17:5***

*Hence it has come that at this day there are found among those who are called Anabaptists, various confessions, which differ in style, but not in faith, (we speak of the foundation of the same), in which confessions the creed set forth above is more fully interpreted and explained.*

Perrin speaks of the origins of the Church of God and their consistent doctrine and access to the Holy Scriptures. Van Braght documents the plight of the martyrs as the rock of testimony of the Church of God as Paul speaks in his Hebrew's homily:

*32. Now what more can I say? For time would fail me to relate the accounts of Gideon, Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets; 33. Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34. Quenched the fury of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, and turned back the armies of foreigners.*

*35. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection; 36. And others endured the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment.*

***37. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were brutally interrogated, and slaughtered by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, and ill-treated; 38. Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, living in caves and in holes in the earth.***

***39. But these all, though they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise 40. Because God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect (Heb. 11 FV).***

A ship cut loose on the sea, perseveres in the truth, spreads the good news, endures the testing of time and voracious persecution, with the armour of God challenges the storms and tempest of earthly dominion (Eph. 6). They keep the lamp of God burning through the middle and, until now, the darkest of ages, so that a conflagration begins on the other side of the inquisition and the whole world erupts!

***Dr. Bray continues - "Horrible devastations and wars which were raised and carried on by the Popes, under the solemnity of Crusades, besides the more private ways of murdering by the merciless Inquisitors, against those preservers of primitive Christianity, and forerunners of the blessed Reformation.***

***The old Waldenses and Albigenses, to the alienation, as far as divine Providence would permit, both of the princes and people, who then were the only maintainers of the true religion.***

***In that part of the history concerning the Albigenses, we have that Latin Antichristian tyranny most remarkably exemplified, in the total ruin and extermination, both of several princes and of their people, merely for endeavouring to conserve primitive Christianity in its native purity, and for opposing the Papal despotism and innovations.***

*Herein are also represented the wars, massacres, and persecutions carried on by the instigation of the Popes and the Romish priesthood, to the distress of every subject in the dominion of those princes who either formerly were, or still are vassals to the Romish hierarchy.*

*In this history of the Albigenses are given various instances of the wicked principles which tended to maintain the Papal usurpations over secular princes; and of the manner in which they were enforced upon the Earls of Toulouse, Beziers, Foix, and Comminges, and even on the King of Arragon.*

***The barbarous manner in which those Papal encroachments and usurpations were put in practice, will amaze the reader at the insults and violence of those prime ministers of Satan, Pope Innocent III, and Pope Innocent IV, towards those worthy and honest sovereign rulers; at the perusal of which, all persons who are not of the persecuting party, would almost shed tears, while their hearts must needs bleed."***

***"...The Roman Inquisitors were enraged at the Waldenses for their constancy and perseverance in such sanctity of faith and practice. Therefore, although the mere force of truth did sometimes extort from them the most honourable testimonies on their behalf, yet generally those Inquisitors published the most wicked lies which **they could invent against them and in their criminal processes they also villainously inserted, in their answers and confessions; of which those guileless Christians never dreamed."*****

***Hence the ensuing valuable history will be very acceptable to all American citizens, and especially to every Christian, because, from its authentic documents, it is manifest, that during the protracted continuance of the feudal tyranny and the ecclesiastical despotism throughout the ten kingdoms of the Roman empire.***

*The Christians who resided in the valleys of Piedmont and their immediate vicinity, were the only people who either understood or enjoyed the privileges of civil and religious freedom.*

*The Church of God is of more value, even as it subsists in this world, than the world itself.*

*It is the purchase of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was crucified for it; and there is no good thing without it worthy of our esteem. But as our Redeemer invites us to enter and dwell therein for our salvation, so Satan endeavours to make men wander out of it to their damnation.*

*He blindfolds them, that they may take that for the Church, which only bears the name of it; and keeping them in error, and seducing them by worldly splendor, makes them to despise the true Church, principally, because it is subject to persecution in the world, wherein those who do not honour the master cannot love the servants.*

*Insomuch, that acknowledging no other Church besides that which hath for many ages triumphed in the blood of the martyrs whom it hath slain, they importunately demand, in what then was the Catholic Church if that be not it, which hath so long and so peaceably enjoyed the title thereof?*

*Where was it concealed, say they, during the ages past and so they press us at least to show them some one in the whole course of so many years, who believed that which in our time hath been extolled under the name of the Reformation.*

## **PART 11 - The power of the Holy Spirit within the True Church - Fruits of the Spirit - Industry, Vitality of Godly Institutions, Justice and True Freedom**

The power of the Church of God burns the psyche of communities, echoes in the halls of heaven and under the throne of God (Rev. 6:9), and mirrors each martyr – through all ages. The seeds of peace and joy reap the fruits of the Spirit of God firstly in Abraham; then the children of Israel - holding the hope of national freedom under God; then exalted in our saviour Jesus Christ; and finally, before the kingdom comes, from His earthly body – the Church. The spiritual kingdom beckons to those not yet sealed, as the holders of the bedrock of the freedom with obedience to His law, under His governance.

In Matthew 7, Christ warns about the dangers in the narrow and broad paths leading to either life or death - the latter is the broad path or way. Communities celebrate grand events – carnivals and parades on the broad way. On display, soldiers and weapons move effortlessly. Consistent with the inventiveness and power of mankind, military inventiveness dominates human enterprise. The Romans, showing prowess in road building, exert resources, firstly to move soldiers and later for trade - by ocean, land and, now, air and soon, space. Over hills and mountains, down and up rivers and through valleys. We name our main city streets “Broadway”. But where do we find the narrow way.

The narrow path resounds with individual struggles - single file, climbing and reaching; no ditches; and pocked with rocky and rough terrain. So marks the Alpine wilderness, where the

true brothers and sisters of the Church of God hide but witness to the continent and the cosmos. The main church body, the light in the wilderness in the midst of the middle dark ages, protected by narrow paths and steep cliffs.

The Church in the Wilderness, one of the few lights shine in the spiritual the darkness that clouds and enslaves the understanding of firstly the individual and then the community. My people, God says, are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4). And today? The lack of Godly knowledge befuddles the brightest, and manufactures myth and fantasies on the back of a clinical and godless science, that must and will completely collapse.

Surrounded by wolves in sheep's clothing who bear evil and wicked fruit, the church, over and over, fends off the attacks for not following the "holy mother" church of Rome. Land and belongings stolen, children taken into the false church fold, while the enriched priests and monks hide their sins in cloisters, monasteries and "grand" cathedrals.

The inquisition testifies of the stark contrast between the peaceable and productive Christian life that gives strong witnesses to all of those across Europe and the mercilessness rampaging edifice that slaughters, tortures and destroys.

From the Martyr's *Mirror* Van Braght records the nature of the false prophet/worldly church and the true remnant that is manifested from ancient times, through the fruits of the Holy Spirit:<sup>45</sup>

*Since, then, the God-fearing who are visited with the cross, have so many holy martyrs as predecessors; and since the cross is foretold them; yea, since such glorious promises are given to those who suffer, it is a little thing for them that they, who gladly acknowledge themselves soldiers under the bloody banner of Christ, are therefore aspersed and ridiculed as fools.*

*The Christian reader may here perceive and firmly conclude that the cross is also the ensign of those who serve and follow Jesus Christ, the Captain of the faith; and that, on the contrary, **those who afflict others, with crosses and sufferings, do not belong to this Captain, but are under another leader.***

***For the true Christians have never persecuted the innocent, but were always persecuted themselves; and in the primitive church, even in the time of Constantine, when the bishops began to rise a little higher in the world, and were protected by the Emperor, it was considered an abomination to persecute any one; they, however, suffered persecution themselves.***

*It was then deemed such a detestable thing, to put to death or persecute anyone for heresy, that Bishop Ithacius was excommunicated and separated from the church, because he, through the tyrant Maximus, had brought about the death of Priscilian, the heretic; as the Roman cardinal, Cesaer Baronius, very plainly describes in his church history, for the year 385.*

*He also states further, that it is utterly incompatible with the meekness of a pastor. Again, that none of the holy fathers even commended it, that an ecclesiastic should seek to bring a heretic to his death.*

***From this it is clearly manifest, how falsely they boast of being the successors of Christ and His apostles, and of the primitive church, who have so abominably stained their hands with the blood of innocent people, people who only confessed and practiced the Gospel according to the full dictates of their conscience; yea, concerning whom the tyrants themselves frequently testified, that their life was pious; that they would not willingly lie, or speak against their conscience; and that they were not apprehended on account of any misdeeds, but only because they did not obey the mother, the holy church, and the decree of the Emperor.***

***It is so far from such being the true and apostolical church, that there is no surer mark of the false and anti-Christian church, than the killing of heretics, or rather, so-called heretics; for however abominable heresy may be, this is the most abominable of all.***

***For what indeed is more opposed to the peaceable, meek, merciful, forgiving, and revengeless character of Christ, than to persecute any one for his faith? What can we conceive of that militates more against the holy laws and commandments of Christ, which chiefly consist in love, peace, humility, meekness, lowliness, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion.***

***If Christians are called (as they do) to requite hatred with love, evil with good, cursing with blessing; yea, must they, according to the doctrine of Christ, pray for them who oppress and persecute them; how, then, is it possible that they can remain Christians and them selves oppress and persecute others who have never laid a straw in their way?***

*Can we believe, that any trace, yea, any true knowledge of the spirit and word of Christ remains where there is such a direct antichristian disposition and action?*

***If, according to Christ, false prophets are to be known and judged from their fruits (Matt. 7:16), there can be nothing by which they may, more readily, be distinguished, than from their persecuting others; for they are witnesses unto themselves, as Christ said to the Pharisees, that they are the children of them who killed the true prophets, and who fill up the measure of their fathers.***

*Our Saviour compares them to serpents and a generation of vipers, who cannot escape the damnation of hell. Matt. 23:31-33.*

*The disciples of Christ, who still entertained the hope of the establishing of an external and carnal Israel, asked their Lord, whether they should, according to the example of Elijah, command fire to come down from heaven, upon those who did not receive Him.*

***Whereupon Christ earnestly rebuked them, saying: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:54-56.***

*But these heretic killers, who boast of being the vice-regents and followers of Christ, yea, doctors of divinity, dare, not only without asking Christ, but even against His express prohibition and example, whet the sword, and stir up the fire, not to murder those who refuse to receive Christ, but those who are ready to adhere to and follow Him even unto death.*

***By this they clearly indicate, first, that they are governed and impelled by the spirit not of Christ, but of the devil (who was a murderer from the beginning, John 8 :44) ; and, secondly, that they do not come like Christ and His followers, to save men's souls, but to destroy them; since they kill not only the bodies of the innocent, thus dishonoring the image which is created after God ( Gen. 5:1), and making themselves guilty of the mortal sin of blood-shedding (Gen. 9:6) but, 0 awful deed! They purposely and as much as lies in their power, also endeavor to kill their souls, whom, being considered by them in a state of damnation, they suddenly cut off from the time of repentance. Matt. 26:52.***

***They would presumptuously teach Christ, the perfect wisdom; for He deemed it well, and commanded His disciples, to let the tares grow until the harvest, lest they should root up the wheat with the tares, but these teach and do the opposite.***

*Weeding contrary to the command of Christ, they root up not only the tares, but, passing by bad, unchaste, extravagant, pompous, avaricious, mendacious, deceitful, envious, hateful, and vindictive men, they also, from the field of the world, root out the purest grain.*

*They usurp the office of the Most High, and would command and compel the souls who are not under them, but under the sceptre of Jesus Christ (Matt. 10:28); yea, they set themselves not only beside, but above the Divine Majesty, demanding that men should obey them rather than God.*

But just as Christ died and shone the bright spiritual light on the evils in this world, so the church plants the seeds of the kingdom looking forward to her betrothal as the full bride of Christ, at His coming:

*I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2 FV).*

The seed, not hidden or obscure, but in blood and fury forage - just like living Word of God penetrates to the marrow of the bones and discerns and divides the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4). Finding fertile ground nurtured by the vine of Christ. He prunes (John 15:5) to produce more fruit in His brothers and sisters so that they bear the character, more precious than gold (Psa. 19:10), and that does not fade or fail. The thorns and thistles grow with the good seed choking and spoiling some with lies, but not able to extinguish the truth (Matt. 13:14).

Martyr's Mirror uncovers the cloak of the despot and tyrant, who refuses to debate and discuss, but seek the sword and fire! Does might make right?<sup>46</sup>

***God has commanded that we should serve Him with all our hearts (Deut. 6:5), but these prohibit men from serving God in this manner, and constrain them contrary to the convictions of their consciences to follow their laws and institutions. Matt. 21:37.***

***Christ constrained the people to conversion, by words of admonition, persuasion and reproof, and of those who were off ended at His doctrine, He only said: "Let them alone: they be blind leaders." Matt. 15:14.***

***But these compel with fire and sword, so that they deliver to the executioner those who embrace the doctrine of Christ according to all their ability, and do not feel themselves at liberty to follow these blind leaders; bringing them into a strait, where they cannot without danger, escape either to the right or to the left; for, if they obey these, they fall***

***into the hands of God; and if they adhere to God, they cannot escape the cruelty of these men.***

*Now, in order to give a semblance and gloss to their unchristian and ungodly punishments of heretics, they befoul these pious people with the stain of disobedience, and, washing their hands, as it were, from innocent blood, lay the guilt upon the edicts, **which**, however, were devised, and are daily executed, through their bloody advice and instigation.*

*But, pray, who has given them power to make edicts against souls and consciences, to reign thereby in the kingdom of Christ, in which they themselves can be but subjects and servants? Will this excuse them? By no means.*

***The Jews who sought to bring the innocent Jesus to death, also said like these: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." John 19:7. They know, or ought to know, that at the tribunal of Christ judgment will be rendered, not according to human edicts, but according to the divine word: "The word that I have spoken," said the Lord, "the same shall judge him in the last day," (John 12 :48), and, therefore, everyone is necessarily bound more to the law of Christ, than to their laws and edicts; yea, an account will have to be given of these edicts, at that tribunal, and that whereby they sentenced the innocent wrongfully to death, will then justly aggravate their own sentence.***

*What will they offer as an excuse, when an account will be demanded of them, why they exercised such bloodthirsty tyranny over souls? Why they wrested the sceptre out of the hand of Christ, and usurped His seat? Why they made themselves masters in that kingdom in which they, as servants, must themselves give an account of their actions? Why they, as evil servants, treated and beat their fellow servants so cruelly; though He (Christ) had warned and threatened, to cut such asunder, and to appoint them their portion with the hypocrites, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 24:45, 51)? Why they did not consider, that those shall have judgment without mercy, who have showed no mercy (James 2:13)?*

*What terror, what anxious remorse and fleeing will it cause when, to convict them of their wickedness, there shall come forth those whom they fettered, chained, beat, killed and martyred, whom they then accounted fools and madmen, and whom they now behold in such great glory and esteem with God.*

*In that day, when all hidden things must come to light, such empty and artificial excuses will not avail. Hence, now is the time to consider how unchristian it is, to persecute Christians; how much deserving of death it is, to shed innocent blood; how culpable it is, to dishonor the image of God; how perverse and vain it is, to fight against spirit as an excuse for, the punishments of heretics, these reasons:*

- 1. Thereby to bring and compel them to conversion.***
- 2. That their heresy might not propagate itself, and pollute others.***
- 3. To prevent rebellion. As regards the first, it is the duty of every Christian, to promote the salvation of his neighbor as much as is possible.***
- 4. But how is this to be done? By external compulsion with fire and sword? Impossible; this touches and affects the body, but not the conscience, which must not be compelled, but led and instructed.***

***The Word of God is the sword with which all error and heresy must be cut down. If the supposed error cannot be conquered with the power of truth, swords will be dull before it.***

*And though a man, through dread of suffering, renounce his belief with the mouth, yet will he not do it with the heart; and thus, instead of converted Christians, dissembling hypocrites are made.*

*But if a man remain steadfast, and is put to death, how can this tend to his conversion, since every means of conversion is taken away? For, one of two things is certain: if he is a damnable heretic, he is cast down into hell; but if he is not, a saved Christian is put to death; choose whichever you please and an abominable crime is committed.*

*What is it then, that urges them thus to promote any one's conversion? What binds them to this? Who enjoins it upon them? Who advises them to it? Yea, who gives them permission to do it? And which of the apostles has set such an example?*

*How presumptuous it is, to usurp the seat of God, and to wish to rule over the conscience, whereas Christ commanded, to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. Matt. 22:21.*

*They should bear in mind, that Christ prayed for His persecutors, and learn from it, how unbecoming it is, that those who would be Christians, persecute others, who pray for them. Luke 23:34; I Pet. 2:19.*

*They should contemplate, how great an evil it is, to co-opt any one's conscience by the terrors of fire, rope, and sword, when Paul so strictly forbids to wound the weak conscience of the brethren. Rom. 14:15.*

*They should remember, that, since the holy apostle commands no greater punishment for heretics, than to shun them, they also need, yea may, use no greater. Tit. 3:10.*

*Surely, if they would well examine themselves, they would not so readily proceed to condemn, but would suffer themselves to be restrained, since Christ declares that with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again. Matt. 7:2.*

*They would fear, if they knew themselves aright, that in condemning another they might condemn themselves; since it might easily be the case, that before God...*

The fruits of the spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law (Gal. 5:22) – the seeds of the modern democratic republics - unknown to the false historians – touted as the Calvinist work ethic<sup>21</sup> by Max Weber.

For the Church of God blesses the world, justified before God through the faithful actions of repentance, baptism and keeping of the law through His grace (Rom. 2:13).

While the fruits of the flesh (false spirit) are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions,

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<sup>21</sup> The phrase was initially coined in 1904–1905<sup>[4]</sup> by [Max Weber](#) in his book [The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism](#).<sup>[4]</sup>



dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like (Gal 5:19-21) – the Babylonian system enslaves all nations:

*And he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird; Because all nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury" (Rev. 18:2-3).*

The Babylonian powers terminate brethren by removing all goods, property and inheritances, cutting off the children from the Church of God. Without God's working hand to sustain the Church – **all would be lost – ironically even the persecutor!**

The hot bed of foaming persecution ***cultivated in the monasteries***, cathedrals and princely halls, appear to have godly devotion, but instead imbued with all abominations and fleshly desires – raging against the true fruits of God and they hold the power to our day!

Babylon brings injustice– she judges and engages the civil governments (Beast Powers) to carryout her verdicts. The Harlot stimulated by demonic powers – sits on many waters (peoples) enthraling many nations, and peoples and languages (Rev. 17:1.)

Jones attributes unrestrained actions to the bombastic human heart:<sup>47</sup>

*It then proceeds to condemn all suspected persons, as heretics, if they do not purge themselves within a year-commands the officials to exterminate heretics from all places subject to them orders that the lands of the barons shall be seized by the Catholics. If they do not purge them from heretics, within a year after proper admonition, and ordains various punishments against all the favourers of heretics-thus closing the dreadful catalogue.*

*"Furthermore, we put under our ban those who believe, receive, defend, and favour heretics; ordaining that if any person shall refuse to give satisfaction within a year after his excommunication, he shall be, ipso jure, infamous, and not admitted to any kind of public offices-let him be untestable, and let him not have the power of making a will, nor of receiving any thing by succession or inheritance.*

*Moreover, let no one answer for him in any affair, but let him be obliged to answer others. If he should be a judge, let his sentence be of no effect, nor any causes be heard before him.*

*If an advocate, let him never be admitted to plead in any one's defence. If a notary, let no instruments made by him be valid. We add that an heretic may be convicted by an heretic, and that the houses of the Paterines, their abettors and favourers, either where they have taught, or where they have laid hands on others, shall be destroyed, never to be rebuilt." Dated at Padua, Feb. 22, 1224.*

***Anything more infamous than these edicts, in the way of spiritual tyranny, it would be difficult to imagine.*** And although, by reason of the circumstances of the times and the differences which soon arose between the Pope and the Emperor, they had not all that effect

which might have been expected, it is, nevertheless, certain that the Inquisition was greatly promoted by them.

***They were approved and confirmed by the Pope, and inserted in his bulls, and in process of time, the persecuting spirit which pervades them, came gradually to be incorporated into the laws of almost every country in Europe.***

***After the death of Frederick, which happened about the middle of the century, Pope Innocent IV remaining sole arbiter of the affairs of Lombardy and other parts of Italy, set himself diligently to extirpate heresy, which of late had exceedingly increased.***

***And consider it the labour which had been employed in his service by the Franciscan and Dominican friars, whose zeal, was unrestrained by either respect of persons or the fear of dangers-by any regard to justice or the feelings of humanity, had recommended them highly to the pontiff: he cheerfully allowed himself of their ardour to second his efforts.***

Preaching was found of little avail, and even the enlisting of crusaders and enticing military execution was suspended for the ***sake of erecting in different countries standing tribunals armed with tremendous authority, but charged solely with the purgation of heretical pravity.***<sup>22</sup>.

To the establishment of these novel tribunals there were, however, two objections started.

The first, that it was an encroachment on the authority of the ordinary bishop of the place, and the second that it was unprecedented to exclude the civil magistrate from the trial and punishment of heretics, on whom it had hitherto devolved.

***To remove the first of these difficulties, an expedient was soon devised the Pope enacted that the tribunal should consist of the inquisitor, with the bishop of the place also, but so managing the affair, at the same time, that the inquisitor was not only to be the principal, but, in reality, everything, and leaving the bishop little more than the name of a judge.***

To remedy the second inconvenience, and to give at least the appearance of authority to the secular powers, they were allowed to appoint the subordinate officers to the inquisition, yet still subject to the approbation of the inquisitors.

They were also allowed to send with the inquisitor when he should go into the country, one of their assessors, whom the inquisitors should choose. Of all the property belonging to heretics which they should be enabled to confiscate, a third part was to go to the community, in return for which, the community was to defray the whole expense of keeping the prisons, and supporting the prisoners.

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<sup>22</sup> "- The phrase "heretical pravity," will sound rather uncouth to modern ears that have not been accustomed to the jargon of the catholic writers, but the reader should be told that it is the usual slang of those writers for denoting the wickedness of thinking differently from the church of Rome.

*The infliction of the legal punishment was also vested in the magistrate, after trial and condemnation by the inquisitors; but that was a matter so much of course, and which he well knew he could not avoid executing, without incurring the vengeance of the church, that, in fact, it only converted him into a spiritual judge's executioner.*

*And thus, to use the language of Dr. Jortin, "the priest was the judge, and the king was the hangman."*

*Such was the footing on which "the holy office" was placed in the year 1251, in the ecclesiastical states of Italy, which were under the Pope's immediate inspection. It was afterwards extended to more distant provinces, and every where entrusted to the management of Dominican friars.*

***Thirty-one rules or articles, defining their jurisdiction and powers, and regulating the procedure of this spiritual court of judicature, were devised; and all rulers and magistrates were commanded, by a papal bull, issued for the purpose, to give, under pain of excommunication, the most punctual obedience, and every possible assistance to this holy court.***

Satan's empire embodies disputes, alacrity, disorder and confusion (infused in the human psyche), divides and muddles the truth – full of lust and power (politics). Its adherents chase after wind (Ecc. 1:14) – clay mixed with iron! Eventually and inevitably they will be destroyed by the chief cornerstone (Dan. 2:43)!

Justice (due process) in modern civil government (US and UK), attempts to repair the entrenched chicanery of the crusading inquisitorial courts, which presume guilt without substantive evidence, even applying trial by ordeal<sup>23</sup>.

Jones incisively punctuates the deadly drama:<sup>48</sup>

***Exclusive of the cruel punishments inflicted by the holy office, says a late writer, it may be truly affirmed, that the inquisition is a school of vice. There the artful judge, grown old in habits of subtlety, along with the sly secretary, practises his cunning in interrogating a prisoner to fix a charge of heresy - now he fawns, and then he frowns; now soothes, and then looks dark and angry; sometime affects to pity and to pray, at other times insults and bullies, and talks of racks and dungeons, flames, and the damnation of hell.***

***One while he lays his hand upon his heart, and sheds tears, and promises, and protests he desires not the death of a sinner, but would rather that he would turn and live; and all that he can do he will do for the discharge, aye, for the pretermment of his imprisoned brother. Another while he discovers himself deaf as a rock, false as the wind, and cruel as the poison of asps.***

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<sup>23</sup> In [medieval Europe](#), like [trial by combat](#), trial by ordeal, such as [cruentation](#) was considered a "judgement of God" ([Latin: \*judicium Dei\*](#)): a procedure based on the premise that [God](#) would help the innocent by performing a miracle on his behalf. The practice has much earlier roots, attested to as far back as the [Code of Hammurabi](#) and the [Code of Ur-Nammu](#) – from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trial\\_by\\_ordeal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trial_by_ordeal).

*It should, however, be remarked, that the attempts which were made to introduce the inquisition, did not prove equally successful in all Roman Catholic states, nor even in the greater part of them.*

*It was never in the power of the Pope to obtain the establishment of this tribunal in many of the most populous countries that were subject to the see of Rome. In France it was easily introduced, but soon afterwards expelled, in such a manner, as effectually to preclude a renewal of the attempt.*

*The difficulties arose partly from the conduct of the inquisitors, their inordinate severity, their unbounded extortion and avarice, and the propensity they shewed, on every occasion, to extend, beyond measure, their own authority.*

***So much that they were making rapid strides to engross, under one pretext or another, all the criminal jurisdiction of the magistrate; for, under the head of heresy, they insisted, were included, infidelity, blasphemy, perjury, sorcery, poisoning, bigamy, usury!***

*Another reason was, that the tribunal was found to be so expensive, that the community refused to sustain the burden of it.*

***Nor has it been alike severe in every place into which it has been introduced - In Spain and Portugal this scourge and disgrace to humanity has for centuries' glared, monster like, with its most frightful aspect-in Rome it has been much more tolerable.***

***Papal avarice has served to counterbalance papal tyranny. The wealth of modern Rome has arisen very much from the constant resort of strangers from all countries and of all denominations, and chiefly those of the higher ranks.***

***Nothing could have more effectually checked that resort, and of course the influx of riches into that capital, than such a horrid tribunal as that which existed at Lisbon and Madrid, and which diffused a terror that was felt to the utmost confines of those unhappy kingdoms.***

*In no country has the operation of this dreadful court of spiritual despotism been more strikingly exemplified than in Spain. The subject has been placed in the most instructive point of view by two accurate and elegant modern historians, and their reflections upon it are so just and natural, that as it cannot be unacceptable to the reader, I shall give the substance of what they have said.*

*The court of inquisition, which, although it was not the parent, has been the nurse and guardian of ignorance and superstition in every kingdom into which it has been admitted, was introduced into Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, and was principally intended to prevent the relapse of the Jews and Moors, who had been converted, or who pretended to be converted, to the faith of the Church of Rome.*

*Its jurisdiction, however, was not confined to the Jews and Moors, but extended to all those who in their practice or opinions differed from the established church.*

***In the united kingdoms of Castille and Arragon, there were eighteen different inquisitorial courts, having each of them its counsellors, termed apostolical inquisitors; its secretaries, sergeants, and other officers; and beside these there were twenty thousand familiars dispersed throughout the kingdom, who acted as spies and informers, and were employed to apprehend all suspected persons, and commit them for trial.***

***To the prisons which belonged to the inquisition. By these familiars, persons were seized on bare suspicion, and in contradiction to the established rules of equity, they were put to the torture, tried and condemned by the inquisitors, without being confronted, either with their accusers, or with the witnesses on whose evidence they were condemned.***

***The punishments inflicted were more or less dreadful, according to the caprice and humour of the judges. The unhappy victims were either strangled or committed to the flames, or loaded with chains, and shut up in dungeons during life-their effects confiscated, and their families stigmatized with infamy.***

## **PART 12 - The off-scouring of the earth - losing life, children and goods – the stones cry out!**

The Crusaders, enshrined and legalized by the power of the Anti-Christ with the blessings of a false eternity, fill the lands with anarchy. They creep into the deepest parts of communities – wandering the streets, the fields and into churches – pillaging booty and destroying the most innocent.

As discussed, the so called Holy Roman Empire propels and infiltrates civil government, including Emperor Frederick in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Frederick issues propounds the power of Anti-Christ in bold and pernicious incisions with a futile, but powerful attempt to extricate the true Church of God from the lands and, if possible, even from the hearts and minds of the people!



*Dominions of Frederick*

The Church of the living God extolls the virtues of the Bible, spreads the good news with blessed success –threatening the powers of the beast and anti-Christ. The crusading Pope Innocent III tramples over the Church in Albi, France, and then throughout Europe attempts to dampen and kill the enthusiasm for the truth<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Innocent greatly extended the scope of the [crusades](#), directing crusades against [Muslim Spain](#) and the [Holy Land](#) as well as the [Albigensian Crusade](#) against the [Cathars](#) in southern France. He organized the [Fourth Crusade](#) of 1202–1204, which ended in the disastrous [sack of Constantinople](#). Although the attack on Constantinople went against his explicit orders, and the Crusaders were subsequently excommunicated, Innocent reluctantly accepted this result, seeing it as the will of God to reunite the Latin and [Orthodox Churches](#) and ...Innocent called upon King [Philip II Augustus of France](#) to suppress the Albigenses. The Crusade was prosecuted primarily by the French crown and promptly took on a political flavor, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of practicing Cathars and realignment of the County of Toulouse in Languedoc, bringing it into the sphere of the French crown and diminishing the distinct regional culture and high level of influence of the Counts of Barcelona. Under the leadership of [Simon de Montfort, 5th Earl of Leicester](#), a campaign was launched. ***The [Albigensian Crusade](#), which led to the slaughter of approximately 20,000<sup>[25]</sup> men, women and children, Cathar and Catholic alike<sup>[25]</sup> and brought the region firmly under the control of the king of France.*** It was directed not only against heretical Christians, but also the nobility of [Toulouse](#) and vassals of the [Crown of Aragon](#).

Jones records the pronouncements intertwining the civil and religious governments as pronounced by Frederick and subsequently repeated by many potentates:<sup>49</sup>

*The third law is as follows:*

*"We condemn the receivers, accomplices, and abettors of the Paterines, to forfeiture of their goods and perpetual banishment, who by their care to save others, have no fear or regard for themselves.*

*Let not their children be in any wise admitted to honours, but always accounted infamous, nor let them be allowed as witnesses in any cause in which infamous persons are refused.*

*But if the children of those who favour the Paterines shall discover any one of them, so that he shall be convicted, let them, as the reward of their acknowledgement of the faith (**he speaks of the Catholic faith**), be entirely restored by our imperial favour, to their forfeited honour and 'estate'."*

In the fourth edict his Imperial Majesty is pleased thus to proceed:

*"We, condemn to perpetual infamy, withdraw our protection from, **and put under our ban, the Puritans, Paterines, Leonists, Arnoldists, Passagines, Josephines, Albigenses, Waldenses, etc. and all other heretics of both sexes, and of whatsoever name, and ordain that their goods may be so confiscated as that their children may never inherit them, since it is much more heinous to offend the eternal than the temporal majesty.**"*

The powers of civil government diminish the protection of the Church of God. The true Church, increasingly sought physical refuge in the Alps and remote areas of Europe. Thinking that they do the will of God (John 16:2) the principalities and monarchies vengefully attack and destroy whole congregations of Christian people in France and central Europe.

The Church of God grows even stronger, though under the thumb of a united anger stirred by Satan (Revelation 12). She holds the banner of Biblical Truth – denying the Trinity and pronouncing Rome as the anti-Christ of Revelation.

Although hunted, persecuted and rejected by the vast populace – seen as outcasts and the off-scouring of the world, obstinate and joyful in the face of death – the Christians persist and spread the word and power of God into all dominions of the earth – As Jones quotes Paul<sup>50</sup>:

*"Now you are satiated. Now you have been enriched. You have reigned without us. And I would that you did reign, so that we also might reign with you. For I suppose that God has made us apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.*

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King [Peter II of Aragon](#) was directly involved in the conflict, and was killed in the course of the [Battle of Muret](#) in 1213. The conflict largely ended with the [Treaty of Paris of 1229](#), in which the integration of the Occitan territory in the French crown was agreed upon from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope\\_Innocent\\_III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Innocent_III)

*We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are glorious, but we are without honor. **To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and wander without a home; And we labor, working with our own hands. When railed at, we bless; when persecuted, we bear it; When reviled, we entreat; for unto this day we are as the refuse and the off-scouring of the world. I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children I warn you (I Corinthians 4:8-13).***

**PART 13 - Turning the hearts of the fathers to the children; and the hearts of the children to their fathers (Mal 4:6). Therefore we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (Heb. 12:1).**

**Voltaire - “Never is human nature so debased, as where ignorance is armed with power.”**

The Church of God continues to convert many peoples of every language and ethnicity. So many steeped in the fantasies of the False Church. Testimonies of the elite confirm their ancient heritage, their peaceable lives, and a virile separation from the political and religious systems. With a God given right the people of God adhere to the scripture as a Way of life, living by the commandments of God.

The Church defies Babylon and preaches of the kingdom, just as Christ defied the ruling classes. Babylon’s ire chaffs against the success of the Church of God - seen as a direct assault on the rulership of Popery. Even the stones from the Rock of Christ cry out against the folly of the power of Babylon – and reverberate to our day! When Christ entered Jerusalem on His final journey before crucifixion, the people cried out in joy “Hosanna!” That is, save us, rescue us, our Saviour! There, lies the threat to the forces of this world.

For the final time on this earth, Christ climbs the same path that the Feast of Tabernacles’ pilgrims climbed from the Jordan River floor to the heights of Jerusalem<sup>25</sup>. They rejoice and sing the song of ascents as recorded in the Psalms – 120-134, beginning immediately after the tolling of Psalm of 119 – that adores the Law of God:

*38. Saying, “Blessed be the King, Who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” 39. And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to Him, “Master, rebuke Your disciples.”*

*40. But He answered and said to them, “**I tell you that if these were silent, the stones would cry out.**” 41. And when He came near and saw the city, He wept over it (Luke 19 FV).*

*1. In my distress I cried to the LORD and He answered me. 2. **Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.***

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<sup>25</sup> Jericho, conquered by the Israelites led by Joshua, when they entered the Promised Land is ½ mile below Jerusalem. Joshua is a type and bears the Hebrew name of Christ – as we are led into the Kingdom of God, facing a mighty climb.

***3. What shall be given to you? Or what shall be done to you, O deceitful tongue? 4. Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of the broom tree!***

***5. Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! 6. My soul has long dwelt with him who hates peace. 7. I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war (Psalm 120 FV).***

Jones<sup>51</sup> documents the atrocities that bear on the human spirit! Witness the contrasts within creation – evil tyranny of man under Satan; and the remnant, mustard seed (Luke 13:19) under God!

Quoting from Voltaire:

***“A priest in a white surplice, or a monk who has vowed meekness and humility, causes his fellow creatures to be put to the torture in a dismal dungeon.***

***A stage is erected in the public marketplace, where the condemned prisoners are conducted to the stake, attended with a train of monks and religious confraternities. They sing psalms, say mass, and butcher mankind.***

***Were a native of Asia to come to Madrid upon a day of an execution of this sort, it would be impossible for him to tell, whether it were a rejoicing, a religious feast, a sacrifice, or a massacre; and yet it is all this together!***

***The kings, whose presence alone in other cases is the harbinger of mercy, assist at this spectacle uncovered, seated lower than the inquisitors, and are spectators of their subjects expiring in the flames.”***

***It is, indeed, matter of regret that any among the members of that church should have their minds so enslaved by prejudice, as to imagine, for a moment, that a despotism which required for its support such diabolical engines, could possibly be of heavenly origin.***

***There is something in the very constitution of this tribunal so monstrously unjust, so exorbitantly cruel, that it must ever excite one's astonishment, that the people of any country should have permitted its existence among them.***

***How they could have the inconsistency to acknowledge a power to be from God which has found it necessary to recur to expedients so manifestly from hell, so subversive of every principle of sound morality and religion, can be regarded only as one of those contradictions, for which human characters, both in individuals and nations, are often so remarkable.***

***The wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. But the policy of Rome, as displayed in the inquisition, is so strikingly characterized by that wisdom which is earthly, sensual and devilish, that the person who needs to be convinced of it, seems to be altogether beyond the power of argument.***



***Never were two systems more diametrically opposed in their spirit, their maxims, and effects, than primitive Christianity, and the religion of modern Rome; nor do heaven and hell, Christ and Belial, exhibit to our view a more glaring contrast!!***

The False Church loves the edicts of darkness, despises the scriptures, and considers them indecipherable. The children of the Church of God knew more than all the theologians of these ages, as Jones records:<sup>52</sup>

***...Because they have stirred up the hatred of the popes and great men of the world against them, by the freedom which they take to reprove the vices and dissolute practices of princes and ecclesiastic.***

The reform movement emerges from the power of the Holy Spirit as it moved the Church of God through the centuries. The reformers investigate the character of the people of God, sifting through the source of their sustenance and sustainability.

And the theologians in every country discover, as though hidden in plain sight, communities infused with a humble and passive nature extending to 70 generations, without pause - rising to a dispersed population (1500's) of over 800,000.

Shock penetrates the minds of the historian as the conspiracies and atrocities surface. No crime ever deserved these punishments and tortures! The search uncovers generations of God's people trampled by spiritual genocide that attacks a peaceful and humble belief system. Like a diligent archaeologist reveals layers of civilization, slowly the truths of their endurance and perseverance emerge.

But, after 1600 years of darkness, what change will be wrought? Will mankind suddenly awake from this slumber of the ages? Will human behaviour and systems rejuvenate? Will the discovery of the artifacts bring the rock of ages to all people? The discoveries - they kept the Sabbath, caused their children to be baptized (young adults) according to the primitive Church, taught them the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God.

Instead a new human awakening scolds the abuses and devises a humanistic culture that condemns all religion and throws spiritual life out with the death declaration - "God is Dead"! Within ½ of a lifetime from the Nietzsche declaration of 1882 the world would face the most destructive war in history.<sup>26</sup>

Caught in the net of the inquisition and crusades the true Church and others:

***<sup>53</sup>“Moors were banished, a million at a time. Six or eight hundred thousand Jews were driven away at once, and their immense riches seized by their accusers, and distributed***

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<sup>26</sup> "God is Dead" is a widely quoted statement by [German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche](#). Nietzsche used the phrase to express his idea that [the Enlightenment](#) had eliminated the possibility of the existence of the [Abrahamic God](#) or of [deities](#) in general. However, proponents of the strongest form of the [Death of God theology](#) have used the phrase in a literal sense, meaning that the Christian God who existed at one point, has ceased to exist. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\\_is\\_dead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_is_dead)

***among their persecutors, while thousands dissembled, and professed themselves Christians only to be harassed in future.***

***Heretics of all ranks and of various denominations were imprisoned and burnt, or fled in to other countries (from Spanish dominions – Holland, southern France, etc.).”***

But the common people convulse in fear:

***<sup>54</sup>“The Spaniards are now trained up by the priests to shudder at the thought of thinking for themselves. That honour to his country and of human nature, the late Mr. Howard, says, when he saw the Inquisition at Valladolid, "I could not but observe, that the sight of it struck terror into the common people as they passed.”***

From the despoiling of the fair Christians comes “due process” in law, for as Satan inspired the destruction of Christ, so he attacks the innocent of this world. Jesus, not only the essence of mildness and gentleness, as a nurse that cherishes her children, but then also as the Son of God with righteous anger: “Come to me all that are weary and heavy laden, for my burden and yoke are light” (Matt. 11:28 – paraphrased) and “My house is a house of prayer but you have made it a den of robbers and thieves” (Matt. 21:13 – paraphrased).

But what an awful juxtaposition covers this horrid court of papal inquisition.

***Let us hear the description which Voltaire, a very, competent witness, gives of it.***

***"Their form of proceeding," says he, "is an infallible way to destroy whomsoever the inquisitors wish. The prisoners are not confronted with the accuser or informer.***

***Nor, is there any informer or witness who is not listened to. A public convict, a notorious malefactor, an infamous person, a common prostitute, a child, are in the holy office, though nowhere else, credible accusers and witnesses.***

***Even the son may depose against his father, the wife against her husband .***

***To this tribunal we must likewise impute that profound ignorance of sound philosophy in which Spain lies buried, whilst Germany, England, France, and even Italy, have discovered so many truths, and enlarged the sphere of our knowledge. Never is human nature so debased, as where ignorance is armed with power. "***

The lives of the missionaries and church communities hung on the vagaries of the edicts of the false church. One of the most dynamic and ironic contrasts arises in Calabria, in southern Italy. The Church of God, planted in the 1300s grew to a spiritually festooned body of believers. Constant exchange between the Vaudois valleys in the northern Alps and Calabria helped the church grow and mature for over 200 years.

Within the shadow of the Roman Empire, where centuries before the coliseum claimed lives of Christians, now another spectacle more diabolical and emphatic. Filled with anger the false church decimates the Church of God.

A prime martyr, J.L. Paschale, a sheep among wolves:

<sup>55</sup>Meanwhile, preparations had been made at Rome for the trial of Jean Louis Paschale. On the 8th of September, 1560, he was brought out of his prison, conducted to the Convent della Minerva, and cited before the Papal tribunal. He confessed his Saviour, and, with a serenity to which the countenances of his judges were strangers, he listened to the sentence of death, which was carried into execution on the following day.

*Standing upon the summit of the Janiculum Mount, vast crowds could witness the spectacle. In front the Campagna spreads out its once glorious but now desolated bosom; and winding through it like a thread of gold is seen the Tiber, while the Apennines, sweeping round it in craggy grandeur, enclose it like a vast wall. **Immediately beneath, uprearing her domes and monuments and palaces, with an air that seems to say, "I sit a queen," is the city of Rome.***

***Yonder, asserting an easy supremacy amid the other fabrics of the Eternal City, is the scarred and riven yet Titanic form of the Coliseum, with its stains of early Christian blood not yet washed out.***

***By its side, the partner of its guilt and doom, lies the Palatine, once the palace of the world's master, now a low mound of ruins, with its row of melancholy cypresses, the only mourners on that site of vanished glory and fallen empire.***

***Nearer, burning in the midday sun, is the proud cupola of St. Peter's, flanked on the one side by the buildings of the Inquisition, and on the other by the huge Mole of Hadrian, beneath whose gloomy ramparts old Tiber rolls sluggishly and sullenly along.***

***But what shout is this which we hear? Why does Rome keep holiday? Why do all her bells ring?*** Lo! from every street and piazza eager crowds rush forth, and uniting in one overwhelming and surging stream, they are seen rolling across the Bridge of St. Angelo, and pressing in at the gates of the old fortress, which are thrown wide open to admit this mass of human beings.

*Entering the court-yard of the old castle, an imposing sight meets the eye. **What a confluence of ranks, dignities, and grandeurs!*** In the centre is placed a chair, the emblazonry of which tells us that it claims to rise in authority and dignity over the throne of kings. The Pontiff, Pius IV, has already taken his seat upon it, for he has determined to be present at the tragedy of today.

***Behind his chair, in scarlet robes, are his cardinals and counsellors, with many dignitaries besides in mitres and cowls, ranged in circles, according to their place in the Papal body. Behind the ecclesiastics are seated, row on row, the nobility and beauty of Rome.***

***Plumes wave, stars gleam, and seem to mock the frocks and cowls gathered near them, whose wearers, however, would not exchange these mystic garments for all the bravery that blazes around them. The vast sweep of the Court of St. Angelo is densely occupied. Its ample floor is covered from end to end with a closely-wedged mass of citizens, who have come to see the spectacle.***

***In the centre of the throng, rising a little way over the sea of human heads, is seen a scaffold, with an iron stake, and beside it a bundle of faggots.***

*A slight movement begins to be perceptible in the crowd beside the gate. Someone is entering. The next moment a storm of hissing and execration salutes the ear. It is plain that the person who has just made his entrance is the object of universal dislike. The clank of irons on the stone floor of the court, as he comes forward, tells how heavily his limbs are loaded with fetters.*

*He is still young; but his face is pale and haggard with suffering. He lifts his eyes, and with countenance undismayed surveys the vast assembly, and the dismal apparatus that stands in the midst of it, waiting its victim. There sits a calm courage on his brow; the serene light of deep, untroubled peace beams in his eye. He mounts the scaffold, and stands beside the stake. Every eye is now turned, not on the wearer of the tiara, but on the man who is clad in the sambenito<sup>27</sup>.*

***"Good people" says the martyr—and the whole assembly keep silence.***

***"I am come here to die for confessing the doctrine of my Divine Master and Saviour, Jesus Christ."***

***Then turning to Pius IV, he arraigned him as the enemy of Christ, the persecutor of his people, and the Anti-Christ of Scripture, and concluded by summoning him and all his cardinals to answer for their cruelties and murders before the throne of the Lamb.***

***"At his words," says the historian Crespin<sup>28</sup>, "the people were deeply moved, and the Pope and the cardinals gnashed their teeth."***

*The inquisitors hastily gave the signal. The executioners came round him, and having strangled him, they kindled the faggots, and the flames blazing up speedily reduced his body to ashes. For once the Pope had performed his function. With his key of fire, which he may truly claim to carry, he had opened the celestial doors, and had sent his poor prisoner from the dark dungeons of the Inquisition, to dwell in the palace of the sky.*

*So died, or rather passed into the life eternal, Jean Louis Paschale, the Waldensian missionary and pastor of the flock in Calabria. His ashes were collected and thrown into the Tiber, and by the Tiber they were borne to the Mediterranean. And this was the grave of the preacher-martyr, whose noble bearing and undaunted courage before the Pope himself gave added value to his splendid testimony for the Protestant cause.*

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<sup>27</sup> *Sambenito* featured red saltires, whose wearer was only to do [penance](#). Eventually all three types of tunics became known as *sambenito*; a conical cap, denominated [coroza](#) (and [capirote](#)), of the same material and motifs as the corresponding *sambenito*, would also be worn. The heretics, found guilty by the [inquisitors](#), had to walk in the [procession](#) wearing the *sambenito* as a [Shirt of Flame](#), the *coroza*, the rope around the neck, the [rosary](#), and in their hands a yellow or green wax candle. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanbenito>

<sup>28</sup> Crespin, *Mist, del Martyrs*, pp. S06—16. Leger, part i., p. 204, and part ii., p. 335.

***Time may consume the marble, violence or war may drag down the monumental pile "The pyramids that cleave heaven's jewelled portal; Even Jove's star-spangled dome; the tomb where rich Mausolus sleeps—are not immortal."*<sup>29</sup>**

***But the tomb of the far-sounding sea to which the ashes of Paschale were committed, with a final display of impotent rage, was a nobler mausoleum than ever Rome raised to any of her Pontiffs.***

The Church grows from early beginnings soon after the last apostle John died in 90 A.D., suffering threats - physical, spiritual and theological – generation after generation. Their beliefs based on the true Doctrines of the Bible, cling to the truth and prove all things; fighting for that freedom with their lives as predicted by Christ.

Continuous contention and persecution rages destruction against the Church of God, fomenting against children, women and families. Over time some truth methodically erodes true Christian practices, like Footwashing. God keeps the faith alive through His divine protection and spiritual support and personal indwelling of the Spirit. That divine cover, the “calling and the choosing” characterizes the true Christian (Matt. 22:14).

Without His persistent spiritual acts, over generations, we live as orphans, without a Father. The laws of God within us working with His grace gives the Christian the act of continuous creation. The breakdown through Adam and Eve, is now being restored by Christ, as the second Adam, bringing us back into the Godly family and putting us on the path of “eternal working” (I Cor. 15:22).

Men value time and desire to control life, without interference. The carnal mind (lust, greed, power, and hate (Gal. 5:22)) rebels against God. The key to understanding the pursuit of the kingdom of God and its fruits lies in keeping and remembering the Sabbath, each week. This taste of eternity, keeps our identity secure with each generation, and communes with God through His ongoing work of creating. A refuge, a blessing, and the joy filled respite from vain weekly pursuits.

When we forget our God, He forgets our children (Hosea 4). The selfish and carnal desires breed anger and rebellion. Instant satisfaction and gratification magnify our plight bringing potentially tragic outcomes to our children. Treated like chattel! “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” He warns! We waste away as spiritual orphans without a Father, no anchor in life, while we cast our children to the worldly wolves of material.

Man wants to dictate, control and extend time through fleshly and hollow pursuits – a false god. The carnal mind feels robbed of time, and the Sabbath appears to be some external religiosity that belongs to ritual, tradition, and synagogues. But in all time God calls and communes, opens vistas of peace, and breaks through the crusty human mortal façade. The Sabbath, made for us, at the very threshold of creation – ironically, not as a burden but true freedom from materialism and the enslaved senses.

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<sup>29</sup> Sextus J Propertius (Oranstoun's translation), p. 119

For a new desire supplants vanity, as His spirit releases and then marries with our soul (Luke 6: 1-5) - **origin, destiny, meaning and morality** – poignantly unknown to the empty hungry and hunting human heart and mind.

One of the mysteries of God, for the Holy Spirit captures the delight of this eternal communion, and produces the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Just as other mysteries of God's laws and statutes cannot be discovered or understood by human endeavor, without the Holy Spirit (Rom. 7:7):

1. The Holy Days (Lev. 23) picture the complete plan of salvation and answer the questions concerning human loneliness, destiny, and meaning;
2. Pre-marital sex appears to the world as a precursor to a full-time partnership. But the commitment in front of God and community anchors society (7<sup>th</sup> commandment – Exodus 20);
3. Coveting – an affair of the heart corrupts man, bringing dysfunction, vanity and psychoses;
4. Idolatry – in all its intrinsic and extrinsic forms, runs interference with the purity of our relationship with God (2<sup>nd</sup> commandment); and
5. Primacy of God – brings the heart, soul and mind to the spiritual and eternal perspective. We all become fools without this (Psa. 14) commitment – “A fool says in his heart there is no God.” No middle ground remains - without placing God first in our lives, we lose all perspective and meaning. ***We will have other gods!*** No in-between exists! Replacements fill the void, all debilitating and impotent - food, career, lust, or greed.

When we exalt vileness, evil fills the community and the wicked walk about freely (Psa. 12:8). For the tenor and theme of life brings curses (Deuter. 28). We do not fight against principalities, powers, flesh and blood of this world but against spiritual domains and wickedness in high places. We cannot fight without the full armour of God (Eph. 6:10-12).

The ebb and flow of civil and religious contentions and rivalries hangs over their peace. The attacks in 1655 come from all access points into the valleys - with well-equipped armies – at the Passover of that year. The extreme slaughter purges the people from the valleys as they escape overseas and bound for many places in Europe. Some return, holding out hope for the rebirth from the devastation. Flocks, possessions and precious places gone!

The world appears to dramatically change after the travesties of the Middle and Medieval Dark Ages<sup>30</sup>. The Vaudois become unshackled from the centuries of social and religious repression with a decreasing number of martyrs and the truth of Biblical teachings finally brought into the limelight of social discourse.

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<sup>30</sup> In the [history of Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages), the **Middle Ages** (or **medieval period**) lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the [fall of the Western Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages) and merged into the [Renaissance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages) and the [Age of Discovery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages). The Middle Ages is the middle period of the three traditional divisions of Western history: [classical antiquity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages), the medieval period, and the [modern period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages). The medieval period is itself subdivided into the [Early, High, and Late Middle Ages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages). [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle\\_Ages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages)

Industrial technology, including the printing press supplants the cloaked and darkened cloisters of the monks and clergy. The oppressive combined forces of the state and religion finally must unfurl physical, and eventually religious freedom with the result of beckoning vistas of discovery and escape. Driven by persecution, but holding fast to a living active Christian faith bears fruit in European institutions. Many embark for the new world untethered from continental despotism. Finding freedom to worship in uniquely protected places – sheltered now by vast oceans instead of towering cliffs.

When searching the records for a bond that connects the churches of God to the Apostles of the Primitive or Early Church many historians and school curricula fail to recognize the source of true freedom in the body of the Church of God. Instead, many cannot connect the dots of true history and God's influence in the world and personal affairs, as God perpetually desires to be attached to our lives. But the repetitive cycle of apostasy continues as man fashions fantasies and imitations of the true Church, in both belief and action, unknowingly sowing the seeds of destruction.

Many opine that the small groups of believers reside as outsiders, not only heretics, but rebels against the peaceful order of civil society. Inquisitors continuously push the martyrs to recognize their subversive role in upsetting the natural order.

The truth of God spoken in the communities of the Church instill a pervasive scriptural knowledge that none could challenge. As Perrin affirms:<sup>56</sup>

*The Bishop of Cavaillon, Vesembecius, **at the time of the great persecution of the Waldenses of Merindol and Provence**, made a certain preaching monk enter into conference with them, to convince them of their errors, before he proceeded to violence.*

*But the priest withdrew in confusion, saying, **he had never in the whole course of his life made such progress in the holy scriptures, as he had done in those few days that he had conferred with the Waldenses, in examining the articles of their confession by the passages of holy scripture by them quoted.***

*But that Bishop, not contented, sent to them a whole troop of young doctors, lately come from the Sorbonne, by the subtlety of their questions. But one of them upon his retreat openly acknowledged, he had learned more of the doctrine necessary to salvation by hearing the answers of the little children of the Waldenses in their catechism, than by all the theological disputes which he had ever heard in Paris.*

*Bernard de Girard, lord of Haillan, saith, that the Waldenses have been charged with more wicked opinions than they are really guilty of; **because they have stirred up the hatred of the popes and great men of the world against them, by the freedom which they take to reprove the vices and dissolute practices of princes and ecclesiastic.***

*Witness Catalan Girard of St. John, in the valley of Lucerne, who being condemned to be burnt at Reul, a city in Piedmont, when he stood upon the pile, had the courage to desire two stones, and as it is reported by his own executioners, holding them in his hands, he loudly uttered these following expressions:*

***“You wretched persecutors do think entirely to extirpate and destroy our poor churches by this means, but know that it will be as impossible for you to obtain your ends, as it is for me to chew and digest these stones.”***

***And indeed, notwithstanding such long and rude persecutions, both general and particular, the church of Piedmont, and in the neighboring valleys, and other places which had received the same doctrine, did so multiply and increase at that time, that George Morel in his memoirs, 1530, doth affirm that there were then above 800,000 persons of the Vaudois religion.***

***Luther confessed, that he hated the Waldenses, as persons consigned over to perdition, until having understood the piety of their faith by their confessions and writings, he perceived that those good men had been greatly wronged whom the pope had condemned as heretics, being rather worthy of the praise due to holy martyrs.***

***Among the said Waldenses, he had found one thing worthy of admiration, and to be taken notice of as miraculous and unheard of in the popish Church; that the said Waldenses, having forsaken all human doctrines, did meditate with all their power in the law of the Lord day and night; that they were very expert in the Scriptures and well versed in them.***

***On the contrary, those who are called our masters in the papacy, did so despise the holy writings, in the title of which notwithstanding they gloried, that there were amongst them they who had not so much as seen the Bible.***

***Moreover, having read the confession of the Waldenses, he said that he gave thanks to God for the great light which he had bestowed upon them, rejoicing with them, that all cause of suspicion being removed from among them, and the reformed, which made them be suspected by each other of heresy, they were however so nearly united as to have been brought together into one sheepfold under the only pastor and bishop of our souls, who is blessed for ever.***

***King Louis XII of France, having received information from the enemies of the Waldenses dwelling in Provence, of several heinous crimes which they fathered upon them, sent to the place Adam Fumee, master of requests, and a Sorbonist doctor, called Parui, who was his confessor, to make inquiry into the matter.***

***They visited all their parishes and temples, and neither found there any images, or sign of the ornaments belonging to the mass, or ceremonies of the Romish Church; much less could they discover any of those crimes with which they were charged. But rather that they kept the Sabbath duly, caused their children to be baptized (young adults) according to the primitive Church, taught them the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God.***

***The king having heard the report of the said commissioners said, with an oath, that they were better men than himself or his people.***



*That same king, understanding that in Dauphiny, in the valley of Fraissiniere, in the diocese of Arabrun, there were certain people who lived like beasts without religion, having an ill opinion of the Romish worship, he sent thither one of his confessors, and the official of Orleans, to bring him a true information thereof.*

*That confessor, with his colleague, repaired to the place, where he examined the Waldenses dwelling in the said valley touching their faith and conversation. The Archbishop of Arabrun, who made account, that the goods of the said Waldenses would be annexed to the domains of his archbishopric, as being liable to confiscation for the cause of heresy, very much pressed the said commissioners to condemn them immediately as heretics. But the said commissaries would not fulfill his desire.*

*They rather justified them as much as in them lay, insomuch that, before their departure, the said king's confessor, being at his lodgings at the tavern in Ambrun, **said, in the presence of several of his assistants, that he wished he were as good a Christian as the worst of the said valley of Fraissiniere.***

***King Francis I., successor to Louis XII, understanding that the Parliament of Provence laid heavy impositions upon the Waldenses at Merindol, Cabriers, and other neighboring places, had a desire to inform himself about the faith, life, and manners of the said Waldenses.***

*For that purpose he commanded William de Bellay, Lord of Langeai, his lieutenant in Piedmont, to make diligent inquiry into that affair. Whereupon the said Lord sent into Provence two honest persons to inquire into the life and religion of the said Waldenses, and the proceedings of the Parliament against them.*

*Those two deputies brought word back to the Lord of Langeai, that the greatest part of the inhabitants of Provence affirmed, that the said Waldenses were a laborious people, and that about two hundred, years ago they came from Piedmont to dwell in Provence.*

*And that betaking themselves to **husbandry and feeding of cattle, they made many villages, destroyed by the wars, and other desert and uncultivated places, very fertile by their industry; and that by the information given them in the said country of Provence, they had learned that the said inhabitants of Merindol, were a very peaceable people.***

*Loved by their neighbors, and men of good behavior and of a godly conversation, careful in keeping their promises, punctual in paying their debts, without suffering themselves to be sued, a charitable people, not permitting any amongst them to fall into want; and that they were liberal to strangers and poor passengers, according to their ability.*

*That the inhabitants of Provence affirmed that those of Merindol were distinguished from those of the country, in that they could not endure to blaspheme, or name the devil, or swear at all, unless in the making some solemn contracts, or in judgment.*

*They were also known by this, that when they came into any company where they talked lasciviously or blasphemously, to the dishonor of God, they straightway withdrew from such*

*company. Thus many enemies of the Waldenses have spoken honorably of them, enforced thereunto by the power of the truth.*

***It is marvelous that they are not uncultivated in their manners; for no one among them is ignorant of letters, and they all can write fairly. They are well taught in the French language; so that they can understand the bible, and sing the psalms.***

***Nor can any boy be found at random among them, who being asked of the faith which they profess, will not promptly give you an intelligible account, which is common to all the other Vallenses. They religiously pay their tribute, which, after their service to God, is a chief article in their confession of faith.”***

#### **PART 14 - The Epilogue and Denouement, the End from the Beginning**

***The martyr’s testimonies lash at the hearts of all***

***The Darkest of Ages crashes into a reform but...is a Deeper Darkness is reborn***

The persecution of the Church of God culminates in the 1655 Passover Piedmont Massacre intensely raising the chastisement of the Republic of England and the Protector – Oliver Cromwell (1599 -1658) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver\\_Cromwell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Cromwell) <sup>31</sup>. His associates including the mighty pen of Sir John Milton pounce on the monarchs, princes and rulers of the United Countries (Holland); Swiss Cantons; France; Sweden; Transylvania; Bohemia; Pomerania; and German principalities including Brandenburg, the royal birthplace of the Prussian monarchy that brought about German unification in 1870.

John Milton castigates Babylon in a [Waldensian Sonnet](#)<sup>32</sup> ***and then pens the words of Cromwell*** to cauterize the inciters and encourage the protectors of the Churches of God. The British Isles – descendants of the Celtic tribes of Europe call to the Church of God, through common heritage – from George Jowett<sup>57</sup>

*The name Britain continued to name England and Wales, long after the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in A.D. 426. Not until the invading Normans began to be domestically absorbed by the British Kelts and Saxons did the Anglican title obtain ascendancy.*

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<sup>31</sup> Cromwell is one of the most controversial figures in the history of the British Isles, considered a regicidal dictator by historians such as David Sharp,<sup>[5]</sup> a military dictator by [Winston Churchill](#),<sup>[6]</sup> a hero of liberty by [John Milton](#), [Thomas Carlyle](#), and [Samuel Rawson Gardiner](#), and a revolutionary bourgeois by [Leon Trotsky](#).<sup>[7]</sup> His tolerance of Protestant sects did not extend to Catholics; his measures against them in Ireland have been characterised by some as genocidal or near-genocidal,<sup>[8]</sup> and his record is harshly criticised in Ireland.<sup>[9]</sup> He was selected as one of the [ten greatest Britons of all time](#) in a 2002 BBC poll.<sup>[10]</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver\\_Cromwell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Cromwell)

<sup>32</sup> The largest theme of the sonnet is religion, though calling on religion to enact justice. The other theme is the movement from Old Testament to the New Testament. The poem compares the theme of vengeance from the Old Testament to the theme of regeneration in the New Testament. The clear example of vengeance in the poem is the first line of “Avenge, O Lord,” which could be a reference to Luke 18:7, a bible verse that speaks about vengeance. An example of regeneration is the lines “grow/ A hundredfold” and “Mother with Infant.” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On\\_the\\_Late\\_Massacre\\_in\\_Piedmont](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Late_Massacre_in_Piedmont)

*From the lesser used name Angle the national name took form to label the land and its people, England. Strange as it may appear on first thought, yet there are no misnomers in the various names and titles. **Racially the Kelts, Anglo-Saxons and Normans were but separate tribal branches of the same Keltic race. This also includes the Danes, who had invaded Britain in A.D. 787. Ethnologically the whole Keltic race is composed of the Keltic-Saxon-Scandinavian stock.***

***Historically the arrival of the Danes, Saxons and Normans are referred to as invasions, but actually it was a converging of the one race into their predestined homeland, which to them and to the world became their Motherland, Britain.***

*Together they have grown in stature, wearing the British (people of the covenant) title like a badge, in honour and with glory. The fact that the British name was singularly identified with the people of England and Wales is more curious than mysterious. As the history of ancient Britain unfolds before us we can understand the reason more clearly.*

*Irrevocably they were bound together by the ties of language and religion. Cymric was their mother tongue and each practised the Druidic religion. Britain was the central headquarters of Druidism, to which all paid tithe. It was by far the most populous and by its commerce and industry was world renowned. What London is to Great Britain today, Ottawa to Canada, and Washington to the United States, so was Britain to the whole Keltic race.*

*Largely, this was the reason for other nations identifying the British name with England. From the religious point of view, out of which the British name arose, this island was entitled by priority to the title. England was the first of the British Isles to be inhabited. Before the Kelts arrived it was a virgin land devoid of human habitation.*

*Mighty martyrs spread the word of God throughout all of Europe setting the ships a-sail from the shores of England, Holland, and France to the whole world – moved by the Spirit of God. The monarchical structure empowered by the hideous hand of darkness - that permeates Babylon and Satan - begins to show fissures while the ax continues cut the root (Matt. 3:10) of the false powers and dark doctrines of this world.*

*Just as Christ took away the first covenant because of disobedience and rebellion. In this case, the Church of God, unknown to most of the world, carries the banner of the future kingdom of God under the new covenant (Matt. 28:19).*

**The words of wisdom from Oliver Cromwell, John Wycliffe and John Milton scour the sensibilities of monarchs and disrupt the foul despots and their religious fervour. Military missions sent to the heart of the Waldenses' lands, demarcate centuries of attacks and destruction; and the truth of that evil spreads abroad, only to be partially buried by the counter-reformation and denial!**

**Given to the states of Holland, this letter speaks a sample of the other letters sent to all the principalities previously mentioned. Cromwell rose up like a Lion with the pen of Milton and the force of the Almighty to intervene and impinge the rampaging Babylon.**

As Jones records:<sup>58</sup>

*And yet, it would be difficult to fix upon a period while our country (United Kingdom – beware US) was more prosperous at home, or sustained a higher character abroad, than during his (Oliver Cromwell) protectorate.*

*For, not to speak of the number of able and upright judges whom he introduced into "Westminster Hall"; nor of the impartial administration of justice throughout the land. **Nor yet of the attention which he shewed to reform the national religion, by advancing men of learning and piety in the churches and discountenancing those of an opposite character.***

*He certainly contrived to support his reputation both among his own subjects and with foreign nations, in a very extraordinary manner, even compelling those to fear who did not love him.*

*His name was terrible throughout Europe<sup>33</sup>, and "It is hard for us to discover," says Lord Clarendon, "which dreaded him the most, France, Spain, or the Netherlands, in all which places his friendship was current at the value which he chose to set upon it.*

*For, as they all sacrificed their honour and their interests to his pleasure, so there was nothing he could have claimed that either of them would have denied him." **The truth of this representation, and, in some measure, the pertinence of these reflections, will appear from the history on which we are now about to enter.***

*The council of Zurich, in Switzerland, were, by reason of their proximity to the valleys of Piedmont, the first who received intimation of the horrid massacre which had recently taken place there. The news reached them on the Lord's day, **April 29, 1655 (Passover week of that year) and such was the impression which it made upon them, that the town council immediately assembled, and issued a proclamation for a day of fasting and humiliation throughout all their territories; at the same time recommending that collections should every where be made for relieving the wants of the poor sufferers.***

*Most Illustrious Lords, &c.*

*Having this instant received the dismal news of the lamentable state of our brethren of the faith in Piedmont, as you may see by the copy of a letter now sent, we thought ourselves obliged by the sacred rights of faith, union, and communion, to acquaint you therewith; being fully assured that you will be pleased, according to your wonted piety and Christian charity, thoroughly to consider and lay to heart this "affliction of Joseph."*

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<sup>33</sup>It is related of Cardinal Mazarine, who at that time swayed the councils of the French cabinet, that he "would change countenance at the very mention of his name; and it passed into a proverb in France, that" he was not so much afraid of the devil as of Oliver Cromwell." Upon the whole, says the late Mr. Fox, "the character of Cromwell must ever stand high in the list of those who raised themselves to supreme power by the force of their genius; and among such, even in respect of moral virtue, it would be found to be one of the least exceptionable, if it had not been tainted with that most odious and degrading of all human vices, hypocrisy." - HISTORY OF JAMES II. p. 18.

*This persecution is smoothed over with a very fair pretext by the opposite party, but there is no one who loves the church of Christ, that will not easily be persuaded of the subtleties and treacheries to which their adversaries alternately have recourse.*

*Moved by an ardent sympathy, we earnestly beseech you, most mighty and illustrious lords, that you would lay to heart the case of these afflicted people, and administer those means of relief which you may think conducive thereunto; not only by prayer to the Father of Mercies for them, and by granting them that pecuniary assistance which their miseries loudly call for, but also by pacifying their prince towards them; or at least, obtaining for them the liberty to emigrate, which we also shall, to the utmost of our power, endeavour to do.*

*May the Sovereign Lord of all have mercy upon his church in every place; own their cause; and his Almighty arm avert their misery and adversities; to whose protection we heartily recommend you. ---Given, in haste, the 30th April, 1655.*

The counter-reformation chimes with crusading zeal raises the beast and false prophet from near death and scours the corners, streets, and pathways of all communities. Lies fly swiftly but truth overtakes them. In the Biblical narrative we see the constant twisting and submergence of truth, first by denial in the face of injustice, then evasion and then detachment (*Adam – the woman you gave me; Eve – the serpent you put in the garden*).

**Note the record bears a true and false witness as recorded in defiance of the truth. That the heretical accusations arose from twisting the truth to the benefit of the preponderant power – common among those that immerse themselves in worldly ambition.**

**The true Church of God reviled, attacked, buried and burned, while the beast and false prophet assume the role of protector and preserver of a false, diabolical truth and a god with an authority to take life. The records reveal central truths retrieved by V. Braght <sup>59</sup> from a burned city - nothing is hidden that will not be revealed - *Lies fly swiftly, but truth overtakes them: (Luke 8:17)***

*In the second book of the first part of the History of the Waldenses, by Jean Paul Perrin, translated by J.M. V., 3d chapter, page 74, col. 2, there is an account of one Jan Veileti, a monk, and inquisitor over the Waldenses, and how very unfaithfully and deceitfully he or his clerk acted in the case of these people, from which it can be inferred, how it also was with others of their accusers. The words read as follows:*

*But in the processes which were instituted by this monk Jan Veileti, **we have observed an exquisite kind of villainy and low cunning**; for, having gotten these proceedings into our hands, we found in them little billets, upon which this commissary (Jan Veileti) had noted the answers of the accused, simply, and just as they had come from their lips; **but these simple answers, we afterwards, in the proceedings found extended, and frequently given in a form contrary to, and quite different from what the sumptum**, that is, the aforementioned answer as noted in the proceedings, implied and contained; **thereby perverting the meaning of the defendant, and causing him to say that of which he had never thought.***

*For example, when he was asked whether he did not believe, that as soon as the sacramental words were pronounced by the priest, in the mass, the body of Christ was in the*

host, just as He was on the tree of the cross, and the Waldenses answered, **No, Veileti or his clerk set down as his answer: That he had confessed that he did not believe in God.**

Again, when it was asked, whether the saints must not be invoked, the reply was, **No, they wrote: That they had reviled, and spoken evil of, the saints.**

When it was asked, whether the virgin Mary must not be saluted and invoked in our extremity, and the answer was, **No, they wrote: That they had reviled the virgin Mary.**

"Behold, such was the faithlessness of the monks and inquisitors in such important matters, and it is not without a certain evidence of God's providence," says the writer, **"that these villainies have been preserved and have remained to the present time, as a means by which to show, what spirit actuated those men** having, by manifold frauds, oppressed and ultimately killed and burnt the believing members **of the church of Christ**, yet have the audacity to ask us, **where the church, and the believers, whom they themselves put to death, were before our coming.**"

"Now, if the reader is desirous to know," says our author, "how said proceedings fell into our hands, we reply, that this occurred likewise through the providence of God."

He then relates, how the archbishops of Embrun, John Rostan, and others had these papers and proceedings under lock and key in their chests and chanceries, until the city where they resided, was taken, A. D. 1585.

The house of the archbishop having taken fire on this occasion, many of these processes held in former **times against the Waldenses, were thrown in bags into the street.**

One Calignon, chancellor of Navarre and a certain councilor of Grenoble, who were present, ordered them to be picked up and delivered into their hands; and thus, **it is stated, the perfidious calumnies against the Waldenses came to light, which, otherwise, would have gone among the papists, as true accusations against them.** But it is as the common adage says: **Lies fly swiftly, but truth overtakes them.**

The unrelenting persecution through the inquisition persists intensely for 500 years. Interestingly 500 years elapses to our day, temporarily pausing the aggressive satanic effort to destroy the Church. Perhaps, now, lulled by creature comforts, the demonic pressure presents more insidious but invective traps for us.

Thyatira, the fulcrum 4<sup>th</sup> of the 7 churches, each overseen by an angel (Revelation 2) occupies the middle; the bending but not breaking spiritual dam. Under intense pressure from Jezebel, the physical dam eventually bursts into the whole world.

In Revelation 2 and 3 each angel receives a letter with Christ's admonishments. Each phase or characteristic bears the brunt of the facetious false prophets with demonic doctrines adorning and matching the twists and quirks of human nature. The Smyrna branch undergoes similar spiritual growing pains as she toils against lethargy and the trenchant synagogue of Satan, but she holds to the truth once delivered.

In the 800's Paulinus and Claude of Turin represent that struggle as they face the onslaught of idolatry and the spin to the nature of God – a fundamental need for Christians, and a favorite place for false spirits to attack. Claude, the early pastor in Turin and to the Churches in Piedmont:<sup>60</sup>

Amongst other corruptions much prevailed, the doctrine of transubstantiation then began to be generally propagated. Paulinus undertook to refute that absurdity, in a treatise on the Eucharist, which he wrote at the request of Charles the Great (**Charlemagne**), and which he dedicated to that monarch.

*He affirms that the Eucharist was a morsel or bit of bread, and that it is either death or life to him that partakes of it, according as he hath or hath not faith in that which is signified by it. **He pours the utmost contempt upon the sacrifice of the mass, opens up the scripture doctrine of Christ's priestly office, as after the order of Melchisedec, vindicates his incarnation and crucifixion as the true propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and thunders out the boldest anathemas against all human satisfactions, maintaining that the blood of none of those who have themselves been redeemed is capable of blotting out the least sin, for that this privilege comes alone through the Lord Jesus Christ.***

"The Son of God," says he, "is our Almighty Lord, because he redeemed us by the price of his blood, is properly called the true Redeemer by all that are redeemed by him. He, I say, was not redeemed, because he was never captive; but we are redeemed, who were captives sold under sin, and bound by the hand-writing that was against us, which he took away, blotting it out with his blood which the blood of no other redeemer could do, and fixed it to his cross, openly triumphing over it in himself."

In opposition to the Arians, who attributed to Christ only an adopted Son ship, he thus illustrates John 6:52: "Is it said, that he who doth not eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, hath not eternal life? He that eats my flesh," saith Christ, "and drinks my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

The power of raising up at the last day belongs to none but the true God; for the flesh and blood cannot be referred to his divine, but to his human nature, by which he is the Son of man. And yet if that Son of man, whose flesh and blood this is, (for that one and the same person is both the Son of God and Son of man) were not really God, his flesh and blood could not procure eternal life to those that eat them. Hence the evangelist John saith, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin."

Moreover, whose flesh and blood is it that gives life to those that eat and drink them, but the Son of man's, whom God the Father hath sealed; who is the true and almighty Son of God. For He, the bread of life, came down from heaven for us, and gives his life for the world, to the end that whosoever eats thereof, shall live forever." In reference to Christ's intercession, he says, "He is called the Mediator, because he is a middle person between both the disagreeing parties, and reconciles both of them in one.

Paul is not a mediator, but a faithful ambassador of the Mediator. He then quotes his words, "We are ambassadors for Christ praying- you in Christ's stead. Be ye reconciled to God. Our advocate," says he, "is one that intercedes for those that are already reconciled, even as our Redeemer doth, when he shews his human nature to God the Father, in the unity of his person, being God-man. John doth not intercede for us, but declares Him (Jesus) to be the propitiation for our sins."

These extracts, which might be enlarged to a great extent, are sufficient to give the intelligent reader some idea of the doctrinal principles of Paulinus. **He denied the supremacy of Peter over the rest of the apostles—lays it down as an inviolable maxim of Christianity, that God alone is the object of our faith, in opposition to what was taught in the church of Rome—and, in short, to quote the words of a learned writer,— "Whoever examines the opinions of this bishop, will easily perceive that he denies what the church of Rome affirms with relation to many of its leading tenets, and affirms what the church of Rome denies and whatever colourable pretexts may be employed, it will be difficult not to perceive this opposition through them all."** (Dr. Alix)

But the succession of events now leads me to call the reader's attention to the life and labours of Claude, Bishop of Turin. This truly great man, who has not improperly been called the first Protestant reformer, was born in Spain.

**In his early years he was a chaplain in the court of the emperor Lewis the Meek (Ludovicus Pius, king of France and emperor of the West) and was even then in high repute for his knowledge of the scriptures, and his first-rate talents as a preacher; in consequence of which, says the Abbe Fleury, Lewis perceiving the deplorable ignorance of a great part of Italy, in regard to the doctrines of the gospel, and desirous of providing the churches of Piedmont with one who might stem the growing torrent of image worship, promoted Claude to the see of Turin, about the year 817.**

In this event, the attentive reader will hereafter perceive the hand of God, so ordering the course of events in his holy providence as, in the very worst of times, to prepare, "a seed to serve him, and a generation to call him blessed." The expectations of the emperor were amply justified in the labours of Claude; **by his writings he ably illustrated the sacred scriptures, and drew the attention of multitudes to their plain and simple meaning, unadulterated by the corrupt glosses of the Catholic priesthood.**

**"In truth," says Fleury, himself a Catholic writer, "he began to preach and instruct with great application." His first zeal was directed against images, relics, pilgrimages, and crosses. It is not to be supposed that efforts such as his, directed against the prevailing superstitions of the age, should produce no ostensible effect; the monks were presently up in arms against him, reviling him as a blasphemer and a heretic, and his own people became so refractory that, in a little time, he went about in fear of his life.**

Supported, however, by the testimony of a good conscience, and a confidence in the goodness of his cause, Claude persevered, and wrote comments on several books of scripture, of which, unfortunately, the only one that has been printed is his exposition of the epistle to the Galatians. "He bore a noble testimony," says Mr. Robinson (in his Ecclesiastical Researches, p. 447) "against the prevailing errors of his time, and was undoubtedly a most respectable character."

Of one whose reputation stands so high, it cannot be necessary to enter upon any formal vindication against the calumnies of his opponents, but it may be satisfactory to the reader to have before him a summary of the principles which he held, and for which he nobly contended.



*Let it be observed then, that, throughout the whole of his writings, he maintains that "Jesus Christ is the alone head of the church." This, the reader will perceive, struck immediately at the root of the first **principle of Popery—the vicarious office of the bishop of Rome. He utterly discards the doctrine of human worthiness in the article of justification, in which a manner as overthrows all the subtle distinctions of Papists on the subject.***

*He pronounces anathemas against traditions in matters of religion, and thus drew the attention of men to the word of God, and that alone, as the ground of a Christian's faith. He maintained, that men are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law **(but that faith without works is dead – James 2:20)**—the doctrine which Luther, seven hundred years afterwards, so ably contended for, and which so excessively provoked the advocates of the Church of Rome.*

*He contended that the church was subject to error, and denied that prayers for the dead can be of any use to those that have demanded them; while he lashed, in the severest manner, the superstition and idolatry which everywhere abounded under the countenance and authority of the see of Rome.*

Claude affirms the enduring importance of scripture, and extolls the need to remember the Passover to sustain the power of the Holy Spirit within the Church of God; likely in opposition to the Catholic syncretism that paints the name of Christ into the Babylonian tenets of the Easter and Christmas celebrations.

**Ironically his defense of the original scriptural doctrines directly clashes with the Inquisition and Crusades 300 years later!** In those persecutions the inquisitors justify the verdict of heresy and death against the Church of God, by repeatedly brandishing Rome's false claims of papal supremacy, keeping pagan days, infant baptism, and the worship of the idolatrous mass!

*The writings of Claude were voluminous; for he was indefatigable in explaining the scriptures, and in opposing the torrent of superstition. He wrote three books upon Genesis in the year 815, and also a Commentary on the Gospel by Matthew, of which there are several copies in England.*

*He wrote a Commentary on Exodus in the year 821, and another on Leviticus in 823, besides which, he wrote comments on all the apostolic epistles, which have been since found, in manuscript in two volumes, in the Abbey of Fleury, near Orleans, in France.*

*These latter were drawn up at the express request of the emperor, Ludovicus Pius, to whom he dedicated his Commentary on the Epistle to:*

*"The apostles being sat down at table, Jesus Christ took bread, blessed and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying to them, Take, and eat—this is my body.*

*The ancient solemnities of the Passover, which were used in commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel, being ended, he passeth on to the new, because he would have the same to be celebrated in his church, as a memorial of the mystery of her redemption, and to substitute the sacrament of his body, and of his blood, instead of the flesh and blood of the paschal lamb;*

*and to shew that it was he himself to whom God had sworn, and shall never repent, "Thou art the eternal Priest according to the order of Melchisedec."*

*Moreover, he himself breaks the bread which he gives the disciples, that he might represent and make it appear, that the breaking of his body would not be contrary to his inclination, or without his willingness to die; but as he himself elsewhere says, that he had power to give his life, and to deliver it up himself, as well as to take it again, and raise himself from the dead.*

*He blessed the bread before he brake it, to teach us that he intended to make a sacrament of it. When he drew nigh to the time of his death and passion, it is said, that, having taken the bread and cup, he gave thanks to his Eternal Father. He who had taken upon him to expiate the iniquities of others, gave thanks to his Father, without having done anything that was worthy of death: He blesseth it with profound humility at the very time that he saw himself laden with stripes, no doubt to teach us that submission which we ought to exercise [under the chastening hand of God.]*

*If he, who was innocent, endured, with meekness and tranquility, the stripes due to the iniquities of others, it was to teach and instruct us what we ought to do when corrected for our own transgressions.*

*In regard to his saying, "This is my blood in the New Testament," it is to teach us to distinguish between the new covenant and the old—the latter of which was consecrated by the effusion of the blood of goats and oxen, as the [Jewish] lawgiver said at the sprinkling of it, "This is the blood of the covenant that God hath commanded you." For it was necessary that the patterns of true things should be purified by these, but that the heavenly places should be purified with more excellent sacrifices, according to what the apostle Paul declares throughout his whole epistle to the Hebrews, where he makes a distinction between the law and the gospel.*

*Jesus Christ, when about to suffer, says, "I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine, until the day that I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father." As if he had plainly said, "I will no longer take delight in the carnal ceremonies of the synagogue, amongst the number of which, the great festival of the Paschal lamb was one of the chiefest; for the time of my resurrection is at hand; that day will arrive, when I shall be lifted up to my heavenly kingdom, even to a state of glorious immortality, where I shall be filled together with you, with a new joy for the salvation of my people, which shall be born again in the spring of one and the same grace."*

*The "new wine," may also import the immortality of our renewed bodies; for when he saith, "I will drink it with you," he promises them the resurrection of their bodies, in order to their being clothed with immortality. "I have received," says he to Theodemirus, "by a special messenger, your letter, with the articles, wholly stuffed with babbling and fooleries.*

***You declare in these articles, that you have been troubled that my fame was spread not only throughout all Italy, but also in Spain and elsewhere; as if I were preaching a new doctrine, or setting myself up as the founder of a new sect, contrary to the rules of the ancient Catholic faith, which is an absolute falsehood.***

*But it is no wonder that the members of Satan should talk of me at this rate, since they called [Christ] our Head a deceiver, and one that had a devil, &c. For, I teach no new heresy, but keep myself to the pure truth, preaching and publishing nothing but that.*

*On the contrary, as far as in me lies, I have repressed, opposed, cast down, and destroyed, and do still repress, oppose, and destroy, to the utmost of my power, all sects, schisms, superstitions, and heresies, and shall never cease so to do, God being my helper, as far as in me lies.*

*When I came to Turin, I found all the churches full of abominations and images; and because I began to destroy what everyone adored, every one began to open his mouth against me. These kind of people against whom we have undertaken to defend the church of God, tell us, if you write upon the wall, or draw the images of Paul, of Jupiter, of Saturn, or Mercury, neither are the one of these Gods, nor the other apostles, and neither the one nor the other of these are men, and therefore the name is changed.*

*But surely if we ought to worship them, we ought rather to worship them during their lifetime, than as thus represented as the portraits of beasts, or (what is yet more true) of stone or wood, which have neither life, feeling, nor reason.*

*For if we may neither worship nor serve the works of God's hand, how much less may we worship the works of men's hands, and pay adoration to them in honour of those whose remembrance we say they are? For if the image you worship is not God, wherefore dost thou bow down to false images; and wherefore, like a slave, dost thou bend thy body to pitiful shrines, and to the work of men's hands?*

*Certainly, not only he who serves and honours visible images, but also whatsoever creature else, whether heavenly or earthly, spiritual or corporeal, serves the same instead of God, and from it expects the salvation of his soul, which he ought to look for from God alone. All such are of the number of those concerning whom the apostle said, that "they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. "'*

The Church and truth of God penetrates principalities, economies, institutions, and communities while under persecution. Martyrdom, the seeds of the kingdom and God, rejoices the heart of God as the death of the saints brings them across that vast gulf between flesh and spirit (Lazarus and the Rich Man – Luke 16:19). The deaths of the saint's nurture and spread the word of God and open the eyes of the blind and ears of the deaf.

The world's institutions deny and revile the truth, turning blind eyes and deaf ears, carefully constructing reality-disconnected myths. Only when facing overwhelming revolution (i.e. reformation) do powers relinquish and bend and blow away some of the accumulated dust of lies and hypocrisy. But true to the nature of the god of this world, the unholy union of man and demons, arise anew from the ashes.

So, she is today, spinning, weaving and hewing (seemingly) new powers and principalities that reflect the satanic kingdoms ruled by blood lust and lies.

As a Godly testimony against the nations of Israel, the words and actions of Hosea demonstrate a prophetic pattern. He had 3 children that reveals God's judgement. Paul speaks to the Hosea passage in Rom 9:25, affirming that the old covenant passes away because of adultery, but the new covenant restores His people:

1. First a boy – Jezreel – ***active judgement;***
2. Secondly, a girl - Lo-Ruhamah (Hos. 1:6) – ***passive tolerance;*** and
3. Thirdly a boy - Lo-Ammi – ***not my people or detachment.***

***Let Godly fear fall upon us as all, as our countries enter the detachment phase!***

God actively judges kingdoms (Rom. 13:1) and determines the ultimate authority of mankind.

*Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God; and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God; So then, the one who sets himself against the authority is resisting the ordinance of God; and those who resist shall receive judgment to themselves.*

The inquisitor demands authority by this scripture. But we know that if that authority opposes God's law, then Christians do not bow the knee (Heb. 13:14; Phil. 3:20). The dramatic ascendancy of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, drove fear into the monarchs of Europe with the ominous portend of revolution shaking their royal foundations. Oh, that a true leader moves the foundation of this evil world, today!

**Those ancient members and pastors of the Church of God prayed for us, seeing the kingdom of God afar off – as Abraham did. The echoes of joy in the midst of martyrdom resound, then and now, in the hearts of people in many lands.**

**When the fifth seal is broken in Revelation 6, their voices figuratively cry out from under the very altar of God shouting “How long before He judges those who belong to this world for their shed blood!”**

Where beats the heart of true history<sup>34</sup> that brings this heritage to our memory? Do we stumble at noon day as a drunkard, and grope along the wall, condemned to repeat the mistakes of the past (Isa. 59 – FV)?

*Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have come between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perverseness.*

***None calls for justice, nor does anyone plead for truth; they trust in vanity and speak lies. They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.***

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<sup>34</sup> <sup>8</sup> But if a man lives many years *And* rejoices in them all, Yet let him remember the days of darkness, For they will be many. All that is coming *is* vanity. (Eccl. 11:8 NKJ)

*They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web; he who eats their eggs dies, and that which is crushed breaks out into a viper. Their webs shall not become clothing, nor shall they cover themselves with their works; their works are works of iniquity, and the acts of violence are in their hands.*

*Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. They have not known the way of peace, and there is no justice in their ways. They have made crooked paths for themselves; whoever goes therein shall not know peace.*

*Therefore justice is far from us; nor does righteousness overtake us. We wait for light, but behold, darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows.*

***We grope along the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes. We stumble at noonday as in the night; among those who are strong, we are like dead men. We all roar like bears, and mourn grievously like doves; we look for justice, but there is none, we look for salvation, yet it is far from us; For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;***

***In rebellion and denial of the LORD, and turning away from our God, talking perversity and revolt, conceiving and speaking from the heart words of falsehood.***

*And justice is driven backward, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth has fallen in the street, and uprightness cannot enter. Yea, truth fails; and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. And the LORD saw, and it was evil in His eyes that there was no justice.*

*And He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no intercessor. Therefore His own arm brought salvation to Him; and His righteousness sustained Him, For He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon His head. And He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was covered with zeal like a cloak.*

*According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay; fury to His foes, deed for deed to His enemies. He will repay their deeds to the isles. So they shall fear the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall make him flee.*

*"The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," says the LORD.*

*"As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD, "My spirit that is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed, nor out of the mouth of your seed's seed," says the LORD, "from now on and forever."*

Forgetfulness inebriates each successive civilization: Israel forgets her heritage after being freed from the empire of Egypt – a type of satanic rule; Israel forgets the covenant given at Sinai, and vacates the Promised Land; and, with Christ in their midst, His very priests chaffed by true godliness in His presence, deny its power and origin.

The human elixir of memory loss leaves behind no reference point. We vacate Godly communion! Adrift in a sea of ubiquitous tolerance – bound for the end time rocks of judgment. He will forget our children and our people will be eaten up like bread (Psa. 14 and Hosea 7 FV):

*They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the rulers with their lies. They are all adulterers, like an oven heated by the baker; he stops stirring, from kneading the dough, until it is leavened.*

*In the day of our king, the rulers have sickened themselves with the heat of wine. He stretches out his hand with scorners, for they have made ready their hearts like an oven, while they lie in wait. Their baker sleeps at night; in the morning it burns like a flaming fire.*

*They are all hot as an oven, and devour their judges. All their kings have fallen; there is none among them who calls to Me. Ephraim (**British peoples**) mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake that is not turned.*

*Strangers have eaten up his strength, and he does not know. Yea, gray hairs are here and there on him, yet he knows it not. And the pride of Israel testifies to his face. And they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek Him in all this. Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart; they call to Egypt; they go to Assyria.*

***When they go, I will spread My net upon them; I will bring them down like the birds of heaven; I will chastise them, as their congregation has heard. Woe to them, for they have fled from Me! Destruction unto them—because they have sinned against Me. Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against Me.***

*And they have not cried to Me with their heart, when they howled on their beds; they gather themselves for grain and wine, and they rebel against Me. Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet they think evil against Me.*

Jones elicits the words of Cromwell, John Milton and the emissary Samuel Morland against the “world”:<sup>61</sup>

*On the 26th of May, Mr. Morland took his departure for the continent, being charged, on his way to Piedmont, with a letter from the Protector to the French king, relating to the Waldenses, in whose recent murder, as the reader will have already noticed, some French troops had been employed.*

*The following is a copy of the letter which, on the first of June, the English envoy delivered at La Fere, where the king and court of France was then residing.*

*Most Serene King!*

*The lamentable complaints which have been conveyed to us from those poor and afflicted people, who profess the reformed religion, and inhabit the valleys within the dominions of the Duke of Savoy ; and who have of late been most cruelly massacred; together with the melancholy tidings we have received concerning the plundering and banishing of others, have extorted from us these*

*letters to your majesty; and the rather, as we have been informed, how truly we know not, that this massacre has been carried on, partly by some troops of yours, which had joined themselves to other forces belonging to the Duke of Savoy.*

*We were very unwilling to give any credit to these things, because it cannot be thought consonant to the purposes and proceedings either of good princes or of your majesty's most prudent ancestors, who conceived it to be their interest, and not less conducive to the peace of Christendom, that their Protestant subjects should live in safety, and enjoy protection under their government, for which they have always been grateful, and rendered eminent services to their sovereigns, in times both of peace and war.*

*Similar considerations have hitherto induced the Duke of Savoy to treat their subjects with equal kindness. Now we doubt not but that your majesty has so much influence with the Duke of Savoy, that by your intercession, a peace may be procured for those poor people, with liberty to return to their native country. The performance of this would be an act worthy of your majesty, and conformable to the example set you by your predecessors, while it would, at the same time, set the minds of your own subjects at rest, by assuring them that their need not fear a repetition of such evils among them; and also confirm your confederates and allies, who profess the same religion, in greater respect and affection for your majesty.*

*With respect to ourselves, any favour of this kind which you shall grant to your own subjects, or which you may obtain for the subjects of others, will be not less acceptable to us; indeed it will be more so, than any other profit or advantage, among the many which we promise ourselves from the friendship of your majesty.*

OLIVER P.

Westminster, May 25, 1655.

*About the 20th of May an account of the Duke of Savoy's proceedings against the Waldenses reached England; and, to use the words of Sir Samuel Morland, it no sooner came to the ears of the Protector, than **"he arose like a lion out of his place," and by the most pathetic appeals to the Protestant princes upon the continent, awoke the whole Christian world, exciting their hearts to pity and commiseration.***

*The providence of God had so disposed events, that our great poet Milton filled the office of Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell at this critical juncture.*

***Never was there a more decided enemy to persecution on account of religion than Milton. He appears to have been the first of our countrymen who understood the principles of toleration, and his prose writings abound with the most enlightened and liberal sentiments.***

*The sufferings of the Waldenses touched his heart, and drew from his pen the following exquisite sonnet:*

***On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*<sup>35</sup>**

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,  
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones;  
Forget not: in thy book record their groans  
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that rolled  
Mother with infant down the rocks<sup>36</sup>. Their moans  
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they  
To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow  
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway  
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow  
A hundredfold, who having learnt thy way  
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

The office which Milton filled under the Protectorate was much the same as that which, in our day, is called "SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS". This Sonnet, that Milton's mind, busied with this affecting subject, he provoked forth in a strain of poetry, where his feelings were not fettered by acrimony or formality. **He adds that The Protestants armed themselves with an opportunity of exposing the horrors of Popery, by publishing the travesties.**

But this was a small portion of the interest which he took upon this affecting occasion. It devolved upon him by office to address the heads of the different Protestant states in Europe, with the view of interesting them in the affairs of the Waldenses; **and his letters deserve to be handed down to the remotest ages of the world, a noble instance of a benevolent and feeling mind, worthy of the author of Paradise Lost.**

I shall, therefore, present to the reader with the whole of them in this place, faithfully translated from the Latin originals (**what a witness against the Romish hierarchy! In their own language**). They are in themselves interesting; are intimately connected with the history of the

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<sup>35</sup> The largest theme of the sonnet is religion, though calling on religion to enact justice. The other theme is the movement from Old Testament to the New Testament. The poem compares the theme of vengeance from the Old Testament to the theme of regeneration in the New Testament. The clear example of vengeance in the poem is the first line of "Avenge, O Lord," which could be a reference to Luke 18:7, a bible verse that speaks about vengeance. An example of regeneration is the lines "grow/ A hundredfold" and "Mother with Infant." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On\\_the\\_Late\\_Massacre\\_in\\_Piedmont](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Late_Massacre_in_Piedmont)

<sup>36</sup> The seventh and eighth lines of this Sonnet - Morland relates , that "A mother was hurled down a mighty rock with a little infant in her arms; and three days after was found dead, with the little child alive, fast clasped between the arms of the dead mother, which were cold and stiff, insomuch that those who found them had much ado to get the young child out." *Morland's History*, p. 363.



Waldenses; and the Christian spirit that pervades them, redounds in the highest degree to the honour of the writer.

*Through what strange fatality it has come to pass, that an incident which reflects so much lustre upon the **character of Milton, as the writing of these state-papers certainly does, should have been allowed to pass into oblivion, while many things of minor importance find a place in every memoir of the poet.***

***It would probably be difficult to give a more plausible reason for, than the superior interest which most men take in the concerns of this present life, to those of the kingdom of heaven and of their immortal souls.***

*Before I introduce these interesting letters, however, to the reader's notice, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of laying before him the character that has been given of them by two distinguished writers of modern date both of them members of our established church, and consequently not to be suspected of any undue partiality for the character or principles of Milton.*

*The first to whom I refer, is Dr. Thomas Newton, bishop of Bristol, who in his life of our great poet, prefixed to his edition of the Paradise Lost, tells us that the blindness [of Milton] had not diminished, but rather increased the vigour of his mind.*

***And his State-letters will remain as authentic memorials of those times to be admired equally by critics and politicians; and those in particular about the sufferings of the poor Protestants [or Waldenses] in Piedmont, who can read without sensible emotion?***

*This was a subject he had very much at heart, as he was an utter enemy to all sorts of persecution; and among his sonnets there is a most excellent one upon the same occasion."*

*The other writer to whom I alluded is Dr. Charles Symmons, the poet's last, and certainly ablest, biographer who, referring to these letters, thus elegantly remarks: "The hand of the Latin Secretary most ably concurred with the spirit of the executive council; all during his continuance office, which was prolonged to the Restoration.*

*The State-papers in his department may be regarded as models in the class of diplomatic composition. They speak, indeed, the language of energy and wisdom; and are entitled equally to the applause of the scholar and the Statesman.*

*They must have impressed foreign states with a high opinion of that government for which they were written, and in the service of which so much ability was engaged.*

*It may be observed, that the character of their immediate author is too great to be altogether lost in that of the ministerial organ; and that in many of them, Milton may be traced in distinct, though not in discordant existence from the power for whom he acts.*

*The letters which he wrote in the Protector's name, to mediate for the oppressed Protestants of Piedmont,<sup>37</sup> whose sufferings had revived the horror of the Catholic atrocities in Ireland, might be cited in testimony of what I affirm.*

*These official instruments are faithful, no doubt, to the general purposes of him under whose authority they were produced: but they exhibit also much of the liberal and benevolent spirit of the Secretary: their mirror cannot be concocted of falsehood or perversion: but with unquestionable flattery, it reflects the harsh features of the English usurper so softened into positive beauty as to conciliate our affection equally with our respect."*

***One of the first of Cromwell's measures was to appoint a day of fasting and prayer, to seek the Lord in behalf of the melancholy condition of this afflicted people; a public declaration of their state was also issued, calling upon the inhabitants throughout the land to join in free and liberal contributions towards their succour and support, in which the Protector himself set them a noble example.***

*By commencing the subscription with a donation of Two thousand pounds from his own private purse. And that no time might be lost, in testifying his good will towards the Waldenses, on the 23d of May.*

*Sir S. Morland received orders to prepare for setting off with a message from the English government to the Duke of Savoy, beseeching the latter to recall the merciless edict of Gastaldo, and to restore the remnant of his poor distressed subjects to their homes and the enjoyment of their ancient liberties.*

*On the 26th of May, Mr. Morland took his departure for the continent, being charged, on his way to Piedmont, with a letter from the Protector to the French king, relating to the Waldenses, in whose recent murder, as the reader will have already noticed, some French troops had been employed.*

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<sup>37</sup> Dr. Symmons, in a note on this passage, remarks that "This active and powerful interposition of the Protector 's was productive of its intended effect. ***The Catholic tyrant desisted from the slaughter of his innocent subjects, and those miserable people had a breathing time from their calamities. I call them, as they are called in these official dispatches, by the generally known name of Protestants: but the dissenters from the Papal church, who occupied the valleys of Piedmont, had neither connection nor a common origin with those who were properly called Protestant s, from one of the first acts of their association in Germany. The Waldenses asserted a much more ancient pedigree ; and assumed to be of the old Roman church before it was corrupted by the Papal innovations.***" See *Life of Milton*, 2d Edit, 1810,-p, 317- 319.

**PART 15 - The Epilogue and Denouement; *The Churches of Piedmont*  
*From Wilderness to the Whole World*  
*Testimonies against the Church of God*  
*And Thus the Valleys were bereft of the Luster of the Gospel***

The religious and monarchical edicts against the Church of God that began a 1000 years after Christ, then wanes and concludes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The earlier groups and then later Church, impinged by the pretentious testimony of Babylon marks 700 years of bloody ravages.

As Jones records:<sup>62</sup>

*The fact is acknowledged by the papists themselves; by Caranza, Genebrard, Baronius, and others, who describe the tenth century as a monstrous age. The language of the latter writer indeed is so remarkable, that it deserves to be quoted.*

*Alluding to Psalm 44:23 he says:*

*"Christ was then, as it would appear, in a deep sleep, and the ship was covered with waves; and what seemed worse, when the Lord was thus asleep, there were no disciples, by their cries to awaken him, being themselves all fast asleep."*

*It may not, however be without its use to take a rapid glance at the proceedings of the court of Rome, and mark the stages by which the antichristian power arrived at its zenith. On entering upon this subject, there is one remarkable circumstance which merits the reader's notice as he proceeds, for the fact is worthy of his attention.*

***It has fallen to our lot, through the good providence of God, to see this monstrous power, which for a succession of ages tyrannized over the bodies and souls of men, virtually annihilated by the power of France.***

*What the reader should particularly remark is, that it was by the aid of that same power, in a very especial manner, that the "Man of Sin" was elevated to his throne. It can scarcely be necessary to recall to his recollection the intrigues between the popes and French monarchs, of which I have given a short detail in a former section.*

*"The history of the Roman pontiffs that lived in this [tenth] century," says the learned Mosheim, "is a history of so many monsters, and not of men; and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous, and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Romish communion, unanimously confess."*

***During the dark ages which succeeded the invasion of Europe by the barbarous nations, when feudal anarchy distracted the civil governments, and a flood of superstition had deluged the church, Christianity, banished from the seats of empire, and loathing the monkish abodes of indolence and vice, meekly retired into the sequestered valleys of Piedmont.***

***Finding there a race of men unarrayed in hostile armour, uncontaminated by the doctrines and commandments of an apostate church, unambitious in their temper, and simple in their manners, she preferred their society, and among them took up her abode.***

***The turbulence of the times, which drove many from the more fertile plains of France and Italy, in search of freedom and tranquility, greatly augmented the population of this remote district; and, in the ninth century, the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven had been held forth among them with considerable clearness and ability by Claude, bishop of Turin.***

The earth gives minimal physical shelter that rarely protects the innocent from murderous armies! But God's covering and the recesses of the Alps holds the true believers, as if in a womb, as she continues to birth the spiritual progeny for the soon coming kingdom of God.

The main body of the Church of God, within the Cottian Alps, holds to the doctrine and superiority of scripture. She separates, to foster future generations, but still readily witnesses to the rest of the world. Steadfastly she continues, not cowering or hiding, but with wily and yet harmless courage carefully attempts to avoid the ravenous wolves of apostasy:<sup>63</sup>

***Remote from the influence of noisy parties, and little conversant with literature, we can scarcely expect any notice of them, until their increase and prosperity excited the attention of ambition and avarice, and occasioned it to be rumoured in the neighbouring ecclesiastical states, that a numerous people occupied the southern valleys of the Alps, whose faith and practice differed from those of the Romish church; who paid no tithes, offered no mass, worshipped no saints, nor had recourse to any of the prescribed means for redeeming their souls from purgatory.***

*The clamour of the Romish clergy, however, ultimately prevailed, and the civil power was armed against the peaceable and inoffensive inhabitants of the valleys.*

***Multitudes, however, fled like innocent and defenseless sheep from these devouring wolves. They crossed the Alps; and travelled in every direction as Providence and the prospect of safety conducted them, into Germany, England, France, Italy, and other countries.***

The acts of God, secretly but persistently surface within the halls of civil and religious powers, unfortunately bringing revolution, reformation and war. But human penance and correction, with any heartfelt appearance, will not suspend the judgement of the Holy Power that seeks truth in the inward parts (Psa. 51:6). The Church of God with her martyrs' spur reform in civil governance. But without true change judgment is merely delayed<sup>64</sup>.

***There they trimmed their lamps and shone with new luster. Their worth everywhere drew attention, and their doctrine formed increasing circles around them. The storm which threatened their destruction, only scattered them as the precious seeds of the future glorious reformation of the Christian church...mark(ing) their dispersions into different countries, and the treatment they met with during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, prior to the appearance of Peter Waldo of Lyons.***

*Our materials of information are scanty, and even those we must be content to receive chiefly from their implacable enemies; but by a little patient research, and the aid of a discriminating judgment in selecting the probable from the fictitious, we shall be furnished with some interesting information relative to this obscure portion of their history.*

False accusers constantly see the true Church's adherence to spiritual discipline and rejection of greed as "communal" characteristics that shuns private property and embraces polygamy. This dialogue written by a Catholic inquisitor, points to their hypocrisy as the false church strays from scriptural obedience, and embraces the vehemence of the powers augured by Satan<sup>65</sup>:

***"Their heresy is this:—They say that the church is only among themselves, because they alone follow the ways of Christ, and imitate the apostles, not seeking secular gains, possessing no property (false), following the pattern of Christ, who was himself perfectly poor, nor permitted his disciples to possess anything.***

***Whereas ye, say they to us, (to the false church) join house to house and field to field, seeking the things of this world,—yea, even your monks and regular canons possess all these things—describing themselves as the poor of Christ's flock, who have no certain abode, fleeing from one city to another, like sheep in the midst of wolves—enduring persecution with the apostles and martyrs; though strict in their manner of life, abstemious, laborious, devout and holy, and seeking only what is needful for bodily sustenance, living as men who are not of the world.***

***But you, say they, lovers of the world, have peace with the world because ye are of it. False apostles, who adulterate the word of God, seeking their own things, have misled you and your ancestors.***

***Whereas we and our fathers having been born and brought up in the apostolic doctrine, have continued in the grace of Christ, and shall continue so to the end. "By their fruits ye shall know them" saith Christ; "and our fruits are the footsteps of Christ. The apostolic dignity, say they, is corrupted by engaging itself in secular affairs, while it sits in the (supposed) chair of Peter."***

***They do not hold the baptism of infants, alleging that passage of the gospel, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." They place no confidence in the intercession of saints; and all things observed in the church which have not been established by Christ himself or his apostles, they call superstitious.***

Scripture affirms that those that die in the faith, are asleep, awaiting the return of Christ. The Church incriminates the false doctrines of purgatory and the worship of the dead:<sup>66</sup>

***They do not admit of any purgatory fire after death, contending that the souls as soon as they depart out of the bodies, do enter into rest or punishment, proving it from that passage of Solomon, "Which way soever the tree falls, whether to the south or to the north, there it lies," by which means they make void all the prayers and oblations of believers for the deceased.***

The inquisitor rails against the power, might and originality of the true Church:

***"We therefore beseech you, holy father, to employ your care and watchfulness against these manifold mischiefs; and that you would be pleased to direct your pen against these wild beasts of the reeds, not thinking it sufficient to answer us that the tower of David, to which we may betake ourselves for refuge, is sufficiently fortified with bulwarks, that a thousand bucklers hang on the walls of it, all shields of mighty men.***

***For we desire father (he speaks of the Pope), for the sake of us simple ones, and that are slow of understanding, you would be pleased by your study, to gather all these arms into one place, that they may be the more readily found, and more powerful to resist these monsters.***

***I must inform you also, that those of them who have returned to our church (false), tell us, that they had great numbers of their persuasion scattered almost everywhere, and that amongst them were many of our clergy and monks. And as for those who were burnt, they, in the defense they made for themselves, told us, that this heresy had been concealed from the time of the martyrs —and that it had existed in Greece and other countries."***

The letter of Evervinus had all the effect upon Bernard that he could desire. The (supposed) mighty champion immediately prepared himself for the combat. He was then publishing a set of sermons on the Canticles, and in the 65<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> of them he enters the lists most vehemently with these heretics.

***He is extremely offended with them for deriding the Catholics because they baptized infants, and prayed for the dead, and asserted purgatory—condemns their scrupulous refusal to swear at all, which, according to him, was one of their peculiarities—upbraids them with their secrecy in the observance of their religious rites, not considering the necessity which persecution imposed upon them—finds fault with a practice among them of dwelling with women in the same house without being married to them, by which we are no doubt to understand, that they did not think it necessary to solemnize their marriages according to the ceremonies of the church of Rome, though he expresses himself as knowing very little of the manners of the sect; and from the numberless rumours propagated against them, he suspects them of hypocrisy. Yet his testimony in favour of their general conduct seems to overbalance all his invectives.***

"If," says he, "you ask them of their faith, nothing can be more Christian; if you observe their conversation, nothing can be more blameless, and what they speak, they prove by deeds. You may see a man, for the testimony of his faith, frequent the church, honour the elders, offer his gift, make his confession, receive the sacrament (Passover). What more like a Christian?

As to life and manners, he circumvents no man, over-reaches no man, and does violence to no man. He fasts much, and eats not the bread of idleness, but works with his hands for his support. The whole body, indeed, are rustic and illiterate, and all whom I have known of this sect are very ignorant." (deriding the power of the true Church)

Such was the testimony of the (supposed) great Saint Bernard in their behalf.

The inquisitors and false church, ironically, attempt to reduce the paltry written history of the Church of God community. Babylon boldly augments a false history, in persistent defiance, brashly establishing a right, to not only write history, but interpret it. She grossly affirms that falsehood is truth and truth is falsehood (Isa. 5:20).

What troubles the nature of man to deny and defy facts? We know the carnal mind rebels against God, builds fanciful empires that work from the ground of darkness and death. Beginning with the Garden of Eden the power of this world influences, amplifies and excites the sensual nature. But the simplicity of Christ and His call to us to become gods, cannot be undone (John 10:34). The Alpha and Omega determines the end from the beginning establishing meaning, destiny, morality, and origin in mankind. Without that truth all life dies, thoughts and endeavour are confused, and ambition spirals endlessly, chasing after wind.

Without the spiritual intervention of God, the unrelenting evil of mankind stewarded by Satan, leads to self-destruction. In scripture this defiance continues to the very end, even challenging our maker, Christ at His return. But then, He comes, not as a lamb but as King of Kings, a roaring lion brandishing the rod of iron establishing spiritual and eternal kings, many of whom emerge from martyrdom. The Church of God, holds the refuge and becomes progenitor of the truth of God.<sup>67</sup>

*Thus by comparing together these several fragments of information, we may acquire some distinct notion of these Cathari.*

***They were a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious race of Christians, patiently bearing the cross after Christ, and both in their doctrine and manners condemning the whole system of idolatry and superstition which reigned in the church of Rome, placing true religion in the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, maintaining a supreme regard to the authority of God, in his word, and regulating their sentiments and practices by that divine standard.***

*Even in the twelfth century their numbers abound in the neighbourhood of Cologne, in Flanders, the south of France, Savoy, and Milan.*

***"They were increased," says Egbert, "to great multitudes, throughout all countries," and although they seem not to have attracted attention in any remarkable degree previous to this period, yet, as it is obvious they could not have sprung up in a day, it is not an unfair inference that they must have long existed as a people wholly distinct from the catholic church, though, amidst the political squabbles of the clergy, it was their good fortune to be almost entirely overlooked.***

*Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a small society of these Puritans, as they were called by some, or Waldenses, as they are termed by others, or Paulicians, as they are denominated by our old monkish historian, William of Neuburg, made their appearance in England perished with cold and hunger.*

***These seem to have been the first who suffered death in Britain, for the vague and variable crime of heresy, and it would have been much to the honour of the country if they had been the last."***

*But the Cathari, or Puritans, were not the only sect which, during the twelfth century, appeared in opposition to the superstition of the church of Rome. About the year 1110, in the South of France, in the provinces of Languedoc and Provence, appeared Peter de Bruys, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, and exerting the most laudable efforts to reform the abuses and remove the superstitions which disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel worship.*

*His labours were crowned with abundant success. He converted a great number of persons to the faith of Christ, and after a most indefatigable ministry of twenty years continuance, he was burnt at St. Giles's, a city of Languedoc in France, in the year 1130, by an enraged populace, instigated by the clergy, who apprehended their traffic to be in danger from this new and intrepid reformer.*

*His followers were called Petrobrusians; but of his doctrinal sentiments the following are those alone which we can be sure of at this remote period—That the ordinance of baptism was to be administered only to adults—that it was a piece of idle superstition to build and dedicate churches to the service of God, who in worship has a peculiar respect to the state of the heart, and who cannot be worshipped with temples made by hands—that crucifixes were objects of superstition, and ought to be destroyed—that in the Lord's supper the real body and blood of Christ were not exhibited, but only represented in the way of symbol or figure—and lastly, that the oblations, prayers, and good works of the living, could in no respect be beneficial to the dead.*

600 years later, Rome continues to capture the obeisance of the world, as she transforms again, from the angel of death into a new creature. Admonished by new converts of the True Church to not fight the false church, but flee. The main group seeks refuge in the cantons of Switzerland and prepares to adjust to more migration, now their lot in life for the next several generations.

The dominant Church of Thyatira wanes, as the Sardis star rises across the nations of Europe, eventually embarking with the light of freedom to the new world. Throughout the next 350 years, with accumulated prayers and sacrifice of ancestors, and the steady hand of our God, the Sardis phase languishes under the worldly movements of the “enlightenment” and “realism”, until the Philadelphia characteristic surfaces in the 1900s within the environments of “modernism”, “atheism”, and “postmodernism”, the eventual deconstruction of truth.

Setting the stage for a massive migration who hold to the truth of God, the drama unfolds:<sup>38 68</sup>

*In the valley of Perouse, the French committed almost the same outrages that the duke's troops had done at Angrogne had at the tower in the valley of Lucerne. They were encamped in a*

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<sup>38</sup> This history will not revolt the passions of the reader by describing the instruments employed and invented by the inquisitors against so called heretics. For reference here is a video series - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhVjtSnDp5U> and text - <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Killing-in-the-Name-of-God>



*quarter of the community of Pramol, called La Rua, distant about half an hour's march from another quarter, called Peumian, where a party of the communities of Pramol, St. Germain, Perustin, and Rocliepbte were retreated, to the number of fifteen hundred persons, men, women, and children.*

*The French might easily make a descent from their quarters to St. Germain, and carry away the two hundred Waldenses who had so valiantly defended themselves before, and were retreated within their entrenchments: but they being informed of the loss of the valley of St. Martin, and of the enemies' march, quitted this entrenchment, fearing lest they should be surprised in it, and went into Peumian with their brethren.*

*Here they were consulting how they might defend themselves against the French; who prepared to attack them, when certain inhabitants of the valleys, who had revolted to the enemy, came and assured them that the valleys of Angrogne and Lucerne had already submitted to their prince's discretion, who had pardoned them, and referred them to the terms of the order of the 9th of April.*

*They told them also that he only wanted them to put an end to a war, the weight hereof they were not able to sustain alone, and to procure for themselves an advantage of peace.*

*This news having in part broke the measures of the Waldenses, they sent deputies and a drummer to treat.*

***He told them that his royal highness's intention was to pardon them, and promised them positively on the part of the prince and on his own behalf, their lives and liberties of t h e Waldenses, with a permission to return with all security to their houses and goods, provided they would readily lay down their arms.***

***And whereas the deputies represented to him that they feared lest the French being exasperated with what had passed at St. Germain, should revenge themselves on the Waldenses when they were disarmed; he made great protestations to them, and confirmed them with oaths, that although the whole army should pass by their houses, yet they should not kill so much as a chicken.***

*Does not the innocence of Christ speak through the trust and actions of the Church of God, while the diabolical schemes extant in all of us, seek to overtake that purity (Matt. 5).<sup>69</sup>*

*This proposition being made, Catinat detained with him one of the deputies, and sent back the others to give notice to the Waldenses, and to oblige all them that were dispersed to meet together the next day, being the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, at Peumian, to the end that every one might return to his: house after they were informed of the peace.*

*While the Waldenses were gathering together their scattered families at Peumian, Catinat gave an account of this capitulation to Don Gabriel, who sent a courier to him in the evening, and he passing through Peumian assured the Waldenses that he brought peace.*

*And the next day, on his return, told them that the peace was concluded. They were so well persuaded of it, that they had laid down their arms the day before, observing the conditions of the treaty, and confiding wholly in Catinat's promises.*

*In these circumstances they were expecting the news at Peumian when there arrived one of the king's officers from the garrison of the fort of Perouse, with several dragoon s with him.*

*This officer, who was very well known to the Waldenses, repeated to them the assurances of peace, and caused the men to be put in one quarter, and the women and children in another.*

*The French troops being arrived at the same time, told the men that they had orders to lead them to their own houses, and caused them to march four by four.*

Leaving behind land, property, and even lives, the people of God, duped by a false peace seek refuge under beneficent leaders and other communities. The dastardly and desperate pursuing hunters, driven the ferocity we all possess, destroys innocent lambs. The scriptural words of Christ state that those that fight and destroy God's people take on God Himself (Acts 9).

Today we live in the wake of these atrocities and pray for His return with His kingdom where real peace and safety will triumph (Matt. 6:10). Many did not escape with families torn asunder, children brought up Catholic while their parents rotted in jails while the largest group escaped through the Alpine passes into Switzerland and beyond, nurturing the new vine's branches of the Church of God. But, a final major displacement calls. Revelation 12 charts the history of the calling, martyrdom and witness of those that keep His commandments, from the time before creation until the end of human/Satan led civilization:

*1. Then there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2. And being with child, she cried in travail, and was in pain to deliver.*

*3. And another sign was seen in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads; 4. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to deliver, so that he might devour her child when she gave birth.*

*5. And she gave birth to a man Child, Who was to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron; and her Child was caught up to God and His throne. 6. And the woman escaped into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there for a thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

*7. And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels warred. 8. But they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

*9. And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. 10. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, "Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren*

*has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God.*

*11. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death. 12. Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath because he knows that he has only a short time."*

*13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man child. 14. And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

*15. And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth.*

***17. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (FV)***

The bloody testimonies appear lost and buried. But, Christ as the captain of our salvation, sows the foundation of peace and life. Satan – the prince of the power of the air, the liar, the architect of chaos, and the god of this world spikes human depravity! To walk the narrow path to eternal salvation demands gargantuan investment and commitment, and vitally depends on loving God with all your heart, soul and mind and your neighbour as yourself – the two great commandments (Matt. 22).

He desires that none perish as the plan of salvation pictures in the 7 Holy Days given in Leviticus 23. Here the true celebrations reveal that very few will “perish” in the lake of fire (John 3:16), contrary to the false popular “Christian” teaching of the immortal soul twisted from some scriptures. For truly man seeks an eternal relationship and longs for the God-void to be filled, but like our ancestors we want it our way!

We easily succumb to the spiritual deceptive powers and wickedness in high places. Satan, then, now and will be thrown down, pursues the Church of God with intense wrath and increasing cruelty, magnifies and invigorates the civil and religious powers on earth into a suicidal frenzy (Rev. 12:13).<sup>70</sup>

***These poor people being forced to leave their wives and their daughters exposed to the discretion of the soldiers, were conducted, not to their houses, as they had been told, but to Don Gabriel, who was encamped on the mountain of Vachiere, and he gave orders for them to be conveyed to Lucerne as prisoners of war!***

*In the meantime the females were subjected to all the abominable treatment that the rage and lust of brutish soldiers could invent. Not satisfied with plundering them of their property, these barbarians violated the persons of both married women and maidens, in a manner that modesty forbids our relating; and several were put to death merely for resisting in defense of their honor.*

*Mons. Catinat was not present when these atrocities were perpetrated at Peumian. He left the management of this affair to certain of his officers, no doubt that he might be out of the way of hearing the complaints which the Waldenses would have made to him, and not choosing to be a spectator of these barbarous proceedings.*

***It is certain, however, that besides those that were put to death, and others that escaped by flying to the woods and mountains, from the persecution of these monsters, numbers were dragged to prison after a most inhuman manner.***

*The valley of Perouse being now reduced like the rest, by the capitulation of Pemnian, a detachment of the French army quitted it and proceeded to join Don Gabriel at la Vachiere.*

*And now, having completed their work, the conquered Waldenses were collected from all parts of Piedmont, and lodged in the different prisons or castles under pretense of leading them to his royal highness to ask his pardon and obtain their liberation.*

*But this furnished their unfeeling adversaries with a fresh opportunity of displaying their inhumanity. The utmost precaution was taken to separate the different branches of the same family!*

*The husband was carefully parted from his wife, and the parent from his child- thus depriving them of those means of succor and consolation which the ties of consanguinity naturally inspire.*

*By this piece of refined cruelty they no doubt hoped to find the victims of their perfidy and malice the less able to withstand temptation, or endure the evils they had in store for them. Those that could ill bear the wretchedness of a close confinement, were to be consumed with the corroding anxiety and regret which must result from being separated from their dearest earthly connections.*

***There were, indeed, a great number of children, whom they did not send to prison, but dispersed them throughout Piedmont in private houses; but this was a piece of Jesuitical craftiness, for they hoped by that means to get them the more readily instructed in the principles of the Catholic religion.***

***Dreadful as were the proceedings which took place in the massacre in 1655, as detailed in a former section of this work, they do not appear by any means to have surpassed in enormity the cruelties inflicted upon the Waldenses in 1686.***

***Those who deny the existence of the devil and his agency in prompting the human race to destroy one another, if they would account for the infernal cruelties that are related to have been now inflicted by the Catholics on the poor Waldenses, simply on the principle of human depravity, must necessarily entertain a much worse opinion of human nature than the writer of these pages has yet been able to bring himself to adopt.***

***He can, indeed, admit much that militates against the dignity of human nature in its lapsed state; he can only account for the monstrous cruelties that were perpetrated on a class of his fellow creatures, the most harmless and inoffensive that ever inhabited the earth, on the***

***principle of the active agency of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience – he who was a murderer from the beginning - that old serpent which is the devil and Satan - the grand adversary of God and man.***

***The present was his hour and the power of darkness; but to return from this digression. The armies of France and Savoy having inhumanly butchered a multitude of the Waldenses, committed more than twelve thousand of them to prison, and dispersed two thousand of their children among the Catholics; concluding that their work was accomplished, caused all their property to be confiscated.***

***And thus were the valleys of Piedmont depopulated of their ancient inhabitants, and the light of the glorious gospel extinguished in a country where, for many succeeding centuries it had shone with resplendent luster.***

*In the month of September, 1686, the Swiss Cantons convened a general assembly at Aran, to deliberate on the condition of those who were either imprisoned or in a state of exile in Piedmont; and they came to the resolution of sending deputies to demand from the duke the release of all that were confined, and the privilege of quitting the country.*

*The latter, probably by this time glutted with human carnage, signed a treaty, in consequence of which the prisons were set open, and leave given to such as had survived, to depart peaceably through that part of Savoy which borders upon Berne and the territory of Geneva.*

## **PART 16 - The Epilogue and Final Denouement**

### ***The Churches of Piedmont***

### ***From Wilderness to the Whole World***

### ***The Valleys vacated by the Church – their testimonies***

The grinding of the centuries of conflict, seeking refuge and migrating comes to an end – a bang and a whimper! The Church of God, surrounded and deceived in some quarters, must move now – a new era calls. As destined by mighty God – finally relinquishing the valleys she scatters, holding to the legacy of Christ's promise that the Church defies the grave.

By 1686 the places of the Church of God in the valleys of the Piedmont, besieged and destroyed by the powers of Babylon, lie in waste. The blood of the innocent covers buildings, livestock, livelihood, and the paths through the wilderness. Thyatira the tipping point of the seven churches, sheds all worldly attachments but blows the mighty trumpet of martyred decades across the land, blowing some of the ancient dust filled wild imaginings, fables, lies, myths and superstition.

***2. Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine.***

***3. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves a great number of teachers, having ears itching to hear what satisfies their cravings;***

***4. And they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside***

*unto myths (II Tim. 4:2).*

One example of the word piercing like a two edged sword emerges from the testimony against the earthly dominions, now reaching a revolutionary pitch, as any revolt comes from detachment from reality that can only stand for a short period of time.

As Muston records, even the stones cry out:<sup>71</sup>

*It was a Sabbath, the people were assembled in the church, the priest celebrated mass. Francis Guerin took his place amongst the hearers, and waited in silence till the services were terminated.*

*No one suspected that in that **crowd of obscure persons was a soldier of Christ**, who, armed according to the scriptural expressions with **the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit** which is the word of God, was speedily, with all the power of love and courage, to make that **word triumphant over the servile forces of superstition.***

*The priest of Pramol having concluded his service, the pastor rose and inquired if he had finished.*

*"Yea, replied the priest. "What then is it which you have been doing?"*

*"I have been saying mass."*

*"And what is the mass?" The question was put in Latin. The priest knew not what reply to make.*

*Francis Guerin repeated it in Italian, and said to him, "Be so good as to explain to me what the mass is?"*

*The priest was silent as before.*

*Then the pastor, **inflamed with zeal for his God**, and with **ardent and devout compassion for so many enslaved souls**, ascended the pulpit in the midst of an audience dumb with **astonishment**, and exclaimed.*

*"Poor people! You see by whom you allow yourselves to be guided! By a man who does not know what he does; he says mass every day, and he does not know what the mass is. He feeds you with a thing which neither you nor he know anything about. Oh, can you leave behind you your ignorance and these vain superstitions. Souls are too precious to be thus trifled with.*

*"Behold the Bible," he proceeded, laying one down before him, "listen to the word of God and you shall be saved!"*

*The people excited and motionless ventured not to take any decided course.*

*“Well,” added the pastor, “I do not wish to take anybody by surprise; and to give your priest time to prepare his answers. I will return next Sabbath, to prove to him, both by the Bible and by his own missal, that the mass is full of falsehoods; meanwhile, pray to God that he enlighten you, and incline you to receive the truth without weakness and without prejudice.”*

*Hereupon Guerin left the church and re-descended to St. Germain. In course of the week many of the people of Pramol came to him, opened their hearts to him, and asked his advice; and to each he gave a Bible, saying, “There is your best counsellor, consult it often, and you will have no need of other directions.”*

*Next Sabbath he went up again to Pramol. The concourse of people was considerable; curiosity, surprise, and a multitude of different emotions agitated their hearts. The new apostle made his way into the church; the crowd pressed around him; he seemed to be already their pastor.*

*But the priest did not make his appearance; no one presented himself to celebrate or to defend the mass. “Reverend Pastor,” said a voice, “speak to us again of the word of God.”*

*Yes I will speak to you, was the reply, “and **I will be your pastor, or rather you shall have only one shepherd, who is Christ! You shall be his sheep; but his sheep must know him.**”*

***And without delay he proceeded to expound to them the great doctrines of salvation. It may easily be imagined that they triumphed amongst these simple and awakened souls, for whom Popery at first did not think it worthwhile to contend with the Gospel.***

*This event passed unobserved amidst the great troubles of the times. The Church of Rome was too much intoxicated with the bloody triumphs of St. Bartholomew, to alarm herself about so petty a triumph of faith. **But nothing is insignificant which concerns the infinite and immortality; and the salvation of a soul is of more importance in the sight of God than the conquest of a kingdom.***

*Francis Guerin was decidedly of this judgment; for five years after, he set to work again to win souls in another district of the country. At the head of the Vaudois regiments he made his way into the marquisate of Saluces, for which Savoy and France then contended; and when the armies had retired, the pastor still remained to consolidate the evangelical churches there.*

***The adventurous life of the knights-errant is regarded as full of heroism; but with what heroic emotions perhaps still more elevated and still more generous must not apostles, missionaries, and the ardent Vaudois Barbas have been animated, amidst the dangers which they often encountered!***

*Losing all her land, but not her main doctrines, she struggles with the eventual and final loss of her livelihood – her lands and belongings chattel to the beast and false prophet. She avows her antiquity and adherence to peace and industry, love of God and family. Despite the loss of much of her writings; her bibles, and doctrines thrive through the bloody history of martyrdom. The Holy Spirit invigorates the eternal battle, as the Church strengthens the whole continent.*

Contrary to the history taught in our schools, the Church leaves a testimony and inheritance of peace, pacifism, missionary outreach, while defending her quarters from severe spiritual extermination, but never, ever sought vengeance! The Church of God's scriptural doctrines define her character, resilience and purity traced back to the apostles and Christ. Her unique and primitive nature, formed from the fabric of God's love is published again in 1655.

See the dependency on God and Jesus Christ with the workings of the Holy Spirit, unmerited grace, while diligently keeping His royal commandments. Witness the true and only prevailing Church of the Living God, and the foundation for the fire that ignited the sentiments and reformation of Europe, spreading to the whole world:<sup>72</sup>

***Having understood that our adversaries, not contented to have most cruelly persecuted us, and robbed us of all our goods and estates, have yet an intention to render us odious to the world by spreading abroad many false reports, and so not only to defame our persons, but likewise to asperse with most shameful calumnies that holy and wholesome doctrine which we profess, we feel obliged, for the better information of those whose minds may perhaps be preoccupied by sinister opinions, to make a short declaration of our faith, such as we have heretofore professed as conformable to the Word of God; and so every one may see the falsity of those their calumnies, and also how unjustly we are hated and persecuted for a doctrine so innocent.***

1. That there is one only God, who is a spiritual essence, eternal, infinite, all-wise, all merciful, and all-just, in one word, all-perfect; and that there are three persons in that one only and simple essence: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit **(but the latter is not an entity but the power of God)**.
2. That this God manifested himself to men by his works of Creation and Providence, as also by his Word revealed unto us, first by oracles in diverse manners, and afterwards by those written books which are called the Holy Scripture.
3. That we ought to receive this Holy Scripture (as we do) for divine and canonical, that is to say, for the constant rule of our faith and life: as also that the same is fully contained in the Old and New Testament; and that by the Old Testament we must understand only such books as God did entrust the Jewish Church with, and which that Church has always approved and acknowledged to be from God: namely, the five books of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II of the Kings, I and II of the Chronicles, one of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the four great and twelve minor Prophets: and the New Testament containing the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul - 1 to the Romans, 2 to the Corinthians, 1 to the Galatians, 1 to the Ephesians, 1 to the Philippians, 1 to the Colossians {2 to the Thessalonians, 2 to Timothy, 1 to Titus, 1 to Philemon}, and the Epistle to the Hebrews; 1 of St. James, 2 of St. Peter, 3 of St. John, 1 of St. Jude, and the Revelation.
4. We acknowledge the divinity of these sacred books, not only from the testimony of the Church, but more especially because of the eternal and indubitable truth of the doctrine therein contained, and of that most divine excellency, sublimity, and majesty which appears therein; and because of the operation of the Holy Spirit, who causes us to receive with reverence the testimony of the Church in that point, who opens our eyes to discover the beams of that celestial light which shines in the Scripture, and correct our taste to discern the divine savor of that spiritual food.



5. *That God made all things of nothing by his own free will, and by the infinite power of the Word.*
6. *That he governs and rules all by his providence, ordaining and appointing whatsoever happens in this world, without being the author or cause of any evil committed by the creatures, so that the guilt thereof neither can nor ought to be in any way imputed unto him.*
7. *That the angels were all in the beginning created pure and holy, but that some of them have fallen into irreparable corruption and perdition; and that the rest have persevered in their first purity by an effect of divine goodness, which has upheld and confirmed them.*
8. *That man, who was created pure and holy, after the image of God, deprived himself through his own fault of that happy condition by giving credit to the deceitful words of the devil.*
9. *That man by his transgression lost that righteousness and holiness which he had received, and thus incurring the wrath of God, became subject to death and bondage, under the dominion of him who has the power of death, that is, the devil; insomuch that our free will has become a servant and a slave to sin: and thus all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are by nature children of wrath, being all dead in their trespasses and sins, and consequently incapable of the least good motion to anything which concerns their salvation: yea, incapable of one good thought without God's grace, all their imaginations being wholly evil, and that continually.*
10. *That all the posterity of Adam is guilty in him of his disobedience, infected by his corruption, and fallen into the same calamity with him, even the very infants from their mother's womb, whence is derived the name of original sin.*
11. *That God saves from this corruption and condemnation those whom he has chosen {from the foundation of the world, not for any foreseen disposition, faith, or holiness in them, but} of his mercy in Jesus Christ his Son; passing by all the rest, according to the irreprehensible reason of his freedom and justice.*
12. *That Jesus Christ having been ordained by the eternal decree of God to be the only Savior and only head of his body which is the Church, he redeemed it with his own blood in the fullness of time, and communicates unto the same all his benefits by means of the gospel.*
13. *That there are two natures in Jesus Christ, that is, divine and human, truly united in one and the same person, without confusion, division, separation, or alteration; each nature keeping its own distinct proprieties; and that Jesus Christ is both true God and true man.*
14. *That God so loved the world, that is to say, those whom he has chosen out of the world, that he gave his own Son to save us by his most perfect obedience (especially that obedience which he manifested in suffering the cursed death of the cross), and also by his victory over the devil, sin, and death.*
15. *That Jesus Christ having made a full expiation for our sins by his most perfect sacrifice once offered on the cross, it neither can nor ought to be repeated upon any pretext whatsoever, as they pretend to do in the mass.*
16. *That the Lord Jesus having fully reconciled us unto God, through the blood of his cross, it is by virtue of his merits only, and not of our works, that we are absolved and justified in his sight.*
17. *That we are united to Jesus Christ and made partakers of his benefits by faith, which rests upon those promises of life which are made to us in his gospel.*
18. *That this faith is the gracious and efficacious work of the Holy Spirit, who enlightens our souls, and persuades them to lean and rest upon the mercy of God, and so to apply the merits of Jesus Christ.*

19. *That Jesus Christ is our true and only Mediator, not only redeeming us, but also interceding for us, and that by virtue of his merits and intercession we have access unto the Father, to make our supplications unto him, with a holy confidence that he will grant our requests, it being needless to have recourse to any other intercessor besides himself.*

20. *That as God promised us regeneration in Jesus Christ, so those who are united to him by a living faith ought to apply, and do really apply themselves, unto good works.*

21. *That good works are so necessary to the faithful that they cannot attain the kingdom of heaven without the same, seeing that God has prepared them that we should walk therein; and therefore we ought to flee from vice, and apply ourselves to Christian virtues, making use of fasting, and all other means which may conduce to so holy a thing.*

22. *That, although our good works cannot merit an thing, yet the Lord will reward or recompense them with eternal life, through the merciful continuation of his grace, and by virtue of the unchangeable constancy of his promises made unto us.*

23. *That those who are already in the possession of eternal life in consequence of their faith and good works ought to be considered as saints and glorified persons, and to be praised for their virtue and imitated in all good actions of their life, but neither worshipped nor invoked, for God only is to be prayed unto, and that through Jesus Christ.*

24. *That God does not only instruct us by his Word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as means to unite us to Jesus Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits; and that there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the Church under the New Testament - to wit, Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Passover).*

25. *That Christ has instituted the sacrament of Baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and that therein we are cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life.*

26. *That he has instituted the Holy Supper, or Eucharist, for the nourishment of our souls, to the end that eating effectually the flesh of Christ, and drinking effectually his blood, by a true and living faith, and by the incomprehensible virtue of the Holy Spirit, and so uniting ourselves most closely and inseparably to Christ, we come to enjoy in him and by him the spiritual and eternal life.*

*Now to the end that every one may clearly see what our belief is as to this point, we here insert the very expressions of that prayer which we make use of before the Communion, as they are written in our Liturgy or form of celebrating the Holy Supper, and likewise in our public Catechism, which are to be seen at the end of our Psalms; these are the words of the prayer.*

*Seeing our Lord has not only once offered his body and blood for the remission of our sins, but is willing also to communicate the same unto us as the food of eternal life, we humbly beseech thee to grant us this grace that in true sincerity of heart and with an ardent zeal we may receive from him so great a benefit; that is, that we may be made partakers of his body and blood, or rather of his whole self, by a sure and certain faith.*

*The words of the Liturgy are these: Let us then believe first of all the promises which Christ (who is the infallible truth) has pronounced with his own mouth, that is, that he will make us truly partakers of his body and blood, that so we may possess him entirely, in such a manner that he may live in us and we in him.*

27. *That it is necessary the Church should have pastor known by those who are employed for that purpose to be well instructed and of a good life, as well to preach the Word of God as to administer the sacraments, and wait upon the flock of Christ (according to the rules of a good and holy discipline), together with elders and deacons, after the manner of the primitive Church.*
28. *That God has established kings and magistrates to govern the people, and that the people ought to be subject and obedient unto them, by virtue of that ordination, not only for fear, but also for conscience' sake, in all things that are conformable to the Word of God, who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.*
29. *Finally, that we ought to receive the symbol of the Apostles, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue as fundamentals of our faith and our devotion.*
30. *That God has chosen one Church in the world for the salvation of men, and that this Church has one only head and foundation, which is Jesus Christ.*
31. *That this Church is the company of the faithful, who, having been elected by God before the foundation of the world, and called with a holy calling, unite themselves to follow the Word of God, believing whatsoever he teaches them therein, and living in his fear.*
32. *That this Church cannot fail, nor be annihilated, but must endure forever {and that all the elect are upheld and preserved by the power of God in such sort that they all persevere in the faith unto the end, and remain united in the holy Church, as so many living members thereof}.*
33. *That all men ought to join with that Church, and to continue in the communion thereof.*

#### *Conclusion*

1. *And for a more ample declaration of our faith we do here reiterate the same protestation which we caused to be printed in 1603, that is to say, that we do agree in sound doctrine with all the Reformed Churches of France, Great Britain, the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, and others, as it is set forth by them in their confessions; as also in the Confession of Augsburg, as it was explained by the author - promising to persevere constantly therein with the help of God, both in life and death, and being ready to subscribe to that eternal truth of God with our own blood, even as our ancestors have done from the days of the Apostles, and especially in these latter ages.*
2. *Therefore we humbly entreat all the Evangelical and Protestant Churches, notwithstanding our poverty and lowness, to look upon us as true members of the mystical body of Christ, suffering for his name's sake, and to continue unto us the help of their prayers to God, and all other effects of their charity, as we have heretofore abundantly experienced, for which we return them our most humble thanks, entreating the Lord with all our heart to be their rewarder, and to pour upon them the most precious blessings of grace and glory, both in this life and in that which is to come. Amen.*

Slowly Jezebel permeates the doctrines of the true Church overwhelming some with false holy days, and Sunday worship – changes times and seasons through the Julian calendar, falsely starting the year in the dead of winter while tapping into the ancient Babylonian feast days of Christmas and Easter (Saturnalia and Ishtar), brazenly coating the celebrations with the name of Christ. The stealthy white horse of the apocalypse entraps the whole world in systemic superficial purity that is against Christ – the anti-Christ; saying that Christ is Christ and deceiving, not the few, but the many (Matt. 24 and Rev.6). The Church holds to Baptism, the supremacy of God to lead all to salvation, rejects idolatry and the authority of the Pope.

In the world – the enlightenment movement combines reason, economy, the social-equity contract, and theology in a new world system. The Romish Church counters the reformation, again crusading with empirical lust, under the guise of the Jesuits and the organ of the “Propaganda”. The 30 year’s war ravages central Europe from 1618-1648 with “Christian” killing “Christian” for the sake of “Christianity”.

Protestant and Catholic allies struggle against each other, empowered by the civil governments who, fighting under the banner of the cross, presumably destroy and vanquish evil. Drawing from scripture each see their divine right as a bulwark against the anti-Christ, while devastating the country side.<sup>73</sup>

Gaining false converts accomplishes nothing, while framed against the backdrop of true converts, scripturally and spiritually equipped as the Body of Christ. For true Church swings the sword of the spirit of God; the helmet of salvation covers the mind and intellect; the good news of peace directs their footsteps and mission; the shield of faith deflects the fiery darts of temporal and worldly ambition; and the breastplate of righteousness emboldens the heart and passion (Eph. 6).

Satan drives the passions of man with a military and tyrannical fervor when persuasion fails. Babylon collapses when the law and truth of God resides in His people!<sup>74</sup>

*In the valleys, where we have seen that the reformed Franciscan monks, or Grey friars, had been introduced by Rorengo, and maintained most pertinaciously by the governors of the country, the regular clergy continued their underground work, destined to burst forth at an after period in prodigious disasters.*

*A powerful coadjutor was at this time also given them by the court of Rome, to wit, the Propaganda. This name was given to a society composed of clergy and laymen, founded at Rome, in 1622, by Gregory XV., under the title of Congregatio de Propaganda Fide.*

*Its institution had, from the first, no other object than to promote the spread of the Catholic doctrines. It was not long of acquiring a predominant influence over the secular clergy, who had imprudently admitted it as an ally ; and afterwards it went the length of **savagely pursuing—with an incendiary torch in one hand, a sword in the other, and the feet in blood—the extermination of all doctrines which were not its own. Nothing was forgotten in its work except the gospel.***

*And what did it gain?*

***What persecution always gains—the burden of the crimes committed, the responsibility of the bloodshed, and the execration of humanity.***

***It was the prior of Lucerna, Mark Aurclio Rorengo, who introduced into the Vaudois valleys the first seed of this powerful tree, whose branches were very soon to extend over all Piedmont, and to cover it with the bloody fruits of the most odious fanaticism.***

*A member of the Roman Propaganda, already celebrated by his talent for discussion, was sent from Rome to the valleys, expressly to labour for the conversion of the Vaudois.*

*He was a preaching monk, named Placido Corso. Rorengo, who had already had many fruitless conferences with the pastors, hastened to go and meet this protector champion, whose fame announced to him as a polemical Boanerges.*

*It was on the 10th of November, 1637, that Placido Corso arrived at La Tour. His first care was to provoke the pastor of the place, Gilles the historian, to a conference.*

*"I have come a very long way," he wrote to him, "to defend the holy Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church; and having inquired at several persons of your parish as to the reasons for which the Vaudois had separated from it, they directed me to their pastor, as to one who was better able to instruct me on that point."*

*"What an admirable zeal it is," replied the pastor, "**which comes from so great a distance to attack that of which it knows nothing!** But, nevertheless, we are very far from recognizing the Church of Rome as being what you designate it; it is for you, therefore, to prove, in the first place, that it is apostolic and holy; and the result of this inquiry will render it much more easy for us to tell you why it is that we have separated from it."*

*The monk did not shrink from the thesis which he was invited to sustain, and he wrote to the minister all the reasons commonly adduced in favour of the Romish Church. Gilles refuted him.*

*Letters in considerable number were thus exchanged, till in the end Placido Corso left the last unanswered.*

*Hoping to be more fortunate in a viva voce conference (**face to face exchange**), where his adversary would not have time to choose and weigh his arguments, he sought to gain, by such means, the ground which he had lost.*

*Anthony Leger, recently arrived from Constantinople, where he had filled the post of chaplain to an embassy, had resumed the humble duties of a village pastor, in his old parish of St. John. It was to him that the propagandist addressed himself; and after various negotiations, it was arranged that a public conference should take place at La Tour, on the 4th of December, 1637, in the court-yard of an elder of the church, named Thomas Marghet Rorengo demanded that he should preside in this meeting; and it was thought proper to defer to his wish. The youthful Scipio Bastie, on the side of the Protestants, and a Capuchin named Laurent, on the side of the Catholics, were chosen for secretaries.*

*One of the most difficult questions of canonical theology, that of the Apocryphal books, occupied the whole of that meeting.*

*The second was fixed for the 1st of January, 1638, and took place at St. John, in the courtyard of Daniel Blanc, for no apartment was capacious enough to receive the crowd of hearers; but the sky of Italy sometimes, even in winter, permits meetings to be held in the open air, on ground scarcely hardened by frost, at the base of snow-covered Alps.*

*The monks were very late in making their appearance at this meeting. They excused themselves on the ground of their having been detained by their private devotions; but some of those present smiled, and said to one another in a low voice, that they showed themselves more eager to put an end to the conference than to prolong it.*

***The discussion, however, was not terminated when night came on; but it was the last, for the propagandist would not again enter the lists "with these wranglers," as he said, "who made a pope of the Bible" Yes! the Bible was to the Vaudois even more than a pope. But the crouching slave of the Holy See could go no farther in his comparison.***

*The next to follow and emulate him in the arena of discussion was a Grey friar of La Tour, named Brother Hilarion. He undertook a polemical correspondence with the pastor of Bobi, Francis Guerin, whose last letters he also left unanswered. In the valley of St. Martin, the monks of Le Perrier attempted similar contests, and met with similar checks.*

***The spirit of hatred, or at least of intolerance, so natural to monks, became exasperation in these. It was no longer by the weapons of logic that they sought to combat the Vaudois; assassinations and abductions were employed.***

*A young man, named Morton, the servant of an Englishman, was assassinated at La Tour.*

*A young girl of Bubiano was carried off by the monks who dwelt there, and placed under the care of a popish woman. The brother of this girl came to claim his sister again, and she eagerly followed him. The guard saw them, and raised the alarm; the Catholics ran and overwhelmed the young man with blows. Then came a priest on horseback, who took the girl behind him, and bore her off to Turin. From that time forth, all attempts made to obtain restitution of her remained ineffective.*

*But these were not the only wicked proceedings by which the clergy labored to vex the poor Protestants. At their instigation, an attempt was made to compel the Vaudois settled upon the right bank of the Pelis, in the district of Lucerna, to remove and confine themselves to the left bank only; an attempt was also made to restrict all of them from residing for more than three days consecutively in any of the other towns of Piedmont, whither business might call them.*

*But through the interposition of persons in high places, these vexatious measures were unsuccessful. At the same time there occurred also certain movements of troops, which the enemies of the Vaudois always sought to turn to their disadvantage.*

God names the rampaging civil government “the Beast power” for good reason - surmounting tyrannical heights shaded by the elements of Lucifer’s rebellion, she unites with the false prophet – the whorish heart of mankind bursting with darkened spirituality. The diabolical imitation of the true Church and the kingdom of God, partners with principalities, assigns rulers of darkness replete with spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12). Recasting this anarchy to our dangerous times incites an impending fire storm to the doorstep of a world wrapped in nuclear and atomic weaponry.

Destruction of the earth emerges from the warrior heart of man (James 4:4) not from climate change; but the former drives the latter! Man destroys himself first with moral depravity and the breaking of the holy and righteous laws of God.

Muston continues:<sup>75</sup>

*On the 22d of March, 1639, there arrived at Lucerna, St. John, and La Tour, a great number of people from Bubiano and its neighbourhood, all in disorder and alarm, bringing carts loaded with their furniture, and horses with their stores of linen and their children, whilst they themselves conducted their flocks, as if going into exile. Then came message upon message, rapidly succeeding each other, all to announce that a regiment of Italian cavalry, in search of quarters, was advancing at a quick rate.*

*The regiment arrived that evening at Lucerna, and from thence was sent to Bubiano; next day it attempted to enter the territory of St. John, but the Vaudois had placed strong guards at all the passes, and drove it back into the plain. Upon that occasion the excesses consequent upon the want of military discipline, the trouble and confusion which arise in the proximity of camps, prevailed for some days in Piedmont, without penetrating into the Vaudois valleys.*

***These disastrous agitations expired at the confines of that home of the gospel, where courage maintained peace. And they were well entitled to defend themselves—that people, whose number was so small, and whose rulers were then disputing for the throne of a child.***

*But terrible conflagrations occurring at this period, contributed also to increase the misfortunes of these districts. On the 6th of March, and on the 21st of November, 1634, fire caught hold of the woods of Briqueras, and despoiled the hills around that place of all their lofty trees. These hills are now covered with vineyards.*

*On the 11th of December, 1639, two fires, also at the openings of the valleys, broke out simultaneously—the one between Briqueras and St. Segont, the other between Lucerna and Lucernette. The north-east wind blew strongly; the first of the fires extended to the heights of Prarusting, devouring everything in its course.*

*That of Lucernette quickly seized upon the woods of Bubiano upon the one side, and upon those of Famolasc and Bagnols upon the other; and its ocean of flame swept over the country as far as the hills of Barges, thus occupying a space of several square leagues.*

*The affrighted inhabitants, not being able to contend against this devouring invasion, took to flight, or endeavoured to isolate their dwellings, by cutting down beforehand the trees by which they were surrounded.*

*Numbers were compelled to defend themselves against the danger, by extinguishing the flames with the wine from their cellars, for want of sufficient water at hand. This fearful conflagration lasted for several days.*

*The front of the fire might be seen climbing from the plain up the mountains, like a sea of flame, leaving behind its glowing waves the naked and blackened earth, presenting at intervals, over*

great tracts of country, what looked like immense cauterizations, or frightful blotches of gangrene.

Besides all this, Piedmont was desolated by civil war. Three political parties had formed themselves in the country. Robbery and plunder extended everywhere like another fire. The outlaws, still scattered among the mountains, confidently acted upon their own unhappy pretensions; frequent murders signalized their vengeance.

***They exhibited, upon a smaller scale, the same conduct which the princes of Savoy then displayed at the head of their armies. One man kills another, and is an assassin; a prince kills a thousand men, and is a hero. When will murderers be weighed in the same balance?***

***When will the nations become weary of shedding their blood like water for dynastic pretensions, which have nothing to do with their welfare?***

***Encouraged by this first success, the enemies of the Vaudois went farther in their demands. Agents of the Roman Propaganda had established themselves at Turin, and their influence extended, like an invisible network, over the court of Savoy.***

Everything injurious to the Protestants was fervour in her estimation; the Propaganda encouraged these sentiments, and their triumph was completed through the influence of political views.

***A year afterwards, at the synod of St. Germain, the younger Leger was ordained to the holy ministry, who at a later period became, by his courage, as well as by his writings, one of the most powerful defenders of the valleys.***

The persons cited having refused to appear, “their properties and establishments were declared to be confiscated and to have fallen to the exchequer.”

Shortly after succeeded, one after another, measures still more rigorous against the Vaudois. They were prohibited from passing beyond their limits, even for a few hours except on market days.

We celebrate (Christmas, Easter, others) – meaninglessness and emptiness - the lack of Godly knowledge foments the destroying force. The surface thrills of these events pass away like the wind leaving death and dying darkness (Hosea 4 and Jude). Some apostatized:

The Catholics, and those who had become Catholics, were loaded with the favours of the court. A young minister, named Louis Gaston D'Albret, who was born at Paris, and had studied at Geneva, arrived in the valleys, where he filled the office of pastor for two months, when he was unable to resist the pressing solicitations to apostasy which were addressed to the Vaudois.

He abjured on the 26th of July, 1647—received great honours at Turin—resided with the nuncio, and afterwards disappeared from the country, bearing with him a gratuity of 800 livres which the Duchess of Savoy had sent him, eager perhaps to get him removed from her dominions, as



well as withdrawn from Protestantism; for she also was a D'Albret, that name being a patronymic of the progenitors of Henry IV.

..Innocent X annulled, by a pontifical decree, dated on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, 1649, the last favours which these poor people had obtained from their sovereigns. The influence of the Propagandists went on increasing, and ere long all the privileges, guaranteed in such mockery, were arbitrarily suspended by the edict of the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, 1650.

***This suspension was to continue until the Vaudois should have demolished the eleven places of worship which they possessed beyond the prescribed limits; dismissed those pastors who were natives of other countries; shut up the numerous schools maintained by them elsewhere than in their own territory; and consented to the universal celebration of the Catholic worship in all the valleys.***

These severities were all owing to the increasing intrigues of the Capuchins and the Propaganda. The Vaudois sent up petition after petition, and, by these dilatory means, only succeeded in keeping all their difficulties unresolved.

***But during this interval the Propaganda had attained unexpected greatness in consequence of the jubilee, which, in 1650, brought to Rome the tribute of the superstitions of all Europe. A sort of popular enthusiasm was created for that work, in which it was open to all Catholics, of whatever condition, to take a part.***

To be engaged in it, was all that was necessary to obtain a plenary indulgence; persons of great note enlisted themselves; princes and artisans took their places together in these ranks; there was no one who did not need indulgences, or, at least, there was no one who had not some need of pardon; this institution of the Propaganda, therefore, rapidly extended, not only in Italy, but also in France.

***It had special councils in almost all the towns of these countries; and now to its title of "Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith," it added, in Piedmont at least, these supplementary words, "and for the extirpation of heretics."***

These councils, were indifferently, or radical, -with perfidious ingenuity, composed of persons of civil life and persons of religious life, if that name of religious life may be given to the gross fanaticism which labours, hand in hand, with corruption and cruelty.

***Yet this is what Rome calls zeal! If such be not the language of Antichrist, where shall we expect to find it?***

***As there was a plenary indulgence for the Propagandists, the women also desired to have their share. They formed a special council; and thenceforth the Propaganda was composed of two councils—one of men and another of women. This institution was founded at Turin, under the high favour of a royal ordinance.***

***Mankind, in general, are more easily swayed by a command issued in name of truth than by proof of the truth. Here lies the secret of the power of Popery.***

"These ladies (**propaganda**)," says he (**Leger – Church of God pastor**), "divide the towns into districts, and each visits her district twice a week, suborning simple girls, female servants, and children, by their cajoleries and promises; and causing trouble and annoyance to those who do not choose to listen to them.

***They have their spies everywhere, who inform them of all Protestant families in which there is any domestic disagreement; and then they profit by the occasion to blow the fire of division as much as possible, to separate the husband from his wife, and the wife from her husband, the child from his father and mother, etc., promising them, and in fact bestowing upon them, great advantages, if they engage to attend mass.***

Frequently they impel them to institute law-suits against one another, and if once they have a hold of them by this handle, they never let them go until they have either recanted, or are ruined. They know the merchant who is unprosperous in business, the gentleman who has gambled away or squandered all that he had, and in general all families which fall into necessitous circumstances. And to seduce them with their debates, these ladies never fail to propose apostasy to these persons when they are almost desperate. They make their way into the very prisons, and accomplish the release of criminals who give themselves up to them.

And as they employ great sums of money in keeping all this machinery in motion, and paying those who sell their souls to them for bread, they make regular collections, and do not fail to visit all families in good circumstances, shops, taverns, gambling-houses, etc., demanding alms for the extirpation of heresy. And if any person of condition arrives at an inn, they lose no time in paying their respects to him with an empty purse in their hands.

***To conclude, they meet in most of the towns twice a-week, to compare accounts of what they have done, and to concert plans for what they are to do. If it so happens that they have need of the secular arm, or of an order of Parliament, it is rarely that they do not succeed in obtaining it. The councils of the lesser towns give in reports to those of the metropolitan towns, the latter to the council of the capital, and those of the capitals to that of Rome, where is the great spider that holds the threads of all this web."***

Such was the secret of the power so rapidly and immensely organized and extended by the activity, everywhere multiplied and propagated, of the innumerable agents who served it, and were its devoted instruments.

***Could we desire greater devotedness or self-denial in a work of Christian charity? Let us do justice to our persecutors! They thought to serve the cause of charity: but let us execrate the detestable Popery which so perverted the idea of charity, and which changed into infernal poisons the most celestial perfumes of the noblest souls!***

***All the Vaudois children that could be withdrawn from under their paternal roof, and carried off from their parents, were considered as innocent victims saved from heresy, that is to say, snatched from the claws of Satan, and rescued from eternal perdition.***

***Zealous Papists did not shrink from making the greatest sacrifices, braving even the terrors of the laws and the vengeance of men, in order to seize upon them. These children were then placed with rich Catholic families, who undertook their maintenance, or in convents, which undertook to make them slowly die to the world, to their native country, to the pure affections of the heart, and to the truth of the Bible.***

***But what anguish and disorder were thus brought into families! And in this way did the abominable power of corruption, deposited in the bosom of Catholicism, transform the natural generosity of the hearts of its adherents into odious deception and barbarous treachery, as it had transformed Christian doctrine into miserable superstitions.***

***The law of Nature was not more respected than the law of Revelation: for indeed both are from the same Divine source, and it is in the nature of Antichrist to oppose everything which comes from God.***

Centuries transpire before this hideous pressure builds against the people of God, the sword, fire, spiritual sedition, the destruction of livelihood – attacks on every side – as with other generations – escape beckons. But let us not forget the 100s of years the word of God passed from generation to generation, some spoken in the Noble Lesson – from the 11<sup>th</sup> century: <sup>76</sup>

*But the glory of the Vaudois literature is their Noble Lesson - a poem of considerable power and of pure evangelical sentiment, sufficiently explanatory of the horror these ancient Christians entertained of the doctrine of Mariolatry (idolatrous worship of Mary) and saint worship, of the supremacy of the Pope, the idolatry of the mass, and other falsehoods of Papal invention.*

*Besides a copy of this poem, still remaining, we believe, in the Dublin collection, we have seen a very perfect one in the Genevan library, laid up with the autographs and manuscripts of the celebrated reformers, ecclesiastical and political, of the sixteenth century a jewel in an appropriate casket.*

***The poem opens with an exhortation to repentance, founded on the belief prevalent amongst the early Christians, that after the Gospel had been preached a thousand years, Satan would be loosed, and then end of the world draw nigh (Rev. 20:7). This refers the work to the latter part of the eleventh century (a date, indeed, expressly specified). This date in question forms another proof, to add to those already brought forward, of the antecedence of the Vaudois Church to the birth of Peter Waldo:***

*Oh, brethren, hear a noble lesson,  
We ought always to watch and pray  
For we see this world is near its end.  
We ought to be earnest in doing good works.  
For we see this world is coming to an end.  
Eleven hundred years are already accomplished since it was written.  
For we are in the last time.*

*The poem is too long for copying, but we will add a few lines, taken from another part, to prove how early the Vaudois Christians were exposed to persecution, as well as in evidence of the morality of their lives.*

*If there be any one who loves and fears Jesus Christ  
Who will not curse, nor swear, nor lie  
Nor be unchaste, nor kill, nor take what is anothers  
Nor take vengeance on his enemies  
They say that he is a Vaudes, and worthy of punishment.*

*It should be noticed that the word Vaudes means, in the Romaic, a sorcerer; and some authors refer the appellation of the men of the valleys (Vaudois) to this opprobrious epithet, bestowed on the early Christians by their Popish as well as pagan adversaries.*

We know the difficulty in passing on the truth of God to succeeding generations, but it seems martyrdom and persecution brightens and piquantly focuses the mind and heart. Witness the solidity of the youth in the Church of God and their defense of the truth:<sup>77</sup>

*The Bishop of Cavaillon, together with some members of the Aix Parliament, were charged with the conveyance of the king s edict and the urging its acceptance; but the right reverend prelate and his doctor of theology, emulous of the glory of converting the heretics of Merindol, arrived before their colleagues.*

*After some unsatisfactory conferences with the adult population, the bishop, who seems in the main to have been a good-natured man, called the children round him, and throwing them some small coin, the following conversation (given word for word on the authority of Camerarius) took place between them:*

*The Bishop of Cavaillon – “Let me hear you repeat the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer.”*

*The Children (after repeating) “We cannot explain it nor give an account of our faith, but in French.”*

*The Bishop – “There is no occasion for so much learning; it is enough that you have learnt and remember these prayers in Latin; for there are many clergymen and even doctors of divinity, for whom it suffices to be able to give a paraphrase of the Lord s Prayer and the Apostles Creed.”*

*Andre Meinard, Mayor of Merindol – “And what use, I pray you, is it to utter words which one does not understand, and to repeat, like a parrot, the Pater and the Credo (**Lord’s prayer and Apostle’s Creed**)? Truly, does not he lie and mock God, who, without understanding them, permits himself to say these words, I believe in God?”*

*The Bishop – “And dost thou thyself comprehend the signification of these words, I believe in God?”*

*(Here Andrew Meinard begins to render a reason of his faith.)*

*The Bishop – “I did not believe there were so many doctors in Merindol.”*

*Andre Meinard – “No, when the least of us could explain the principles of our faith better than I could; but try, I wish you to make the experiment on one of these children the first that comes to hand and you will then judge whether they are not competently instructed.”*

*Here the bishop, who was by no means prepared either for questioning or answering, says the historian, hiding his shame under a shudder of indignation, made no reply; which the Prefect of Merindol perceiving, said, “My lord, if you will permit one of these children to catechise his comrades, they will be well pleased to do so.”*

***The Bishop gave leave – thereupon pursues Camerarius; one of the children began questioning the others with the most attractive gravity and grace you would have said, like a little professor the others answering his questions in turn with so much ease and precision, that their auditors were not a little astonished.***

*One of the monks who was present could not contain his admiration, and exclaimed, “I am compelled to express that I have often been at the Sorbonne at Paris, and heard the disputes in theology, but I have never gained so much good as I have in listening to these children.”*

***Alas! Poor little ones! They were soon called to put in practice the lessons they had been taught.***

The severe persecution underlines the spiritual commitment to the scripture working with love, faith and action, even as the intrusive counter-reformation gains ground:<sup>78</sup>

***The Jesuits presided at this compact of agony and extermination suggested by the Propaganda. From this time forth their only business was to find an occasion, or pretext, or reason for violent measures. The monks became more arrogant than ever, and the Jesuits dispersed agents amongst the Vaudois, whose employment was to provoke and excite the people to some sudden out-breaking.***

*When hatred was reduced to such accusations as these—when the magistracy could listen to them, there must assuredly have been a world of prejudices on the one side, and a very irreprehensible life upon the other. But the worthlessness of the pretext shows the blindness of the hatred. Other machinations show its ingenuity.*

***A dreadful success crowned the clerical intrigues in this instance, and there would therefore rest an ineffaceable stigma on the front of Catholicism, like the mark on Cain, the first fratricide, even if bloody pages were not so abundant in the history of that religion.***

In the following letters, the Church, the Swiss leaders, and the Duke of Savoy parry back and forth concerning the plight of the Church, her legacy, justice, and her place in the world. Turmoil and indecision fills the hearts of our people as they struggle with a final gasp relinquishing their long held lands. Turning to other horizons – north, east, south and especially west across the vast ocean to send seeds of future generations and hope of the thrill of the word of God in new lands:<sup>79</sup>

***A spring 1686 letter FROM the leaders in Switzerland to the Church of God about the need to QUIT the valleys; the consequence of the loss of their land heritage but, with the Word of God, move on:***

***Gentlemen: IT is true that one's native soil has great charms, and that most men have a natural desire to live and die there, yet the children of God ought not to set their hearts thereupon, because they are foreigners upon earth, and heaven is their true native country.***

*Therefore, you will be guilty of mistrusting Gods providence, if you fancy you cannot find any other country where you may live conveniently.*

*Adore your heavenly Father. In that part of the world soever we ourselves be transported, we ought to think ourselves happy, provided we there have freedom to serve God according to our consciences.*

*You ought to propose to yourselves that the examples of the patriarchs, who have drawn up on them God's blessing by trusting to his promises, and by abandoning their houses and fields, to go to inhabit some remote country.*

*A confidence of this nature, cannot but be very acceptable to the Lord; and it is without doubt more agreeable with the spirit of the Gospel, than to take up arms against your Sovereign; it is to sufferings that Christians are called, and not to a resistance.*

***And we do not find that either the apostles or the primitive church, made use of any other weapons against their persecutors than prayer and patience.*** *These are the considerations that you have obliged our Sovereign Lords, the evangelical cantons, to give us orders to procure for you from his Royal Highness, your lawful prince, a free retreat, with permission to dispose of your goods.*

*In case he would no longer grant you the exercise of your religion; and though you look upon this retreat as an insupportable unhappiness, yet they do not nevertheless consider it as a favour, reflecting, according to their great wisdom, upon the miserable condition to which you are reduced.*

*Indeed they did think it would be very hard to obtain it from his Royal Highness, and that in case he did grant it upon their request, you ought not only to accept it with submission, but to shew you great acknowledgement for it.*

*You cannot, therefore, doubt that we have been surprised to hear **that you have any difficulty in resolving yourselves to it, and that you have a design to resist two powerful princes that are resolved to extirpate you, in case you make the least opposition.***

***For by this behaviour you do not only act against your duty, against Christian prudence, and against our true interest, but you give us also just reasons to complain of you, that having engaged in a negotiation with your prince, you will not accept of those advantages we are in a condition to procure you.***

*Open therefore your eyes, and consider the misfortunes you draw upon yourselves, and the fatal consequences of your design, that must needs turn to the entire destruction of your churches and families.*

*Consider, that what is offered you is so advantageous, considering the present state of your affairs, that several persons of the greatest quality, would have accepted of it as the greatest happiness, in the late persecutions of France **(Huguenots and intense persecution continued until the French revolution in 1789** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huguenots>).*

***And that they would have been exceedingly joyful to get stark naked out of their country without hindrance.***

*If you properly reflect upon all these things, we hope that the example of those that are of a better opinion, will touch and persuade you to follow the same conduct; but if you refuse to imitate it, and if you persist in your obstinacy, you will be guilty before God.*

*Not only of having thrown away your lives, which you might have saved, and of having exposed your wives and your children to the massacre, but also of having caused the ruin of these noble remains of the Waldensian churches which you might have transported into some other country.*

***And do not flatter yourselves, with being able to prevent these evils by the means of some succours that some persons have promised you; for we do assure you, that those that entertain you with these vain imaginations only abuse you.***

*And that you cannot be assisted from any side; you ought to consider that you will be left by all men, and by some of the very inhabitants of your country. **And that therefore you will soon be destroyed, either by the sword or by famine, and that those that may escape the fury of their enemies, will give their lives either by being burnt at the stake, upon the rack, or the gallows.***

*We conjure you, that you should be prevailed with by such powerful considerations, and to agree with the sentiments of the commonality. **That are resolved to desire of their prince a permission to retreat out of his territories, being persuaded that the divine providence will conduct you to some places where you will perhaps find more advantageous establishments than those you leave behind you.***

*And where those that are poor will not be in want of charitable persons that will provide them with all necessaries. In expectation that God will inspire you with good resolutions, and that you will give to your Deputy such a procuration as those of the other commonalties have given, we recommend you to his mercy and his divine protection, resting Gentlemen, your very affectionate to render you service...Turin 5<sup>th</sup> April 1686.*

## **PART 17 - The Epilogue and Final Denouement**

***The Churches of Piedmont  
From Wilderness to the Whole World  
The Valleys vacated by the Church – their testimonies***

From the previous instalment the Counsellors of Switzerland urge the Church of God to abandon the valleys, as if these words come from God, directing them to safer environs. The Church, with a letter, responds - war weary and truncated, she escapes into distant lands.

Many groups protected by protestant institutions, rather than the geography of the valleys and those protectors, beseech the Romish powers include Cromwell in England, Prince of Brandenburg in Prussia, leaders in Bavaria, shepherds in the Basque (from Celtic stock) areas of Spain, William of Orange in the Netherlands, and Princes in the eastern France – formerly called Gaul.

The false purity of the crusades cloaks a beastly anger that thrusts against the common man and those who oppose the False Church. The Church of God in Merindole, southern Gaul felt the full brunt of papal anger that follows from a number of major world events.

In 1076 the Muslims capture Jerusalem. Between 1096 and 1291 A.D. ten major crusades react to the Muslim forces of occupancy. Many recall the valour and nobility of crusading knights as soldiers sent to assail the persecutors and occupiers of the City of Jerusalem by the Muslims.

This Romantic Movement pretends to protect society from any heresy not founded by Rome and her civil minions. Minorities lumped in with Muslims but cast as heretics include Jews and the True Church of God. Material and eternal rewards stimulate ruffians and vagabonds attacks. Anarchy without restraint, sometimes brigands with offshoots from organized armies, trek through the countryside decimating the innocent believers.

The authority to take life and determine the fate of the “sinner” marks the antics of the false church and Satan from the beginning. Many supposed godly hold the fate of the remnant Church in their hands, occupying the principalities of heaven and hell; and life and death.

One infamous story trumpets the earlier Church of God under siege in Gaul, and the later destruction of the Waldensian valleys. An innocent city was [under attack](#):

*In 1208, Pope Innocent III raised an army of over 20,000 knights and peasants eager to kill and pillage their way through France. When the city of Beziers fell to the besieging armies of Christendom, soldiers asked papal legate Arnald Amalric how to tell the faithful apart from the [infidels](#).*

*He uttered his famous words: **"Kill them all. God will know His own."** Such depths of contempt and hatred are truly frightening, but they are made possible by a religious doctrine of eternal punishment for unbelievers and eternal reward for believers.*

*Chronicler Raymond of Aguilers wrote that "It was a just and marvelous judgment of God, that this place [the temple of Solomon] should be filled with the blood of the unbelievers." St.*



*Bernard announced before the Second Crusade that "The Christian glories in the death of a pagan, because thereby Christ himself is glorified."*

The White and Red Horses (false prophets and war) of Revelation ride (Rev. 6):

*Pilgrims resented the fact that sites holy to Christianity were not controlled by Christians, and they were easily whipped into a state of agitation and hatred towards Muslims. Later on, crusading itself was regarded as a holy pilgrimage - thus, people paid penance for their sins by going off and slaughtering adherents of another religion.*

*Indulgences, or waivers of temporal punishment, were granted by the church to anyone who contributed monetarily to the bloody campaigns.*

*Augustine's exhortation to compel entry into the church was adopted with great zeal when church leaders dealt with Christians who dared to follow a different sort of religious path. This had not always been the case - during the first millennium, death was a rare penalty.*

*But in the 1200s, shortly after the beginning of the crusades against the Muslims, wholly European crusades against Christian dissidents were enacted.*

*The first victims were the [Albigenses](#), sometimes called the Cathari, who were centered primarily in southern France. Waldensians, also suffered the wrath of official Christendom. They promoted the role of lay street preachers despite official policy that only ordained ministers be allowed to preach.*

*They rejecting things like oaths, war, relics, veneration of saints, indulgences, purgatory, and a great deal more which was promoted by Catholic leaders. **The church needed to control the sort of information which the people heard, lest they be corrupted by the temptation to think for themselves. They were declared heretics at the Council of Verona in 1184 and then hounded and killed over the course of the following 500 years. In 1487, Pope Innocent VIII called for an armed crusade against populations of Waldensians in France***

*Christians did not shy away from killing their own religious brethren when even minor theological differences arose. For them, perhaps no differences were truly minor - all doctrines were a part of the True Path to heaven, and deviation on any point challenged the authority of the church and the community.*

*It was a rare person who dared to stand up and make independent decisions about religious belief, made all the more rare by the fact that they were massacred as fast as possible.*

The Duke of Savoy in one letter castigates the innocent church, subsequent to the 1655 Passover attacks; attempts to pacify the indignant and savaged leaders of the surrounding nations who come to the defense of the true light bringers of God. The Church reluctantly resists the plea of the Swiss ambassadors to evacuate the valleys, preferring the refuge, even though besieged and occupied. The fear of the unknown open country overshadows their every prayer:<sup>80</sup>

***Letters from the Church of God to Swiss Ambassadors – April 9, 1686, from the Deputies of the churches of Boby, St. John, and Angrogna, to the Swiss Ambassadors –***

*My Lords: We did not fail immediately after the arrival of our deputy, to make our copies of the letter which your Excellencies have been pleased to write to our churches, and they have been read everywhere after the sermon.*

*There can nothing be said that is either more true, or more moving and comforting; and your Excellencies may be fully persuaded, that there is nobody but that finds, and does acknowledge, that it is the effect of your holy and Christian charity towards our churches.*

*Yet notwithstanding it has been till now absolutely impossible to dispose our people to a retreat out of this country. Some out of fear it might cause the loss of several persons that shall venture to be left behind; others by a principle of conscience; and others from several other considerations, which our deputy will explain to your Excellencies by word of mouth **(messengers traveled regularly over the Alps in to Geneva to share and communicate with leaders there).***

*We are in the greatest consternation about it, and scarcely dare to appear before your Excellencies with so much irresolution.*

*Our people adhere the more to their opinion, because they have been informed that several other churches, at least a great part of those that composed them, **did not know, that the business was about such a retreat, when they gave their procuration to their deputies.***

*Or it they had understood them, they had changed their minds, which gives us just reason to fear, that in case your Excellencies should be farther engaged for this people, you would be extremely displeased with their refusal to retreat.*

*And it was by reason of this fear which we had here last Sunday, when we desired your Excellencies to give us leave to inform ourselves of the minds of our people about this proposition, foreseeing at the same time that it might be very hard to persuade them to it.*

***They were for the most part resolved to be their Father's children, and hope that the Lord will be their deliverer, that would make me of feeble things to confound the strong.** And that heaven would find out some hindrance to those designs which are formed against us.*

*We do not question but this extremely afflicts your Excellencies and we are touched with it to our very souls: but it is not in our power to change their hearts, and to dispose of other men's wills.*

*Nevertheless we conjure your Excellencies, in all possible humility, that you would be pleased not to abate your kindness to these churches, neither to deprive us of your powerful and comfortable support which, under God, has made us subsist till now.*

***(The church, wary of the Swiss promises, witness persecution and martyrdom within reformation circles (re: Zwingli) and many had moved out of Bern and Zurich into other areas of Europe during this time – see <https://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/le-refuge-huguenot-en-suisse/>).***

***For God's sake do always pity us; what way soever our affairs shall go, we lay our souls before God, to supplicate him with all ardency, that he would be pleased to direct all things to the glory of his holy name, and preservation of our people; and that he would grant by his Divine providence, by the means of Our Excellencies, that we may still get the prolongation of some days.***

*That we may once more inform ourselves of the sentiments of our people by collecting every man's voice in particular, if it be possible, to know their final resolutions. So that we may not be blamed, neither on one side or another.*

*The Lord be the abundant rewarder of Our Excellencies kindness, and we are, with all manner of respect - My Lords, Your Excellencies most humble, most obedient, and most obliged Servants – the deputies of Bobby, St. John, and Agrogne – John Aghitto, Daniel Graffe, Estienonor Danno, Michael Parisa, John Muschon, John Duffa, Piezze Duffa, Lewis Odin.*

***Next letter*** - Most High, Mighty, and Sovereign Lords,

***WE throw ourselves in all humility at your Excellencies' feet, to shew you our most sensible and inexpressible concern, that a great part of our people are not able to appreciate with Christian prudence the favour your Excellencies endeavour to procure them, by a free retreat out of this country, with person and goods, and to embrace it with holy joy, as a present from heaven, and a favour which they have sighed for at other times.***

*This makes our hearts bleed, and so much the more, that your Excellencies' letter, which you have been pleased to write to them, ought to have immediately disposed them to an affair of this nature.*

*Yet we dare still most humbly beseech your Excellencies to have the goodness to exercise love on all these considerations, as knowing very well that we have to do with persons whom it is very hard to compass, and to make them all sensible of the reason, **and the state of things, but by experience, and principally when it is about abandoning their old and dear native soil.***

*There are, nevertheless, a great many, and the principal of them, who resign themselves entirely to your Excellencies counsel, charity, and prudence, and that will never oppose what you shall find most expedient for the glory of God, and their welfare and presentation.*

*The ministers also are all of the same opinion, and we are all willing punctually to observe the counsel your Excellencies shall be pleased to give us. And we most humbly beseech you to pity us and our families, to extricate us out of an unhappy state which to all appearance is unavoidable.*

*This is the favour we hope from your Excellencies, and pray the Lord to bless your Lordships with all manner of prosperity; and we are with all possible respect and submission, most high, mighty, and sovereign Lords.*

*Your Excellencies most humble, and most obedient Servants, Angrogne, April 9, 1686 – Sidrac Bastie, and Guillame Mallanot.*

***And they continue - We have been informed for certain, by a credible person, that his Royal Highness (King of France – Louis XIV)<sup>81</sup> will not grant us a retreat with our goods, but that he pretends to detain them for the charges he has been at already. That he absolutely insists that the ministers and foreigner should be delivered into his hands. That we should lay down our arms, and that we should deliver them up to the governor. That the troops are to enter into the vallies to demolish the churches, and to obstruct all divine exercises. In fine, we have been informed, that the council would by no means suffer that the French troops should march against us.***

## **PART 18 - The Epilogue and Final Denouement**

**The End from the Beginning**

***The Churches of Piedmont***

***From Wilderness to the Whole World***

***The Valleys vacated by the Church – their testimonies***

***The Beast and False Prophet speak***

***Roaring Lions (Zech. 11:3) – The pride of life – (I John 2:16)***

***The Lamb of the Church final written words***

The Church of God on her knees before her God, courted by many northern principalities, hunted by the beast in France and Savoy, and spurned by the false Prophet as she rises from the ashes. Centuries of Godly adherence in the valleys and beyond, comes to a ponderous end, but stands, for testaments reside in Heaven.

The power of the Church of God imbued with the Holy Spirit resides not in palaces, or inside stone walls, but instead confines herself to caves and caverns - powerful innocent lambs under the ruler ship of the roaring lion:

***“Give me mountains, forests, pits, and prisons, as being far safer places; for it was in these that the prophets prophesied by THE SPIRIT OF God.”***

The valleys, almost completely vacated by the church and now under intense pressure to escape to safety; she seeks refuge and mission in other lands; guided by God’s hand, hidden from the world, and clouded by man’s distortions of history and lust for power.

This chapter of the martyr’s ends, transitions from Thyatira to Sardis, while the promise of reformation beckons. God preserves the Church today, unknown to billions in the world. May we, in this Laodicean characteristic, be vigilant and diligent stirring up the spirit of God, and shout His wisdom in the streets (Prov. 1:20), not losing the savour as the salt of the earth – (Matt. 5:13) for salt with savour is never lukewarm!

For chosen Christians never revile or seek revenge, neither do they present arms, except in the extreme consequence of self-defence – a narrative that testifies of the purity of the Spirit of God. The Church of God knows the Revelation of Jesus Christ and dwells within the intense and ravaging Babylon. The false prophets continue to work in the sons of disobedience, while the harlot’s worldly prominence wanes and fades, she conspires a rebirth of world dominance.

As always Babylon melds the philosophies of Rome, Greece, Egypt, Assyria, and the East. For over 1200 years the worldly wisdom of the Anti-Christ matures into a system of blasphemies and demonic power that sinks deep into all communities, only repulsed by thousands of Bible

following Christians under our eternal Shepherd – who for generation after generation nurture the seeds that Christ plants and brings forth fruit.

All church characteristics partially mirror each generation. Pervasive falsehoods of the demonic Jezebel threaten Thyatira, brings the humble church to her knees, but she looks and prays for the kingdom whose builder and maker is God.

The Noble Lesson speaks of the threats of the eastern hordes, crusading and inquisitorial Jezebel, four horsemen of falsehoods, plagues, famines and war seemingly setting the stage for the return of Christ. Drunk with the blood of the saints the era of Waldenses screams across centuries to us! - a warning of the dastardly power of the anti-Christ set to punish all that keep the truth of the living God.

Sealed with blood, the martyrs now speak from beneath the altar - *how long?* (Rev. 6:10). The monstrous cathedrals of France, Italy, Spain, Germany, England, and the whole world built on the backs of the poor and the filthy lucre drawn from the lands and property of the Church of God.

Many in the Churches of God perceive the reformation as a welcome rescue. But then, deception shape-shifts into another civil/religious force. Then, followers of Luther, Calvin and Zwingli persecute the true Church, twist scriptures under new spheres of worldly influence - “rejuvenated” powers plant the compromising tares in obeisance to Babylon.

So, the Protestants birthed as the daughters of the Mother of Harlots. The Church of God faces compromise as the lukewarm Laodecian movement predicted in Revelation. A relief from the inquisitor, some Christians seek refuge in the reformation.

**In the following letter the pastors, investigate the shift in scriptural adherence, skeptically considering the motives of many reformers (echoes of Matt. 24 – if possible, would deceive the very elect!) and fear that many will be turned from the pure belief and practice, by persuasion of the reformers.**

**Like Christ, the Church of God imbibes and exalts the eternal truth, but are seen as rebellious and revolutionaries, attempting to overthrow Pax Romana. Now the reformers in new clothes take on worldly roles, again seeking to destroy the precious saints.**

When some brethren and sisters in the Swiss dominions die in prison - of misery, want, hunger, and grief; five still live in confinement, while the remaining ones, let loose from their bonds, are threatened, especially by those of Berne. The edict went out - expel them all from the country, seize and sell their goods, and God stands as their only recourse.

But then an humble and friendly letter, to their fellow believers in Holland and elsewhere in the Netherlands, requests all chosen ones to fervently call upon God the Lord in their behalf, seeking comfort and grace - that they might patiently endure that which comes upon them according to the flesh.

**The Duke of Savoy issues a second edict sealing the physical fate of the Church on the First Day of Unleavened Bread (April 9, 1686) 31 years after the Piedmont Passover Massacre of 1655.**

**The center of the Church of God, having spread the Word and groups to many places throughout Europe, now embarks like the Israelites of Egypt into a vast promised lands sheltered by her Celtic cousins<sup>39</sup> - into the expanding British Empire.**

**As the Israelites left Egypt, miraculously through the Red Sea, so now the mountain passes provide escape and refuge to the Church. In exalted tones, Babylon fears little challenge to her hegemony, and angrily tramples the word, spirit and people of God.**

The travesty of a false peace settles into the hearts of God's people, although with some respite and challenge from the Swiss Ambassadors. **The Church of God writes her last letter, willing to lay down their lives for the flock- the day after the last day of Unleavened Bread – April 17, 1686.<sup>82</sup>**

**The conclusion of the Thyatira era – sustained by the hand of God throughout the centuries!**

*"Never," says this excellent writer (Dr. Allix)<sup>40</sup>, "did the church of Rome give a more incontestible evidence of her own antichristian spirit, than by her in satiable thirst after the blood of those Christians.*

***Who, six hundred years ago, renounced her communion: and to allay which she has made the blood of these poor innocent creatures everywhere to run down like rivers, exterminating, by fire and sword, those who were not terrified by her anathemas.***

*During this long interval the Waldenses have ever been in the condition of sheep led to the slaughter, by their continual and uninterrupted martyrdoms maintaining and adorning the religion of Christ our Saviour, which the church of Rome having forsaken, now sought to accommodate to her corrupt and worldly interests.*

*And to the design she had formed of making it a stalking horse to the pomp, lordliness, and tyranny of her Pope and clergy. "Whatever reflections the members of the church of Rome may indulge relative to the circumstance of **God's having apparently relinquished these poor churches to the fury of their cannibal adversaries - I am fully persuaded that those who have made the conduct of divine Providence towards the primitive church their study, will not be stumbled at this apparent desertion of the Waldenses.***

***And their being abandoned to the outrageous cruelty of their persecutors, nor regard the ostensible triumphs of the apostate church as any indication of the weakness of the truth professed by the Waldenses.***

***For notwithstanding the extreme rigour of their persecutions, we find that God hath tenderly preserved them till the Reformation. And though He has often exposed them to the rage and barbarous usage of their persecutors, yet has He, from time to time, afforded them such deliverances, as have enabled them to continue until this day - (they walked as he walked holding to the truths of the Church of God, yet partially succumbing to the powers of this world (Matt. 10:17; John 15:18).***

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<sup>39</sup> See History of the Celtic language – in

[http://www.archive.org/stream/historycelticla01maclgoog/historycelticla01maclgoog\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/historycelticla01maclgoog/historycelticla01maclgoog_djvu.txt)

<sup>40</sup> 'Dr. Allix's History of the Churches of Piedmont, p. 293- 96.

*Their persecutions, like those of the apostolic churches, have only served to procure martyrs to the truth of the glorious gospel, and to disperse throughout every land the knowledge and savour of that which the Romish party, treading in the steps of the ancient synagogue, so cruelly persecuted.*

*Let the Bishop of Meaux then, if he please, insulting tell the Protestants to go and look for their ancestors among the Waldenses, and hunt for them in the caverns of the Alps. His declamation shall never make us forego one jot of that tender Generation and respect which we have so justly conceived for this nursery and seed-plot of the martyrs.*

*And for those valiant troops who have so generously lavished their blood in defense of the truth against all the efforts, all the machinations, and all the violence of the Roman Catholic party.*

*The judgment that St. Hilarius expresses in his writings against Auxentius, ought to be sufficient to arm one against all the evils of those who would insinuate that it is impossible the church should lose its purity, or that this purity should be preserved by churches reduced to caverns and mountains. "Of one thing I must carefully warn you," says he, "beware of Antichrist!"*

*It is ill done of you to fall in Love with walls. It is ill done of you to reverence the church of God in buildings and stately edifices. It is wrong to rest in these things. Can you doubt that it is on these Antichrist will fix his throne?!!*

*Give me mountains, forests, pits, and prisons, as being far safer places; for it was in these that the prophets prophesied by THE SPIRIT OF God."*

Second Edict of the Duke of Savoy – April 9, 1686 (First day of Unleavened Bread)

*"Divine providence having established Sovereigns above the people, has given to the first the distribution of favours and punishments, that the hopes of the one might make the good mindful of their duty, and that the sense of the other might prevent the bad from abandoning themselves to evil.*

*This latter ought to fall from our avenging hands upon our subjects of the valleys of Lucerne, who make profession of the pretended Reformed Religion; because it is notorious that they have not only gainsaid with great obstinacy our Order of the 31st of January last.*

*But that they have also **hardened themselves in their crime**, and are fallen into an enormous and consummate rebellion; nevertheless our natural clemency surpassing their crime, and not contenting ourselves with our fatherly kindness, with which **we have so long time unsuccessfully waited for their repentance**, we have still been willing to leave to their will, (which has ever followed bad counsels).*

*The choice of a happy or miserable condition, and to open to them at the last trial the gates of our favour, that so they may be able to take hold of it in the following manner, and that in case they should not answer it by a ready obedience, **they might not be able to impute to anything but their own rashness, their deserved punishments, which we shall inflict upon them without delay.***

*Therefore, confirming in the first place our Order of the 31st of January last, as far as it shall not be found contrary to this, we have by virtue of this present Edict, with our certain knowledge, full power and absolute authority, and with advice of our privy*

*council, commanded **all our subjects of the valleys of Lucerne, making profession of the pretended Reformed Religion, to lay down their arms, and to retire into their houses within the term hereafter prescribed.***

***We command them also to form no more any associations, nor to hold any conventicles; that so, according to our intention the judges of the place may have free access and that the missionaries and other religious persons may return to the churches which they have been forced to leave, and that the Catholics, and those which have embraced the Catholic Religion, may return to their houses which they have abandoned.***

*And whereas it is not reasonable that the religious missionaries, the Catholics, and those which have embraced the Catholic religion, **should be at any loss by occasion of several damages which they have received from those of the pretended Reformed Religion.***

*We desire, command, and ordain, that all the necessary sums to indemnify them be generally and without distinction levied upon the goods of those of the pretended Reformed Religion.*

*So as that it shall be summarily enforced before the Chevalier Monzonx, intendant of justice of the valleys, declaring, nevertheless, that in case those of the said religion prove that the damages have been caused by some particular persons, they may have their recourse and warrant against them.*

***And to shew our said subjects how great our clemency is towards them, we grant leave to those that shall think of a retreat out of our territories.***

*To do it within the term, and upon the conditions hereafter prescribed: but because their ill will has shewed itself but too much by their past conduct, and that several could hide their evil designs under a false pretense of obedience.*

***We reserve for ourselves, besides those who shall retreat out of our territories upon their own motion, to ordain it also to such as we shall think fit, and as we shall find it most expedient to secure the peace of those that shall stay behind, whence we do intend to prescribe the rules which they shall observe for the future.***

*And for an augmentation of our favours, we grant leave as well to those that shall voluntarily retreat, as to those who retreat by our orders, to take along with them their goods and effects at their pleasure.*

*And to sell those they shall leave behind them, provided they do it in such a manner as is hereafter prescribed. The same is understood concerning strangers, and those that are born from strangers, who are to conform themselves to all but the last article of our Order of the 31st of January last, here above mentioned.*

*The said selling of goods shall be made to Catholics, or to persons that have embraced the Catholic Religion; but because there may perhaps not be found buyers within the term herebefore prescribed.*

*And that we are not willing that the zealots of that religion, who shall retreat out of our territories, should be deprived of the benefits of our present concession, they may agree about, or fix upon persons into whose hands they shall put their procurations, who shall have leave to stay during three months in Lucerne.*



*With full liberty to treat and negotiate with whom they think fit to sell the goods of those who shall have retreated, and who shall have leave to prescribe in their procurations the conditions of their selling their goods for their better security, to receive the price thereof in what place soever they desire it.*

*Should be sent them, without fraud and deceit of the constituted procurators, which the Chevalier and Intendant Monzonx shall take care of.*

*Those that shall be willing to retreat, shall be obliged to meet at the day and place hereafter specified, to be ready to depart without firearms by the way that shall be named them, either through Savoy, or the valley of Aste.*

*To this purpose, we will provide them with passports, that they may receive no ill usage or hindrance in our territories; but that on the contrary, they may find all possible assistance; and because that being in great number they may be exposed to some inconveniences upon the way, and in the places through which they are to go overcharged, they shall divide themselves into three bodies as is herein before mentioned.*

*The first shall be composed of those of the valleys of Lucerne, and shall meet at Tour this month of April; the second, composed of those of the valleys of Angrogne, St. Bartholomew, Rocheplate, and Perustin, shall meet at St. Second. And shall part the day following, viz. the twenty-second of this month.*

*The third and last made up of those of the valleys of St. Martin and Perouse, shall meet at Micadole, and part from thence the third day, viz. the twenty-third of this month.*

*The term wherein our said subjects of the pretended Reformed religion that inhabit the valleys of Lucerne, shall be obliged to lay down their arms, in the manner prescribed in the first article of this present Order, is within eight days after the publication hereof in Lucerne.*

***During which they ought to have obeyed the contents of the said Order, to enjoy the fruits of our clemency, by which as well as our fatherly affection towards our said subjects we leave to its nature and course, notwithstanding the enormity of their crimes.***

*And by means of a punctual observation of all herein contained, we grant our favour, pardon, remission, absolution, and a full amnesty to our said subjects of all their excesses, misdemeanors, crimes, and other things which they may have committed since the publication of our Order of the thirty-first of January last.*

*As well in general as particular, that they may not be called to an account for it under any pretense whatsoever, prohibiting all judges, fiscals, and others whom it belongs to, to enquire into it.*

*But because in case they should render themselves unworthy of such favours, by not observing all that is here above-mentioned, within the prescribed term, it would be too pernicious an example to delay any longer their deserved punishments.*

*After having been prodigal to them of our favours, and after having waited so long time for their repentance, we intend to make use of those means which God has put into our hands to bring the obstinate to their duty, and to make them feel the punishment of their great presumption. **Given at Turin, the 9th of April, 1686.***

**From the Swiss Ambassadors to the Duke of Savoy**

*Your Royal Highness is humbly requested to consider, that he that will retreat out of the valleys by virtue of your published Order, is obliged to prepare himself for his departure, for the transportation of his wife, his children, and his goods that will be necessary to him.*

*That he will be obliged to dispose in several places what he cannot carry along with him; that he must provide for the sale of his corn, of his provisions, of his wine, of his cattle, which he would not be forced to leave at random.*

*And that he cannot entrust with his procurator at Lucerne, and who consequently by reason of the distance of the place, will be incapable to take care of it; that within the term of eight days he will not be able to settle accounts either with his creditors or his debtors, because those he has to do with do not live in the valleys.*

*Or because there may be some accounts that cannot be regulated but by arbitration; that in consideration of goods immoveable, there is to be made an exact description of the vineyards, meadows, fields, and woods, whose boundaries and limits are to be marked out and described, as also of the rights thereunto belonging.*

*And the sums for which they are mortgaged, and that there ought to be granted some particular procurations to that purpose.*

*Therefore your Royal Highness having been pleased by an instinct of your justice and clemency, to grant to your subjects of the valleys leave to retreat wherever they please, and to sell their goods which they shall leave behind them, you would not wish that this favour should be unprofitable to them, by obstructing the favour of this concession by the shortness of time.*

*To take away from them with one hand what you have given with the other.*

*Your Royal Highness is also requested to consider that six trustees are not enough for the sale of goods belonging to several hundreds of families that shall be willing to retreat.*

*That this commission cannot be given but to people of the country, and consequently to persons without learning and without capacity, and taken up with their own affairs.*

*That besides, these trustees will be obliged to run to several places to find out buyers, to let them have a view of the property which they are to buy, that settlements must be made in several places before several notaries.*

*That they are to watch at the selling of a great number of movables that are dispersed in several houses, to count money, to change it, and to send it to them into foreign countries, to find out some conveniences for that purpose, to write to their*

*correspondents for the clearing of several doubts that may be raised, to remove the obstructions they shall meet with.*

*To defend themselves against some unjust demands, to receive letters from those they shall write to from the places of their retreat, to acquaint them with the state of their affairs, and in a word, to be charged with a thousand other occupations that we cannot now foresee.*

*Therefore, because your Royal Highness does not intend to enrich yourself with the goods of your poor subjects, nor to augment your revenues by their losses, you will be pleased to grant them leave to nominate twelve persons that within the time prescribed by your Royal Highness, shall proceed to the sale of the goods of those that shall have retreated.*

*But because it will undoubtedly happen, that within the term of three months, with what diligence soever the trustees may proceed to the sale of the good of the poor refugees.*

*There will be found few chapmen, and **that everybody will expect the end of the term to take advantage of the necessity to which the trustees will be driven to dispose of their goods, and to have them from those wretched people at an under price, by reason of their fear to lose all.***

*We hope your Royal Highness will have the goodness to prevent this inconvenience, and according to the agreements made in the year 1663, with his late Royal Highness of glorious memory, you will buy at a reasonable price the moveable and immoveable goods, that within the space of three months shall not be sold.*

*And forasmuch as your Royal Highness distinguishes yourself by your goodness and clemency, you are not willing, without doubt, to oblige anybody to impossibilities, and therefore must be aware that females newly brought to bed, or such as are in the last month of their time, and old and sick men, are incapable of travelling.*

*You will make no difficulty to dispense in their favour with the law you have prescribed to others about their retreat, **and exempt them from quartering soldiers, who, how well soever disciplined, always cause some disorder, and carry distress into all places where they enter, as also to grant them leave to live and die in their houses without fear of being ill used.***

*And of being spoiled of their goods and provisions. In fine, we beseech your Royal Highness that you would be pleased instantly to use your clemency towards those of the valleys that are detained in your prisons, and towards those that have been taken up on that account, and that you will be pleased mercifully to set them at liberty.*

**The Last letter from pastors of The Churches in the Valleys to the Swiss Ambassadors – April 17, 1686.**

*My Lords, We do intend to communicate immediately to our commonalties your Excellencies' letters.*

*We could have wished that they had been more mindful of those wise counsels your Excellencies have given them to prevent such danger and desolations in all human probability is now unavoidable.*

*We pray to God that he would be pleased to crown their resolution, though against all appearance, with success, and to strengthen their infirmity and feebleness.*

*I do believe that all the ministers do design to live and to die amongst them. Because your Excellencies do not disapprove it: and, indeed, it would neither be honest nor excusable to abandon them in such a juncture of time.*

***And we should certainly have reason to think ourselves guilty in part of their loss, because a good shepherd is bound to lay down his life for his flock.***

*We continue to give your Excellencies our most humble thanks for the trouble and indefatigable care you have taken for our welfare and subsistence.*

*And we conjure you by the compassion of God, and by the charity of Jesus Christ, not to forget us, but whether it be during your stay at Turin, or after your return to the most high and mighty Protestant Cantons, to favour us with your affection and Christian charity upon all occasions.*

*We pray our great God and Saviour that he would be pleased to reward the pains and charities of your Excellencies towards these churches.*

*With his most precious blessings in heaven and earth , and to cover your sacred persons with his inviolable protection: these are the sincere and fervent wishes of those that are, with profound respect, My Lords, your Excellencies most humble and obedient servants.*

***The Ministers of The Evangelical Churches of the Valleys – Lucerne, Angrogne, Perouse, St. Martin, etc. in Piedmont, and in the name of all - S. Bastie, Minister, Angrogne - 17 April, 1686.***

### **Conclusion**

With these final words a remnant of the Church of God escapes to the wide world, where previous brethren had gone. But some remained and can still be identified today, although compromise can slowly creep into each generation of the true Christian. The sustaining Holy Spirit holds the church in the womb of God as the Father and Son work and eagerly await the marriage supper of the lamb. We know that many martyrs lie under the altar along with those that have died in the faith.

But what say we about the antics and deceptions of Babylon? With the unison and harmony of Christ within us, we love our enemies and do good to those that persecute us; for we know that vengeance does not belong to us but to God the Father. So the voices under the altar cry out, How Long (Rev. 6:9 – the fifth seal)?

Babylon, the ancient arch enemy, instigated and amplified by the evil power of Satan cannot be defeated by human will or systems. Politics, philosophy, economy, social equity, or environmental perfection contains no redeeming power. We grasp the path to eternity through

the working of the willing human spirit and the Holy Spirit of God. Lucifer's toolbox holds philosophies, false equity and the lusts of this world. Constantly changing, adapting, mixing, and merging with an intense diversity that triumphs in pandemonium. Without God's intercession, Satan grooms and customizes each generation to lustful and deadly ends.

A magnetic charisma charms a false peace and safety, whitened with a faux Christ. The world's systems - a style, a pose, a frame, a vanity, a catwalk, an improvement, a progression, an inclusion with the lustre of good and evil, birthed with pregnant ideas that oscillate around and imitate the truth, that will eventually recognize the foul source of its impotent power and the rescue and refuge in the beauty of submission to God's will. ***Witness the chimera of post-modernism cloaked in [Babylon](#), the [renaissance](#)<sup>83</sup> – humanism from the ashes tyrannical Babylon.*** As Solomon wisely speaks of a man's plight without God: (Eccl. 1 FV)

*1. The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. 2. "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "vanity of vanities! All is vanity." 3. What profit does a man have in all his labor which he labors under the sun?*

*4. One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever. 5. The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose.*

*6. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits.*

*7. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again. 8. All things are full of labor; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.*

***9. That which has been is that which shall be; and that which has been done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun.***

***10. Is there a thing of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already been in days of old, which were before us.***

*11. There is no memory of former things, neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come by those who shall come afterwards. 12. I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.*

*13. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under the heavens. It is a grievous task God has given to the sons of men to be exercised by it.*

***14. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.***

*15. What is crooked cannot be made straight; and what is lacking cannot be numbered. 16. I spoke within my own heart, saying, "Lo, I have become great and have gathered more wisdom than all that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart has experienced great wisdom and knowledge."*

***17. And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I perceived that this also is striving after wind.***

***18. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.***

She latches to the tendons and arteries of the individual and community hearts – a harmony of competing allegiances like the new churches: sports, music, art, social equity, environmental superiority, and economic reward! The neurons of the brain, without the obedience to God, become reprobate, distorted, and noise-filled leading to complete destruction, death, and darkness.

God says turn, turn, and I will heal you (II Chron. 7:14)! He desires our innermost commitment to Him, within His freeing will. The suffering joy of the true Christian bridges the chasm that separates flesh from spirit, as He beckons to us every second. Make every thought captive to His will and forgive all our enemies.

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**References and End Notes:** Editor's comments appear as ***bold italics underlined in the text.***

<sup>1</sup> **Tit 3:9** But shun foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law; for they are unprofitable and worthless. **Tit 1:14** not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. **2Pe 1:16** For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. **2Ti 2:23** But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

<sup>2</sup> Drama of the Lost Disciples – G. Jowett

<sup>3</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses Volume I

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> **Tit 3:9** But shun foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law; for they are unprofitable and worthless. **Tit 1:14** not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. **2Pe 1:16** For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. **2Ti 2:23** But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albigensian\\_Crusade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albigensian_Crusade)

<sup>6</sup> The first Crusade was preached by Urban II to the Councils of Placentia. and of Clermont, in 1095 and 1096.

<sup>7</sup> The Council of Toulouse, held in 1129, prohibited the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue.

<sup>8</sup> Muston – Israel of Alps

<sup>9</sup> As I shall have occasion, in the subsequent pages of this work, to make frequent references to Limborch's History of the Inquisition, it is proper the reader should be apprised of the degree of credit which is due to that author's statements. He was a native of Amsterdam, born 1633, a person of great learning and talents, which raised him to the rank of professor of divinity in that city.

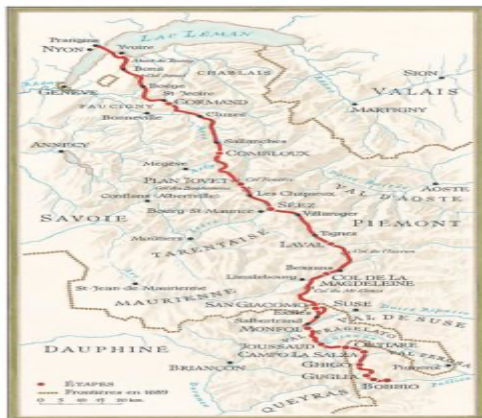
When his History of the Inquisition first came over to England, it was received with the highest approbation by many of the principal nobility and clergy. In particular Mr. Locke, that incomparable judge of men and books, bestowed the highest praise upon it,- commended it for its method and perspicuity, and the authorities by which it is so abundantly confirmed-and pronounced it to be a work of its kind absolutely perfect. In a letter to Limborch himself, he tells him, that he had so fully exposed their secret act, of wickedness and cruelty, that if the Papist had any remains of humanity in them, they must be ashamed of their horrid tribunals, in which everything that was just and righteous was so monstrously perverted ; and that it was proper it ***should be translated into the vulgar language of every nation, that the meanest people might understand the antichristian practices of that execrable court. The papists became so alarmed at its publication, that the cardinals, inquisitors general at Rome, condemned it by an edict, and forbade the reading of it, under the severest penalties***

<sup>10</sup> From Jones – History of the Church from the time of Christ

<sup>11</sup> The Martyr's Mirror – Thielman Van Braght - 1632

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- <sup>12</sup> Ibid  
<sup>13</sup> Ibid  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid  
<sup>15</sup> History of the Vaudois – Monastier  
<sup>16</sup> The Drama of the Lost Disciples – G.F. Jowett - 1961  
<sup>17</sup> Jones History of the Waldenses Volume 1  
<sup>18</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, p. 226 History of the Christian Church.  
<sup>19</sup> Monastier – History of the Vaudois  
<sup>20</sup> Jones History of the Waldenses Volume 2  
<sup>21</sup> Jones History of the Waldenses Volume 1  
<sup>22</sup> Jones History of the Waldenses Volume 2  
<sup>23</sup> Jones History of the Waldenses Volume 1  
<sup>24</sup> Martyr’s Mirror – T.V. Braght - 1632  
<sup>25</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume II - 1818  
<sup>26</sup> Ibid  
<sup>27</sup> Ibid  
<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Dowsing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dowsing)  
<sup>29</sup> Martyr’s Mirror – 1632- T.V. Braght  
<sup>30</sup> Jones Volume 1 – History of the Waldenses – 1818  
<sup>31</sup> Jones Volume 2 – History of the Waldenses - 1818  
<sup>32</sup> Ibid  
<sup>33</sup> Ibid  
<sup>34</sup> Jones – Volume II History of the Waldenses - 1818  
<sup>35</sup> Ibid  
<sup>36</sup> Monastier – History of the Vaudois - 1859  
<sup>37</sup> Jones – History of Waldenses Volume 1  
<sup>38</sup> Paul Perrin – the Waldensian Church – Anterior to the Reformation - 1618 (Editor’s introduction)  
<sup>39</sup> Ibid  
<sup>40</sup> Jones - Ibid  
<sup>41</sup> Monastier – Pastor – History of the Vaudois Church - 1846  
<sup>42</sup> Martyr’s Mirror – T.V. Braght –1632  
<sup>43</sup> Ibid  
<sup>44</sup> Ibid  
<sup>45</sup> Ibid  
<sup>46</sup> Ibid  
<sup>47</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume II - 1818  
<sup>48</sup> Ibid  
<sup>49</sup> Jones – History of Waldenses – Volume II - 1818  
<sup>50</sup> Ibid  
<sup>51</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume II - 1818  
<sup>52</sup> Ibid  
<sup>53</sup> Ibid  
<sup>54</sup> Ibid  
<sup>55</sup> J.A. Wylie – History of the Waldenses - 1889  
<sup>56</sup> History of the Old Waldenses – Anterior to the Reformation – Jean Paul Perrin – published 1618  
<sup>57</sup> The Drama of the Lost Disciples – George F. Jowett - 1961  
<sup>58</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume II - 1818  
<sup>59</sup> Martyr’s Mirror – T. Van Braght - 1632  
<sup>60</sup> Jones – History of Waldenses – Vol I - 1818  
<sup>61</sup> Ibid Jones Vol II  
<sup>62</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume I - 1818  
<sup>63</sup> Ibid

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- 64 Ibid  
65 Ibid  
66 Ibid  
67 Ibid  
68 Jones – History of the Waldenses – Volume II  
69 Ibid  
70 Ibid  
71 Muston – Israel of the Alps – Volume I  
72 Ibid  
73 Ibid  
74 Ibid  
75 Ibid  
76 Jane Louisa Willyams – The Waldensian Church of the Piedmont - 1878  
77 Ibid  
78 Muston – Israel of the Alps – Vol I  
79 Jones – The Waldensian Church – Vol II - 1818  
80 Jones – History of the Waldenses – Vol II - 1818  
81 The 17th century was a time of hardship and struggle – taken from -  
<https://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/a-history-of-the-waldensians/>



### Escape and return routes – Waldenses valleys to Switzerland

In 1630 an epidemic of the plague came to the Waldensian valleys and destroyed a third of the population – 11 out of the 13 pastors died. The Waldesians sent envoys to Geneva to ask for help and pastors were sent from Switzerland. These pastors made the Waldensians accept the customs of the Church of Geneva and they had to adopt French as the official language of their Church – this situation did not change until the mid 19th century.

The Turin court was under the political influence of the French. From 1640 onwards the Waldensians came under attack more and more frequently. In 1655 troops were stationed with Waldensian families and began to massacre the population. The Protestant valleys of the Piedmont became Roman Catholic once more. These massacres, known as the “**Piedmont Easter massacre**” or the “**Bloody Spring**” aroused indignation in Cromwell’s England. It also prompted the poet John Milton to describe the massacres in a famous poem. Holland and in the rest of Europe were deeply shocked at such cruelty. Mazarin himself intervened. At the same time guerilla warfare continued in the Piedmont



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Valleys, fought by a handful of indomitable soldiers led by a farmer, **Janavel**, who is a legend in Waldensian history. Due to international pressure, the Duke of Savoy had to give in and abide by the conditions of the Cavour agreement. The Waldensians were able to go back to their valleys but the Duke put more and more pressure on them as time went by.

In 1685 the effects of the Edict of Nantes were also felt in the French territory of the Piedmont Valleys: Le Val Plagela and the Val Cluson. Consequently, many Waldensian families decided to go into exile and settled in Hesse-Cassel, founding villages where they had freedom of conscience and could live in accordance with their faith.

The Duke of Savoy, **Victor Amadeus II**, a nephew of Louis XIV, continued the anti-Waldensian policy of his uncle; The Duke of Savoy, Victor Amadeus II, who married Louis XIV's niece, continued Louis XIV's religious policies: in the decree of January 1686, he banished their pastors, forbade public worship and forced parents to give their children a Roman Catholic baptism. The pastor Henri Arnaud advocated rebellion. The Waldensians were defeated in a short three-day war; many died and 8500 were imprisoned. However, thanks to Swiss intervention, a certain number managed to flee to Geneva.

In 1688, the political situation in Europe was turned upside down when William of Orange came to the English throne and formed a coalition against Louis XIV. He sent emissaries to the exiled Waldensians in Switzerland and secretly organised their return to the Piedmont Valleys in 1689. This episode is known as the **"Glorious Return"**. Only 900 men managed to get back to the Piedmont; they had to march in terrible conditions, using a very unusual route. However, they arrived in Prali, in the Val Germanica, and were able to hold their first public service on 8th September 1689, led by pastor Henri Arnaud. They swore the **oath of Sibaud** on 11th September 1689, loyally promising to keep together and continue their fight for the Waldensian cause, with Arnaud as their military and religious leader. They escaped from the French army as if by a miracle thanks to fog. Some days later, Victor Amadeus broke off his alliance with France and became an ally of England. The Waldensians were saved. The English put pressure on the Duke of Savoy and made him issue a decree giving the Waldensians civil rights in their territories.

#### The Age of Enlightenment

The Waldensian territories became a Protestant enclave in the Catholic Piedmont valleys, which became the Kingdom of Sardinia. The Austro-Hungarians now ruled over them, replacing the French.

It was thanks to the support of Churches in surrounding Protestant countries that the Waldensians were able to survive; pastors and financial aid were sent which enabled them to set up their own schools. With the help of scholarships their young people were able to study in Geneva, Basel, Leyden or Heidelberg.

Compared to the preceding century, life was not quite so harrowing, but the Waldensians were constantly subjected to acts of humiliation and day by day fought desperately to survive at all. They lived in a kind of "ghettos", cut off from the rest of the Italian peninsula but were attached to the rest of Europe by their links with other Protestant countries.

<sup>82</sup> Jones – History of the Waldenses – Vol I - 1818

<sup>83</sup> The renaissance a mystical trek into humanism reacting to the fantasies of the Catholic hegemony, appears to break free from the shackles of distorted reality and tyranny. See PBS video on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOAVRcl6mFU>, links above and Francis Schaeffer and the series - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTZ60ZKopL4>.

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**The Church of God Triumphs over Babylon (False Prophet) and the Beast Powers**  
Resources Compiled by John J. Guenther – [johnj2@telus.net](mailto:johnj2@telus.net)

**Preface:** The Church of God prevails throughout human civilization, protected by the power of God and Jesus Christ. In many instances historians obscure their writings and influence. In some cases the powers of Babylon burn, re-edit or twist their impact into false testimonies and narratives. Witness the Apocrypha as documents and pseudepigraphic writings clustering around the Biblical Canon that God sustains in the hands of Ezra – Old Testament and John – New Testament. The Bible, endures as the miracle of God’s voice to all people of all times.

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Babylon and her daughters, as queens, boldly subterfuges the Church of God, attempting to bury the remnant by assuming the authority over life and death. True to her studded mythical exposes, she credits herself as the keeper of the word of God. She brashly alters history, times, seasons, and doctrines to recognize her as the originator, and preeminent sustainer of life beyond the grave. Ironically many of her writings contain the very references to the True Church of God that she anxiously tries to stamp out!

The search for pure Christian sources requires sleuthing, mining and straining to reveal facts by stripping away the massive overburden and spurious lies to reveal the sparkling gems and pearls of great price. The precious minerals express the true history of the Church of God – the people, practices, beliefs, witness, mission, influence and destiny.

The truth always expresses a history, a present and a future – the Alpha and Omega - rife with meaning and housing eternal attributes founded on the words of the living God. With the lens of scripture and the workings of God in our hearts we see, hear and feel the truth surface from the dust and superficial sugary coatings of the false history piled up in primary, secondary and post secondary schools; and shockingly, in seminaries, churches and from the lips of worldly pastors.

The following references must be read with the wisdom and insight drawn from a practising Christian life. The knowledge of God comes from a humble spirit with Christ and the Father working within us to fully express the immanent truths of His will – the narrow way, truth, light and life not the broad way, full of lies, darkness and death!

An exhaustive list of references and literature review beckons, but further resources can be garnered from the bibliography in each book.

*Hyperlinks are active within the text topics and reference either a location to be purchased or downloaded.*

***Many of the references are contained as ebooks in various formats by searching and downloading from free public domains such as [archive.org](https://archive.org) or <https://books.google.com/>***

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