

Study for the Month of September 2016

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The 'Man of Sin' of Bible Prophecy and his activities and career - Part XVII

THE THREE BABYLONS No. IV:

Spiritual Babylon: the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth

Recent Headline: ***“Relic Believed to be Fragment of ‘True Cross’ Missing from Catholic Church.”*** ABC News 8-22-2016.
www.yahoo.com/news/relic-believed-fragment-true-cross-120850080.html .
(There were 165 comments). We quote the following (emphasis mine):

“San Francisco police are searching for a **relic** believed to trace back to 325 A.D. that went missing from a Catholic church on Thursday.” “According to ABC San Francisco affiliate KGO, officials are investigating the disappearance of, what is believed to be an ancient religious artifact from St. Dominic’s Catholic Church.

“The leaders of the church and local parishioners say that they are praying that the artifact will be safely returned to the parish.

“At mass on Sunday, Father Michael Hurley informed the congregation, ‘This past Thursday, the church was robbed of a very precious item.’

“That item was believed to contain a fragment of the True Cross of Jesus Christ, one of the church’s most treasured relics. [why was it not at the closely-guarded Vatican vaults but in a local church?].

“The True Cross is a relic that goes back 2,000 years ago to the very cross of Christ himself,’ Hurley said. ‘For it to be stolen in this kind of very deliberate way [what “deliberate way”?] is certainly both upsetting and saddening.’

“According to St. Dominic’s website, the relic is a ‘treasured place of prayer that has brought consolation to those weighed down by the crosses of their lives.’ [What about those whose “heavy crosses” they have been bearing for years is the sexual abuse and even deaths of their precious children in the hands of priests and prelates upon whom they entrusted their “souls” to?]

“Parishioner Susanne Avila told KGO, ‘It’s devastating.’ Avila said she prayed in front of the relic almost every day. ‘It’s like a piece of our little heart has been pulled out and that little heartbeat is gone and we need to get it back.’

“There were no security cameras inside the church and no witnesses.

“Authorities say there is very little they can do with such few clues. [what a waste of time and tax dollars of the people!]. ‘We’re hoping that the thief [God know who he really is!] will have a change of heart and perhaps we can discover it again and restore this important relic to our church, ‘ Father Hurley said.

“In the meantime a sign has been placed on the display case asking for someone[?] to return the relic, no questions asked.” (end of news quote).

NOTE: When I first checked this news item it had 165 posted comments. I don’t know how many have been added since then. But below are some of the earlier comments. Very revealing indeed! One clear thing is clear, though: Not all the people can be fooled all the time! Note:

Yehudie wrote: “Relics were BIG BUSINESS [emphasis in the original] in their time. This was driven home as I stood under the dome of a church as part of a tour group in Italy. The dome was supported by columns and the guide explained that in this column there is a nail from the crucifixion and in that columns is the point in the spear that” (keep reading).

whatever wrote: “Fragment of the true cross. SMH. People, where on earth do you get the idea that immediately after the crucifixion people went around gathering souvenirs? The cross, like EVERY OTHER ROMAN CROSS [emphasis in the original] would have been reused the next day. Not to mention the disciples and His followers were all in hiding.”

Garrett wrote: “There is a small church in New Mexico where supposedly some miracle happened and in one small room there is a hole in the floor down to [the] dirt—and the dirt is considered to be ‘holy’ or good for miracles apparently. So people go there and pray and take a small amount of dirt with them” . . . (keep reading)

Sensibility wrote: “Read the pardoner’s tale in Chaucer’s ‘Canterbury Tales’.... Eh sold enough fragments of the ‘true cross’ to make three of them.

Spock’s Brain Rules wrote: “It is very unlikely that this was a relic from the cross since it took very long for Christianity to take hold and the original founders of the true church [the Twelve Apostles who said that Jesus Christ, not Peter, merely one of their fellow disciples, was the “Rock” on which the church was built!] were not into relics. [to them, as Jesus taught them, such was idolatry!] And it’s a good thing that relics, phony or otherwise, are totally irrelevant to true Christianity. But it is . . . (keep reading).

Razpootin wrote: “First, there was no such as thing as the ‘true cross,’ and catholics have an obscene obsession with trinkets . . . “19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (keep reading)

Phantom wrote: “There is a Judas Iscariot listed in the San Francisco phone book.”]

Stop Whining wrote: “I would offer condolences if the church had accepted the challenge (prior to theft) [in the original] to allow this fragment to be carbon dated.”

Vanilla Voodoo wrote: [Warning! This is harsh, even bordering on profanity. I print it only in the interest of showing our readers that even very likely *non religious* people

who have donned their thinking hats are outraged and express this feeling in such language. By the way, the “Christianity” that atheists almost have the “right” to ridicule is of such type of Christianity that confuses the “gospel” with heathenism and outright superstition!] Vanilla Voodoo wrote:

“Someone is going to use it [the relic] to summon Jesus Christ and combine them with the DNA of Adolf Hitler, Napoleon Bonaparte [who took captive Pope Pius VI in 1798 and took him back to France where he died the following year. This fulfilled the prophecy of Revelation 13 that “one of the heads of the beast would be wounded as to death” but later would “be healed.”], Attila the Hun, Ivan the Terrible, Genghis Khan, Pol Pot, Rasaputin, Walt Whitman, Elizabeth Bathory, Barrack Obama, Caitlyn Jenner to create the antichrist.”

NOTE: How much more misinformed can people be about what or who the Antichrist of Biblical prophecy is! It only shows how apparently successful Satan has been in hoodwinking almost the whole world, even to this very moment in time!].

Ellen G. White’s Writings regarding Relics, etc.

Worship of Relics by the Church of the Dark Ages, Great Controversy, pp. 55-6:

“The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened.

“Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for *forgiveness of sins* and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that *the pope was the earthly mediator* [usurping the office, authority, and work of the Holy Spirit] and that none could approach God except through him; and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them [again blasphemously usurping the office, authority, and work of Jesus Christ, Creator, Redeemer, and Mediator] and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. [Totally opposite of the character of Christ!]. Thus the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them [pope, priests, and prelates].

“Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity. When the Scriptures are suppressed, and man come to regard himself as supreme, we need look only for *fraud, deception, and debasing iniquity*. With the elevation of human laws and traditions was manifest *the corruption that ever results from setting aside the law of God*.

“Those were days of peril for the church of Christ. The faithful standard-bearers were few indeed. Though the truth was not left without witnesses, yet at times it seemed that error and superstition would wholly prevail, and true religion would be banished from the earth.

“The gospel was lost sight of, but the forms of religion were multiplied, and the people were burdened with religious exactions. They were taught not to look to the pope as their mediator, but to trust to works of their own to atone for sin. Long pilgrimages, acts of penance, **the worship of relics**, the erection of churches, shrines, and altars, the payment of large sums to the church---these and many similar acts were enjoined to appease the wrath of God or to secure His favor; as if God were like men, to be angered at trifles, or pacified by gifts or acts of penance!

WGM Commentary:

This is the “righteousness by works” that every true reformer, pastor, minister, Bible teacher, and lay worker needs to expose and disabuse the minds of those who are still enslaved by these deeply-ingrained, widespread deception; for if they fail to do so, the countless deceived Christians, including those still *honestly deceived*--not willing ignorant--become deceivers themselves unwittingly. However, as has been correctly observed, “When those honestly deceived see the truth, they will either cease to be deceived or else they cease to be honest” and join the ranks of the willingly ignorant! There is no plan of salvation designed for the latter if they persistently choose to remain in that condition of darkness when God is still mercifully “calling them out of darkness into His marvelous light” of truth.

Ellen G. White wrote (emphasis mine):

“Those who are striving to be overcomers will be pursued by the temptations of the enemy. Satan will tempt them to corrupt the principles which all must maintain who would reach the high standard that God has set before them. *Satan rejoices when he can lead souls to follow mistaken ideas, until their names are blotted out from the book of life and recorded among the unjust.* We can overcome only in the way that Christ overcame--by wholehearted obedience to every commandment of God. True religion is obedience to all the commandments of God.” - *This Day with God* (Devotional), p. 22.

“Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over the minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.”- *Ibid, Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 47.

All error is sin for Satan is the author of sin and confusion and the father of lies. There is no sanctification in error as there can be absolutely no justification *in* sin and *for* sin. Only by and in the merits of Christ’s perfect life of righteousness in His human nature and perfect atoning sacrifice at Calvary where His blood was shed to satisfy the demands of His immutable law which was transgressed by Adam and Eve and all their children thereafter, that penitent believers totally depend upon. Only this knowledge and intelligent faith will bring out godly repentance as moved by the Holy Spirit. The sinner mourns for the *sin*, not merely its painful consequences, and final wages, which is eternal death. The name “Jesus” means “for He will save His people *from* not in their sins.” Matt.

1:21. Even true repentance is a gift of God! No sinner can truly repent of his own self unless convicted by the Holy Spirit and he does not resist.

There are those young in the faith even among the remnant church who erroneously take the Biblical teaching of willing and intelligent obedience, as in “labor of love” to the Decalogue enjoined throughout the Bible as “righteousness by works,” influenced by false teachers and, perhaps, their own lack of love and desire to invest time and effort in a regular and diligent study of the Word but rely on what others, particularly high profile and popular theological views. They become mere reflectors of other men’s ideas of what comprises truth.

Such make justification by faith far more than what role it plays in God’s plan of redemption as clearly taught in the sanctuary message ---pardon or forgiveness full and complete”-- which the outer court with the altar of sacrifice seen and accessible to all, typified. Justification is the righteousness of Christ *imputed* to the penitent, repenting sinner. In the type, the repenting sinner places his hands upon the head of the specified animal he has brought and confesses his sins upon the animal it, thereby, in symbol, transferring his sin and guilt upon it. Then he himself slays the innocent animal, symbolizing Christ, the Lamb of God, substituting for his own forfeited life and satisfying, in type, the demand of God’s immutable law that has been transgressed. It was only when the blood flowed from the slain sacrificial animal did the work of the priest commence, who then dipped his finger in the blood caught in a basin, and entered into the holy place where he sprinkled it, thereby transferring in type, the sin-laden blood. This went on throughout the year until the Day of Atonement where provision was made that all sins transferred there would be blotted out, with blood, in the “cleansing of the sanctuary” prophesied in Daniel 8: 14.

Those who espouse the counterfeit “justification by faith” doctrine of a necessity downgrade sanctification. Justification is the penitent sinner’s “passport” to heaven provided in the plan of redemption contemplated by the Godhead before the foundations of the earth were laid and before Adam and Eve sinned, where the righteousness of Christ is *imputed* to the sinner. His confessed sin is covered by the *blood* of Christ, yet the sinner hasn’t yet overcome that confessed sin. Sanctification, which follows, is the righteousness of Christ *imparted to the sinner by the Holy Spirit*; it is that which fits the justified sinner for heaven, where he overcomes as Christ overcame, thus, a process of a lifetime.

Counterfeit justification by faith renders sanctification a “good idea” but not essential for eternal salvation. The alternative is what is known as “instant sanctification” where successful resistance to temptation, self-denial, self-sacrifice, and overcoming natural propensities, evil habits, and secret and open transgression of God’s law are considered not achievable—even if the “the power of God unto salvation *from* sin.” The empowering grace of God, which is “greater than abounding sin,” is imparted by the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead to the yielded and cooperating sinner.

Through the diligent exercise of his faculties and choices, quickened and influenced by the Holy Spirit in the Word, which he obeys by “faith that works by

love” and cleanses and purifies the soul from all that defiles it spiritually (Gal. 5, 6 2 Cor. 7: 1), the sinner “becomes more than a conquerors through Christ” in the battle with evil. This is “the victory in Christ,” the restoration of God’s moral image in man—the very goal of the gospel and the plan of redemption! sin never becomes a hateful thing and an abomination. Instead, it remains a delightful thing as in their previous unconverted state. The person has never been truly born again. The “old man” is still very much alive and in control.

Such deluded Christians do not realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its corroding power. In that state they will never experience what Paul describes as “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Col. 1: 26, 27. nature and the glory and immutability of God’s law as the foundation of His government in heaven and throughout the unfallen universe—and that in order that fallen man could even be forgiven, and the immutability of God’s law be maintained, God Himself, through His only-begotten Son, submitted to the demands of His law—death for its transgressor—by becoming our substitute and surety.

“Notwithstanding that vice prevailed, even among the leaders of the Roman Church, her influence seemed steadily to increase. About the close of the eight century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed. To establish this claim, some means must be employed to give it a show of authority; and this was readily suggested by the father of lies. Ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of the pope from the earliest times. And a church that had rejected the truth greedily accepted these deceptions.”(see *Appendix** below)- *Great Controversy*, p. 56.

***Appendix on Forged Writings, p. 681.**--- “Among the documents that at the present times are generally admitted to be forgeries, the Donation of Constantine and Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals are of primary importance. ‘The Donation of Constantine’ is the name traditionally applied, since the later Middle Ages, to a document purporting to have been addressed by Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester I, which is found first in a Parisian manuscript (*Codex lat. 2777*) of probably the beginning of the ninth century. Since the eleventh century it has been used as a powerful argument in favor of the papal claims, and consequently since the twelfth it has been the subject of vigorous controversy. At the same time, by rendering it possible to regard the papacy as a middle term between the original and the medieval Roman Empire, and thus to form a theological basis of continuity for the reception of the Roman law in the Middle Ages, it has no small influence upon secular history.” – *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 3, art. “*Donation of Constantine*,” pp. 484, 485.

Introduced gradually into Christian worship, GC 51-52; SR 328.

“Satan well knew that the Holy Scriptures would enable men to discern his deceptions and withstand his power. It was by the word that even the Savior of the world had resisted his attacks [Matt. 4: 1-11]. At every assault, Christ presented the shield of eternal truth, saying, ‘It is written.’ To every suggestion of

the adversary, He opposed [with] the wisdom and power of the word. In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in ignorance of the Scriptures. The Bible would exalt God and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be concealed and suppressed. *This logic was adopted by the Roman Church.* [God's true church does not function on "logic" but on eternal principles as revealed in the Bible and God's law]. For hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible had been prohibited. The people were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses, and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions.

"Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on the earth, usurping the office, authority, and power of the third Person of the Godhead. What fearful blasphemy against the Holy Spirit!] endowed with authority over church and state.

"The detector of error [the Holy Scriptures] being removed, Satan worked according to His will. Prophecy had declared that the papacy was 'to think to change times and laws.' Dan. 7: 25. This work it was not slow to attempt. *To afford converts from heathenism a substitute for the worship of idols, and thus to promote their nominal acceptance of Christianity, the adoration of images and **relics** was gradually introduced into the Christian worship.* The decree of a general council (see *Appendix** reference below) finally established this system of idolatry. To complete this sacrilegious work, Rome presumed to expunge from the law of God the second commandment [Exo. 20: 4-6], forbidding image worship, and to divide the tenth commandment [Exo. 20: 17], in order to preserve the number."

***Appendix on the general council that established worship of images and relics, p. 52.**—"Image Worship. —The worship of images . . . was one of those corruptions of Christianity which crept into the church stealthily and almost without notice or observation. This corruption did not, like other heresies, develop itself at once, for in that case it would have met with decided censure and rebuke: but, making its commencement under a fair disguise, so gradually was one practice after another introduced into connection with it, that the church had become deeply steeped in practical idolatry, not only without any efficient opposition, but almost without any decided remonstrance; and when at length an endeavor was made to root it out, the evil was found too deeply fixed to admit of removal . . . it must be traced to the idolatrous tendency of the human heart, and its propensity to serve the creature more than the Creator.

'Images and pictures were first introduced to the churches, not to be worshipped, but either in the place of books to give instruction to those who could not read, or to excite devotion in the minds of others. How far they ever answered such a purpose is doubtful; but, even granting that this was the case for a time, it soon ceased to be so, and it was found that pictures and images brought into churches darkened *rather than enlightened* the minds of the ignorant---*degraded rather than exalted* the devotion of the worshipper. So that, however they might have been intended to direct man's minds to God, they

ended in turning them from Him to the worship of created things.’ – J. Mendham, *The Seventh General Council, the Second of Nicea*, Introduction, pages iii-vi.”

Satan’s device to attract minds from Christ, Secure God’s Favor

“A religion of eternalists is attractive to the unrenewed in heart. The pomp and ceremony of the Catholic worship has a seductive, bewitching power, by which many are deceived; and they come to look upon the Roman Church as the very gate of heaven. None but those who have planted their feet firmly upon the foundation of truth, and whose hearts are renewed by the Spirit of God, are proof against her influence. Thousands who have not an experimental knowledge of Christ will be led to accept the forms of godliness without the power. Such a religion is just what multitudes desire.

The Abomination of the Confessional. - “The [Roman Catholic] church’s claim to the right to pardon [justify!] leads the Romanists to feel at liberty to sin; and the ordinance of confession [man-made], without which her pardon is not granted, tends also to give license to evil. He who kneels before fallen man, and opens in confession the secret thoughts and imaginations of his heart, is debasing and degrading every noble instinct of his soul. In unfolding the sins of his life to a priest---an erring, sinful mortal, too often corrupted with wine and licentiousness,---his standard of character is lowered, and he is defiled in consequence. His thought of God is degraded to the likeness of fallen humanity, for the priest stands as a representative of God. This degrading confession of man to man is the secret spring from which has flowed much of the evil defiling the world and fitting it for the final destruction. Yet to him who loves self-indulgence, it is more pleasing to confess to a fellow mortal than to open the soul to God. it is more palatable to human nature to do penance than to renounce sin; it easier to mortify the flesh by sackcloth and nettles and galling chains than to crucify fleshly lusts. Heavy is the yoke which the carnal heart is willing to bear than bow to the yoke of Christ [the Decalogue].” - E. G. White, *Great Controversy* (1911 ed), pp. 567-8.

Similarity of Church of Rome with Jewish Church in Christ’s time. –

“There is a striking similarity between the Church of Rome and the Jewish Church at the time of Christ’s first advent. While the Jews *secretly* trampled every principle of the law of God, they were *outwardly rigorous in the observance of its precepts, leading it down with exactions and traditions that made obedience painful and burdensome.* [It was these hundreds, even thousands of man-made laws, commandments, and traditions passed off as God’s laws by the corrupt spiritual guardians of the people to their deceived credulous followers who were denied access to the Holy Scriptures that was “a yoke” “burdensome,” and “grievous”!]”

The Corruption of the Law and the Cross. - “As the *Jews* professed to love the *law*, so do *Romanists* claim to reverence the *cross*. They exalt the *symbol* of Christ’s sufferings, while in their lives they deny Him whom it represents. Papists place crosses upon their churches and upon their garments. Everywhere is seen

the insignia of the cross. Everywhere it is outwardly honored and exalted. But the teachings of Christ are buried beneath a mass of senseless traditions, false interpretations, and rigorous exactions. The Savior's words concerning the bigoted Jews, apply with still greater force to the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church. [See Matt. 23: 1-36]: 'They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.' Matt 23: 4. Conscientious souls are kept in constant terror, fearing the wrath of an offended God, while many of the dignitaries of the church are living in luxury and sensual pleasure." – *Ibid*, p. 568.

NOTE: These excesses of the Roman church outraged the conscientious principles of such godly men as John Wycliffe, John Huss, John Calvin, Charles Zwingli, and Martin Luther, etc.

"In the providence of God he [Luther] decided to visit Rome. *An indulgence had been promised by the pope to all who should ascend on their knees what was known as Pilate's staircase.* Luther was one day performing this act, when suddenly a voice like thunder seemed to say to him, 'The just shall live by faith!' He sprung from his feet in shame and horror, and fled from the scene of his folly. The text never lost its power upon his soul. *From that time he saw more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation, and the necessity of constant faith in the merits of Christ.* His eyes had been opened, and were never again to be closed, to the Satanic delusion of the Papacy. When he turned his face from Rome, he had turned away also in heart, and from that time the separation grew wider, until he severed all connection with the papal church.

After his return from Rome, Luther received at the University at Wittenberg the degree of doctor of divinity. Now he was at liberty to devote himself, as never before, to the Scriptures that he loved. He had taken a solemn vow to study carefully and to preach with fidelity the Word of God, not the sayings and doctrines of the popes, all the days of his life. He was no longer the mere monk or professor, but the authorized herald of the Bible. He had been called as a shepherd to feed the flock [the church] of God, *that were hungering and thirsting for the truth.* He firmly declared that Christians should receive no other doctrines than those which rest on the authority of the Sacred Scriptures. *These words struck at the very foundation of papal supremacy. They contained the vital principle of the Reformation.*

Luther now entered boldly upon his work as a champion of the truth. His voice was heard from the pulpit in earnest, solemn warning. He set before the people the offensive character of sin, and taught them that it is impossible for man, by his own works, to lessen its guilt or evade its punishment. Nothing but repentance toward God and faith in Christ can save the sinner. The *grace* of Christ cannot be purchased; it is a free gift. *He counseled the people not to buy indulgences, but to look in faith to a crucified Redeemer.* He related his own painful experience in vainly seeking by humiliation and penance to secure salvation, and assured his hearers that it was by looking away from himself and believing in Christ Jesus that he found peace and joy.

Luther's teachings attracted the attention of thoughtful minds throughout Germany. From his sermons and writings had issued beams of light which awakened and illuminated thousands. A living faith was taking the place of dead formalism in which the [Roman] church had so long been held. The people were daily losing confidence in

superstitions of Romanism. The barriers of prejudice were giving way. The Word of God, by which Luther tested every doctrine and every claim, was like a two-edged sword, cutting its way to the heart of the people. Everywhere there was an awakening desire for spiritual progress. Everywhere there was such a hungering and thirsting after righteousness as had not been known for ages. The eyes of the people, so long directed to human rights and human mediators, were now turning, in penitence and faith, to Christ and Him crucified.

The Reformer's writings and his doctrine were extending to every nation in Christendom. The work spread to Switzerland and Holland. Copies of his writings found their way to France and Spain. In England his teachings were received as the word of life. To Belgium and Italy also the truth had extended. Thousands were awakening from their deathlike stupor to the joy and hope of a life of faith."- Ibid, *Story of Redemption*, pp. 341, 342.

"The worship of images and relics, the invocation of saints [instead of God the Father in the name of Christ], and the exaltation of the pope are devices of Satan to attract the minds of the people from God and His Son. To accomplish their ruin he endeavors to turn their attention from Him through whom alone they can find salvation [from sin]. He will direct them to *any object that can be substituted* from the One who has said: 'Come to Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest.'" Matt. 11: 28.

Four things Satan is constantly trying to misrepresent: "It is Satan's constant effort to [1] misrepresent the character of God, [2] the nature of sin [3] and the real nature at stake in the great controversy. His sophistries [4] lessen the obligation of the divine law and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God so that they regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed to the Creator; *it is embodied in systems of religion and expressed in modes of worship*. Thus the minds of men are blinded, and Satan secures them as his agents to war against God. By *perverted* conceptions of the divine attributes, heathen nations were led to believe *human sacrifices* necessary to secure the favor deity; and horrible cruelties have been perpetrated under the various forms of idolatry.

"The Roman Catholic Church, uniting the forms of paganism and Christianity, and like paganism, misrepresenting the character of God, has *resorted to practices no less cruel and revolting*. In the days of Rome's supremacy there were *instruments of torture* to compel assent to her doctrines. There was the stake for who would not concede to her claims. There were massacres on a scale that will never be known until revealed in the judgment. Dignitaries of the [Catholic] church studied, under Satan their master, to invent means to cause *the greatest possible torture and not end the life of the victim*. In many cases the infernal process was repeated to the utmost limit of human endurance, until nature have up the struggle, and the sufferer hailed death as a sweet release. ' – Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy* (1911 ed.), p. 569.

(To be continued next month)

