



# "Watchman, what of the night?"

*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12*

## ROMAN CATHOLICISM

When the official summons for Luther to appear before the Diet of Worms reached Wittenburg, his friends were terrified and distressed, and entreated him not to imperil his life. To this Luther replied:

Christ will give me His Spirit to overcome these ministers of error. I despise them during my life; I shall triumph over them by my death. They are busy at Worms about compelling me to retract; but this shall be my retraction: I said formerly that the pope was Christ's vicar, now I assert that he is our Lord's adversary, and the devil's apostle.<sup>1</sup>

This forthright affirmation of truth became the prophetic foundation of Protestantism. Not only was there a protest against the faith, practice, and system of Roman Catholicism, but there was a turning away from it - an aversion for what it stood.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, the Church looked simply for an individual antichrist. But as the centuries passed, the corruptions in the Roman Catholic Church became more and more evident so that the cry was increasingly raised that the various prophetic symbols of Antichrist - the Little Horn, Beast, Babylon, Harlot, Man of Sin, Mystery of Iniquity - fitted Romanism just as a custom-made shoe fits the foot.<sup>2</sup> This conviction that prophecy was being fulfilled in Roman Catholicism gave power to the Reformation.

The turning away from this anti-Christian system, this aversion and repugnance for the corruption of the apostolic faith was to lead to a complete return to primitive faith and godliness. Step by step, the errors of Romanism were discarded. Each new advance of the reformation moved the people of God closer toward a pure

faith. Finally the Advent Movement was raised up by God in 1844. To this Movement God committed the final step out and away from Rome. It was to restore the Law of God to its rightful place, and to call men's attention to the dire consequences of receiving the mark of Papal authority - Sunday observance. There was to be developed in the hearts and minds of God's true children a complete aversion toward Roman Catholicism, and all that it stood for.

In our church school educational program, we prepared a Bible text book for the eighth grade, called - God's Great Plan. Several lessons were devoted to setting forth the interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation in complete harmony with the Protestant viewpoint. One lesson noted Roman Catholicism as "Satan's Masterpiece of Deception." Commenting on "God's Truth Cast Down", the author wrote for our youthful church school children:

"And his power shall be mighty," said the angel, "but not by his own power." No merely human power could do what this little horn would do. It was Satan's masterpiece of cruelty and deception, - of cruelty in destroying God's people, of deception in leading the world to believe false teachings. With fiendish satisfaction Satan has seen this little horn obey his dictates, and make the breach in God's holy law, which only the death of Jesus could restore. He has seen the little horn tear out of God's law the sacred Sabbath, the sign or seal of God's authority, and in its place establish a day of his own appointment as a mark or seal of *his* authority.<sup>3</sup>

The author of this eighth grade text book was careful to differentiate between Roman Catholics as individuals, and Roman Catholicism. In a lesson on the Beast of Revelation 13, she observed - "Although the papal church will be used by Satan to do this terrible work, we must ever remember that not all who belong to it are evil-doers."<sup>4</sup> This we, too, must recognize. A sincere Roman Catholic is a person who believes ignorantly what the church teaches; but Roman Catholicism is the faith, practice, and system of the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1945, the Southern Publishing Association published a book by one of our outstanding Bible Workers, Miss Mary E. Walsh who had been a Catholic. It was

entitled - The Wine of Roman Babylon. Defining the whore of Revelation 17 as "the Roman Catholic Church", Sister Walsh concludes the first chapter by noting - "The examination of the 'cup' which is in the hand of the woman next demands attention. . . . Words cannot too strongly state the importance of every person's need of knowing exactly what is this wine in Babylon's cup."<sup>5</sup> The chapters that follow discuss in detail the doctrines of Roman Catholicism - Infant Baptism, Auricular Confession, the Mass, Immaculate Conception, Immortality of the Soul, and Sunday Sacredness.

In 1942, the same publishing house had released another work by Christian Edwardson - Facts of Faith. This book was a connected compilation of all the documentary evidence possible on the work and teachings of Roman Catholicism, and some of the history of the groups that opposed its power during the period of the 1260 years - 538 A. D. - 1798 A. D. The author quotes Guinness as follows:

"The Romanists themselves shame you in their clear-sighted comprehension of the issues of this question. [Who is Antichrist?] Cardinal Manning says, '*The Catholic Church is either the masterpiece of Satan or the kingdom of the Son of God.*' Cardinal Newman says, '*A sacerdotal order is historically the essence of the Church of Rome; if not divinely appointed, it is doctrinally the essence of antichrist.*' In both these statements the issue is clear, and it is the same. Rome herself admits, openly admits, that *if she is not the very kingdom of Christ, she is that antichrist*. Rome declares she is *one or the other*. She herself propounds and urges this solemn alternative. You shrink from it, do you? *I accept it*. Conscience constrains me. History compels me. . . with the saints of the ages, *I denounce it as the masterpiece of Satan, as the body and soul and essence of antichrist.*"<sup>6</sup>

In 1952 a Bible Conference was held in the Sligo Church in Takoma Park. One topic was - "Antichrist in History and Prophecy." It was ably presented by the late Dr. Frank H. Yost. He stated clearly that "the intent of this paper" is "to see the prophetic beast as Rome, and to concentrate intensively upon Rome in its Papal phase as the Antichrist of long centuries in history: a specifically blasphemous apostasy arising out of general apostasy."<sup>7</sup> The paper fulfilled the objective of the one presenting it. It was carefully documented.

But what is our present attitude and teaching? This is a serious question. We have been warned that "the conviction is gaining ground in the world that Seventh-day Adventists are giving the trumpet an uncertain sound."<sup>8</sup> Let us consider the legal case of Merikay Silver v. PPPA (Pacific Press Publishing Association.) As a friend of Merikay Silver, the secretary to Lawrence Maxwell, editor of the Signs of the Times, Mrs Lorna Tobler submitted an affidavit stating what she believed the teaching of the church to be in regard to an hierarchical structure of church government. In a sworn testimony she declared:

"I have frequently heard the term 'hierarchy' used among Adventist[s] when reference is made to the Roman Catholic system, of which I have always been taught that Adventists strongly disapprove. I have never heard the term 'hierarchy' used to describe Adventist ministers as it is done in the defendants' brief. . . and I find it strange and contradictory to all I have ever learned in Adventist schools and churches."<sup>9</sup>

Using this statement as a point of reference, the legal counsel for the church noted in a second brief dated March 3, 1975 that such concepts as stated by Sister Tobler were "teaching false doctrine." Then they admitted - "It is true that for a period in its history, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had an aversion to Roman Catholicism and especially to the papal form of church government - an aversion shared by virtually all Protestant denominations." But now note the conclusion as stated in this brief:

While, however, Adventist doctrine continues to teach that church government by one man is contrary to the Word of God, it is not good Seventh-day Adventism to express, as Mrs Tobler has done, an aversion to Roman Catholicism as such.

The term "hierarchy" or "hierarchical" has no such adverse connotation in Seventh-day Adventist theology as Mrs Tobler suggests.<sup>10</sup>

Note carefully this legal brief does not say "Roman Catholics as such", but states, "Roman Catholicism as such." Let us review the terms used and their definitions. Roman Catholicism is the faith, practice, or system of the Roman Catholic Church. Aversion is defined as "a feeling of repugnance towards something with

a desire to avoid or turn from it."<sup>11</sup> Do you catch the picture? Has it awakened you? Adventism - that is official General Conference Adventism - no longer has an aversion to Roman Catholicism! What is the wine in the cup of the woman of Revelation 17? According to Mary Walsh's book, it is Infant Baptism, Auricular Confession, the Mass, Immaculate Conception, Immortality of the Soul, and Sunday Observance. And now by legal pronouncement, it is false doctrine if we have an aversion to all of this. May God have mercy upon us, and forgive us for supporting with our tithes and offerings this false theology being erected as the true faith of the remnant. It is time to wake up, and realize that what is being fed to the laity for a tranquilizing influence through our General Church Papers is not what really is, when the chips are down, and the church officials face the courts? How much longer are we going to sleep when the bridegroom is on His way to the wedding?

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Great Controversy, p. 151

<sup>2</sup>See Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, Vol. II, p. 789 by L. E. Froom

<sup>3</sup>Sarah E. Peck, God's Great Plan, p. 217

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 440

<sup>5</sup>Mary E. Walsh, The Wine of Roman Babylon, pp. 11, 18-19

<sup>6</sup>Christian Edwardson, Facts of Faith, pp. 210-211, quoting from Romanism and the Reformation, H. Gratton Guinness, pp. 158-159

<sup>7</sup>Our Firm Foundation, Vol. I, "Antichrist in History and Prophecy", Frank H. Yost, p. 632

<sup>8</sup>Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers, p. 86

<sup>9</sup>Merikay Silver v. PPPA, Tobler AE ¶114, p. 39, lines 4-11

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Church's Second Brief, March 3, 1975, p. 29, lines 24-25, p. 30, lines 11-15, 17-24.

<sup>11</sup>Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, article, "aversion", p. 61.

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CORRECTION - Last month we gave as the Arkansas address, P. O. Box 176, but it should be - Adventist Laymen's Foundation, P. O. Box 178, Lamar, Arkansas, 72846. The postmaster gave us the wrong number and lock combination. Imagine our surprise when we opened the box, and found it loaded with mail for the local Methodist church. We have not become that ecumenical yet! So do note the change in ordering publications only. All other correspondence please direct to Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Miss., P. O. Box 237, Florence, Miss., 39073.