

ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER NO. 147

“The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity”

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The doctrine of the Trinity has been under the crossfire of controversy during much of Christian history. Our Adventist Church has not been excepted from the controversy. In the newly released book *The Trinity: Its Implications for Life and Thought* (Review and Herald, 2002), Prof. Jerry Moon, one of the three authors, offers a most informative historical survey of the gradual evolution of Adventist pioneers from anti-Trinitarian to Trinitarian beliefs. For the benefit of our readers, I have asked Prof. Moon, Head of the Church History Department at the Andrews University Theological Seminary, to summarize his chapters in a couple of essays to be posted in a forthcoming newsletter.

The struggle our Adventist Church has faced in accepting the doctrine of the Trinity, is reflected in the current challenge of this doctrine by an increasing number of Adventists. Surprisingly, recently a significant number of Adventists have emailed me studies defending the historical anti-Trinitarian position of our pioneers. They believe that the gradual acceptance of the Trinity by our Adventist church, represents a movement from the original true teaching of our pioneers to the acceptance of a Catholic heresy formulated by the Catholic ecumenical councils.

Some Adventists disapprove the decision of the General Conference to eliminate those statements denying the divinity of Christ from Uriah Smith’s commentary on *Daniel and the Revelation* in 1929. It is evident that the influence of Uriah Smith is still felt in the Adventist Church, not only for his prophetic interpretations (such as the application of the 666 to the pope’s title *Vicarius Filii Dei*), but also in doctrinal matters.

In response to numerous requests to re-examine the question of the Trinity, I have decided to devote the next three newsletters to this subject, especially since this quarter our Sabbath School Lessons deals with *The Holy Spirit*. In this newsletter I am laying the foundation for the study of the Trinity, by discussing the social, ecclesiastical, and political implica-

tions of this doctrine. We shall see that what we believe about the nature and functioning of the Trinity, affects the authority structure in the family, church, and state. The aim of this essay is to help us appreciate the importance of a balanced understanding of the Trinity. Obviously this essay will not please those Adventists who regard the doctrine of the Trinity as a Catholic heresy.

In the following newsletter I plan to post chapter 16 from the book *The Trinity: Its Implications for Life and Thought*. The title of the chapter is “The Holy Spirit and the Triune Oneness of the Godhead.” The author is Woodrow Whidden, Ph. D., who has been serving for the past 16 years as Professor of Theology and Church History at Andrews University. You will find Whidden’s study very informative and helpful, especially in view of our current Sabbath School Quarterly dealing with the Holy Spirit.

Following Whidden’s study, I plan to post Prof. Jerry Moon’s essay dealing with the historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Adventist church. It will come as a surprise to some to learn that some of our leading pioneers, like Uriah Smith, did not believe in the divinity of Christ. Eventually our Adventist church rejected the Arian view that reduces Christ to a created Being, and adopted the biblical view of the Trinity as three Beings sharing the same divine nature and center of consciousness. Contrary to the criticism of a few traditional Adventists, the adoption of the doctrine of the Trinity, was not influenced by Catholic heretical teachings, but by an honest study of Scripture.

A Review of the *Da Vinci Code*

In planning for future newsletters, my goal is to address current issues from a biblical perspectives. For example, many of you readers have been urging me to review Dan Brown, *Da Vinci Code*, which has already sold over 40 million copies. In fact, in few days the *Da Vinci Code* movie is schedule to be released, with the potential to influence countless more millions around the world. God willing, I plan to read and review this book as soon as possible.

The reviews that I have read indicate that Brown has written a novel filled with conspiracies and heresies. He reduces Christ to a mere human

being who married Mary Magdalene and had children with her. Allegedly, the paramour relationship of Christ with Mary Magdalene was suppressed by the Catholic Church at the Nicean Council in A. D. 325.00.

The popularity of the book, along with the forthcoming movie, reveals the misguided desire of our culture to humanize the divine Son of God to the point where people can use Him as a source of entertainment, instead of accepting His sacrifice as the source of their salvation. This blasphemous attack against Christ, reminds us of the concerted effort of the unholy trinity of the Dragon, Sea Beast, and Land Beast (Revelation 13) to lead the world into idolatrous worship. As Adventists we need to broaden our horizon and recognize how Satan is using, not only the papacy, but also a variety of agencies such as the *Da Vinci Code*, to lead the world away from the true worship of God into various forms of idolatrous worship.

A Response to the Mounting Criticism of Ellen White

Another important issue to be addressed in a forthcoming newsletter, is the mounting criticism of Ellen White. On the web one can find over 40,000 pages, mostly by former Adventists, attacking the inspiration and integrity of Ellen White. Part of the problem has been the failure of our Adventist church to help our members better understand the limitations of prophets in general and of Ellen White in particular. Providentially, this issue has been addressed in a masterful way by Prof. Graeme Bradford, in a newly released book *Prophets Are Human*, published by Signs Publishing House (2004) and distributed in the USA by Pacific Press. The book has been favorably reviewed by numerous Adventist church leaders and scholars.

Prof. Bradford has accepted the invitation to share the highlights of his 20 years of research on Ellen White in a couple of essays to be posted in our newsletter in a couple of months. You should find his material a much-needed resource to deal with both critics and defenders of Ellen White. Bradford has done a superb job in dealing with questions related to Ellen White and her inspiration, that for too long have gone unanswered.

I thought you would appreciate this brief preview of issues that will be addressed in forthcoming newsletters. Feel free to suggest both topics and significant studies to be considered for future newsletters. Rest assured that I will listen to your suggestions.

Before proceeding with our study of the Trinity, there are several important announcements that need to be made.

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FRIENDS OF THE SABBATH CONFERENCE

A special *Friends of the Sabbath Conference* is planned for Sunday, May 28 and Monday, May 29, 2006, in Gloucester, England. The conference is sponsored by non-SDA Sabbatarian groups, most of whom were former members of the Worldwide Church of God. They have invited me several times to speak at similar conferences held with great success in the USA and Australia.

If you live within driving distance from Gloucester (near Bristol), I would strongly encourage you to attend this Sabbath Conference. You will receive fresh information about the Sabbath and enjoy fellowship with other Sabbatharians.

You will learn new things about the Sabbath which usually I do not present at Sabbath Seminars in Adventist churches, because I try to avoid academic lectures on the Sabbath. For example, I will deliver at the conference the powerpoint lecture is entitled FROM SABBATH TO SUNDAY: HOW IT CAME ABOUT? In this lecture I show significant documents found in the Vatican archives and discuss the theological, social, and liturgical methods used by the papacy to lead Christians away from Sabbathkeeping into Sundaykeeping.

In another lecture I will also discuss the New Covenant theology that led the leaders of the Worldwide Church of God to give up the Sabbath

on January 1995. The same New Covenant theology has influenced over 50 Adventist pastors and professors to leave our Adventist church and write books and articles against the Sabbath. These former Adventists have influenced thousand of Adventists in the USA to leave the church. In my lecture I will deal with the fundamental flaws of the New Covenant theology.

Detailed information about the location and the time of *The Friends of the Sabbath Conference* is posted at the following website: <http://www.friendsofsabbath.org.uk/information.htm> In case you have difficulty to surf the web, the location of the conference is: Quedgeley Community Centre, School Lane, Quedgeley, Gloucester GL2 4PJ. For information, feel free to call Robert Taylor at 01452 417116. I look forward to a blessed time together.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AT THE END OF THE NEWSLETTERS

A detailed description of the special offers on goods and services is provided at the end of this newsletter. Here is a brief listing of the announcements that are expanded at the end of this newsletter.

1. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING WEEKEND SEMINARS

for the months of May and June 2006. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

2. NEWLY RELEASED (MAY 1, 2006) CD-ROM WITH ALL OF PROF. JON PAULIEN PUBLICATIONS.

It contains more than a dozen of books and scores of articles written during the past 20 years of research. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

3. SPECIAL “TEN COMMANDMENT DAY” OFFER ON THE NEW DVD ALBUM on *The Number and Mark of the Beast*.

Note that you have few more days until the end of May to order this timely DVD recording at 75% discount. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

4. TAGNET SPECIAL NEW WEB HOSTING OFFER

for Adventist churches and members. TAGnet provides an incredible number of services to our churches and members. For detail information, visit their website at <http://www.netadventist.org> or <http://home.tagnet.org/> You may also call their office 800 - 9TAGNET

5. SPECIAL OFFER ON THE PACKAGE OF ALL MY RECORDINGS CONSISTING OF 5 ALBUMS, including the newly released DVD album on *The Mark and the Number of the Beast*. The special offer is only \$100.00 for the 5 albums, instead of the regular price of \$500.00. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

6. SPECIAL OFFER ON PROF. JON PAULIEN'S 5 ALBUMS with 60 CD DISKS, containing 120 lectures that explain verse by verse the book of Revelation. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

7. HITACHI PROJECTORS: Few days ago HITACHI offered an additional discount to help especially our churches and schools in developing countries. For examples, the special offer for the new **2000 LUMENS PROJECTOR CP-X250 IS ONLY \$1095.00**, instead of the previous SDA price of \$1995.00. See the details at the end of this newsletter or call me at 269-471-2915

8. USED APPLE G4 17" SCREEN LAPTOP AND DESK TOP for sale at a bargain price. I have just upgraded them. For details call me at (269) 471-2915.

9. NEW TOSHIBA TECRA A4 LAPTOP: TOSHIBA is offering to our Adventist churches and schools the new TECRA A4 at 35% discount. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

10. BED AND BREAKFAST IN LONDON offered by a most gracious Adventist couple. For pictures and details visit my website: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/Promotions/BED&BREAKFAST.htm>

11. REMOTE PRESENTER: Special offer on the smallest and most powerful REMOTE powerpoint presenter by Honeywell. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

12. DA-LITE SCREENS for your church at 30% discount. You can locate the screen your church needs and calculate the 30% discount at the DA-LITE website: <http://www.da-lite.com>. See the details at the end of this newsletter.

Editorial Introduction**Samuele Bacchiocchi**

The two essays on “The Saga of the Adventist Papal Tiara” posted in the last two newsletters, have generated an unusual volume of responses. With the exception of a few critical comments from traditional Adventists, the vast majority of comments have been very encouraging. Many have expressed their appreciation especially for the DVD live recording of the lecture on *The Mark and Number of the Beast*. We have been busy mailing this DVD albums to our subscribers in many parts of the world. If you did not order your album yet, you still have few days until the end of May to order it at 75% discount. See details at the end.

A good number of favorable comments came from Adventist pastors in different parts of the world. They confessed that they always felt uncomfortable with the application of the number of the Beast (666) to the pope’s title *Vicarius Filii Dei*, but they had never been able to investigate this interpretation. They greatly appreciated the factual information provided by the two parts essay on “The Saga of the Adventist Papal Tiara,” and especially the live DVD recording of the two and half hour lecture.

Among the many encouraging messages received, the one from Pastor Mike Leno stands out for its frank discussion of the struggles he has faced as a pastor in dealing with the Mark and Number of the Beast. His comments came to me in the form of a newsletter called *GraceNotes* that he sends out to church members and friends. When I received the his last newsletter entitled “The Tale of the Tiara,” I asked Mike permission to post it in our newsletter. The reason is that he interacts with my latest essays on “The Saga of the Adventist Papal Tiara,” by sharing his personal struggles with the traditional Adventist interpretation of 666. I thought you would enjoy reading his short newsletter.

Mike is a bright man with an analytical mind. I came to know him personally when he invited me to present my *Sabbath Seminar* at his churches in Oregon and Georgia. He disagrees with me on such issues as women ordination, but our disagreements do not diminish our mutual respect. Mike is currently serving as the Senior Pastor of the Ontario SDA Church, in California. He was born to Adventist parents. His father, Lloyd

Leno taught music for 25 years at Walla Walla. He studied at Walla Walla, Andrews University Theological Seminary, and Arizona State University. For the past 27 years he has pastored churches in Oregon, Arizona, Georgia, and now Ontario, CA.

While pastoring the Conyers SDA Church near Atlanta, Georgia, Mike began publishing an e-mail newsletter, now known as *GraceNotes*. I find his short newsletters always refreshing to read. They are short, crispy, and to the point. With a captivating style Mike portrays real life situations to illustrate the faith response to the grace of God. To subscribe to *GraceNotes*, go to <<http://mikeleno.net/list/?p=subscribe>>. The web site for all *GraceNotes* articles is <<http://mikeleno.net/>> His email address is <mikeleno@mindspring.com>. Here is Mike's latest *GraceNotes* newsletter for you to enjoy.

“The Tale of the Tiara”

Mike Leno, Senior Pastor

Ontario Seventh-day Adventist Church, California

During our *Revelation Seminar*, my head elder brought out a chart with the Latin words “*Vicarius Filii Dei*” printed vertically. Beside each letter was its Roman numeric value. By totaling the entire column of values he came to the sum of 666. That, he told the class, tells us the identity of the beast power of Revelation.

I cringed as I heard the explanation. I didn't say anything in front of the class, a mixed group of church members and visitors from the community, but after the session was over, I privately suggested that there were better ways of finding the identity of Revelation's beast power. The process of making letters into numbers seemed to me a rather risky method of Bible interpretation, because other names such as Ellen Gould White, have been manipulated to add up to 666. I feel that the beast power is more easily recognized by its spiritual characteristics. He remained resolute in his approach and I didn't argue. After all, I was the new young pastor, not even thirty years old, and he was a retired physician who had settled in this small Oregon coastal town to build up a church. He had almost single-handedly created a church where none existed before. So what could I know?

That would not be the only occasion to cringe during my initiation to this new form of evangelism called *Revelation Seminars*. I went into the series thinking it would be a good way to teach people the book of Revelation. I even started preparing for each class by studying the Biblical text and consulting various scholarly resources. Then I attempted to apply this information to the lesson each evening. I soon gave up this sort of preparation because, as I was quick to learn, *Revelation Seminars* had very little to do with the actual book of Revelation. The written lessons simply used terminology from Revelation in order to jump into doctrinal subjects.

Now, over twenty years later some things have changed. For one thing, *Revelation Seminars* are now more likely to deal with the book of Revelation. Some still use the text as a pretext to jump into doctrinal subjects, but even that can be helpful when the text and context of Revelation are included. But some things have not changed, such as the disagreement over 666.

Bacchiocchi's Newsletter

I was amused and a little distressed to read the recent e-mail newsletters on "The Saga of the Adventist Papal Tiara" from Dr. Samuel Bacchiocchi. "Brother Sam" as he likes to be called, produces an incredible amount of writing and always with scholarly thoroughness. Listening to him as well as reading him makes me think of drinking from Niagara Falls.

Sam became well-known in Adventist circles thirty years ago when he began taking speaking appointments explaining his Sabbath/Sunday research done at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He remains the only non-Catholic to, not only complete a doctorate at that institution, but also to receive a gold medal from Pope Paul VI for earning the academic distinction of *summa cum laude*. And that's all the more incredible when you consider that his published dissertation challenges prevailing Catholic and Protestant scholarly views of the origin of Sunday. Not surprisingly, some Catholic authorities remain less than accommodating to the existence of Bacchiocchi's writings.

I appreciate Brother Sam's willingness to crawl out on an intellectual limb and say what he thinks. Unfortunately he takes flack from Adventist conservatives because he demands Biblical evidence rather than conservative tradition to substantiate his beliefs. And he gets flack from Adventist liberals because he identifies with conservative causes in such areas as music and the role of women in the church. For my part, I will always applaud his tenacious regard for Biblical authority. I may disagree with him on occasion, especially about the role of women in the church, but I have little sympathy with those who would vilify him for either conservative or liberal reasons. Whatever else you may think about Brother Sam, you cannot doubt his fidelity to the Bible as our rule of faith and practice.

The Tale of the Papal Tiara

Now Brother Sam has stuck his neck out once more; this time by explaining something that Adventist authorities have known since the early 1900s and Adventist scholars have openly acknowledged for at least twenty-five years. He has dared to expose the fact that finding the meaning of 666 by adding up the values of letters in a supposed title of the pope, remains a patently irresponsible way of interpreting the Bible. As Bacchiocchi points out in detail, the evidence is overwhelming. Not only is the traditional way of calculating 666 from a supposed title for the Pope risky, it's downright fraudulent. He documents the origin of this interpretation, which you can read for yourself on his web site http://www.biblicalpherspectives.com/endtimeissues/et_146.htm When you go to the web site, click on the NEWSLETTERS button and you can read all the 146 newsletters he has posted, including the latest ones on the mark and Number of the Beast. You will find these and many other articles are well worth reading.

With the help of Brother Sam's research, here are a few lowlights from the tale of the papal tiara. One of our pioneers in prophetic interpretation, Uriah Smith, included the numerological explanation of 666 in an article in *The Review and Herald* and in his book *Daniel and the Revelation*. Consequently it became a very popular explanation and, although never an official teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, gained apparent validity from its use by many Adventist evangelists and authors.

But Smith's suppositions and sources proved to be unreliable. In fact, investigations conducted at the Vatican on two separate occasions yielded not a shred of evidence that the papa tiaras or miters ever had the words "*Vicarius Filii Dei*" inscribed on them." For example, in 1905 Chas T. Everson, an Adventist missionary serving in Italy somehow gained access to the very dressing room of the pope where some tiaras are kept. He sent to the General Conference stunning pictures he had taken of the papal crowns, but none of them had the notorious inscription. At this point the story takes a strange twist. An artist modified one of the pictures, inscribing on it the words *Vicarius Filii Dei*. Southern Publishing then used the modified picture as an illustration in a revised edition of Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation*.

The Picture of the Fraudulent Tiara

After reading Bacchiocchi's expose of the fake tiara I remembered I had actually seen a picture of it somewhere. Being curious, I dug out my tattered copy of Uriah Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation*. This particular edition was published by Pacific Press, which at the time had its main offices in Mountain View California. The copyright date of this edition is indicated as 1907 by Mrs. Uriah Smith. As I leafed through its pages I came across the offending picture on page 699 (too bad it couldn't have been 666). I have included a scan of this picture along with this article at <http://mikeleno.net>. The picture reveals a jeweled papal crown with a cross on top and the words VICARIVS FILII DEI across its front. The caption below the picture says "THE POPE'S TIARA." Another caption at the bottom of the same page says, "FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN THE VATICAN MUSEUM."

Apparently two of our publishing houses, Southern Publishing and Pacific Press, whether knowingly or unknowingly, participated in an outright fraud. 100 years later this would all be a tempest in a teapot, and a very old one at that, were it not for the fact that many of us have a hard time changing our minds. When something that we once considered to be based on unassailable evidence turns out to be wrong, we want to hide our heads in the sand rather than face the truth. Some of us, however, go a little further than that.

An Example of Hate Mail

When I wrote to Brother Sam about the opposition he was getting over the papal tiara story, he wrote back saying, “I wish you could read the hate mail I’m receiving.” He later sent me the following example from “an angry” Adventist who wrote:

“You truly are a good Jesuit and are doing the job you have taken an oath to do. Know this, God knows you to. You could stand on a stack of your bibles and swear all day long that you were not a Jesuit and I would not believe you. If we both get to heaven then and only then would I believe you are not one. . .

“Remove me from your email list, NOW. But you go ahead to steal all those that are willing to listen to you and your serpent tongue, for neither you nor they have the willingness to uphold the old landmarks and standards. . . Like I say you’re a good Jesuit and should have nothing to fear from their poison, knives, guns etc. Just God.”

The character of such insulting writing remains self-evident. Ironically however, even some relatively thoughtful people will use a lack of evidence as evidence to support their position. Some have suggested, for example, that the Catholic Church must have hidden the evidence of a papal tiaras with the pope’s title on it. And this supposition then gives reason to hang onto an idea that never had sufficient supporting evidence in the first place. It’s the old proof of conspiracy reasoning. If no evidence of a conspiracy exists, then that is proof that one exists! Such circularity hurts our credibility as well as our understanding of scripture.

But suppose the picture was authentic? Suppose, for example, that the good folks at Pacific Press searched their archives and found irrefutable evidence that the picture was not faked and that the papal tiara in Rome really did appear the way it was printed in *Daniel and the Revelation*? That would indeed be earthshaking. But so what? What would be the consequence of that revelation? First, those of us who care about evidence would immediately change our minds. We would retract everything we said about the picture being a fraud, and happily so.

But, and here's the real punch line to the story, it would not change the fact that identifying the beast power through numerology remains a faulty method of biblical interpretation. It doesn't really matter what amazing things we might discover with this method. It fails to measure up to the standards of good methodology for prophetic interpretation. It remains on the level of horoscopes and palm reading because in using it, people tend to see what they are looking for.

The Allegation of Bacchiocchi's Jesuit Identity

As for the supposed Jesuit identity of Brother Sam, that theory would be hysterically funny if it weren't so hurtful. Sadly he has endured such idiocy for 30 years for no reason other than some don't like what he says. About 24 years ago I was privileged to host Dr. Bacchiocchi at my home in Springfield, Oregon. I had arranged a radio interview for him in the nearby city of Eugene. During the years since, I have invited him to speak at several churches where I served as pastor. He has always been a blessing and sought to build up the church through Biblical study. He openly acknowledges that he is fallible human being with the same inherent tendency to bias that we all have. But I have also observed a willingness to learn and grow that we would all do well to emulate. He remains one of many scholars I have known over the years and continue to admire and learn from.

The Real Issue

But ultimately, Dr. Bacchiocchi is not the issue here; and neither are your ideas or mine. The big issue here is whether we will let the Bible be its own guide to interpretation. Will we seek to be ever more faithful to what the Bible is and says rather than impose our ideas and expectations on it? That process remains a lot more difficult than we often imagine. It is a lot easier to approach the Bible with an idea of how it should have been written and what the nature of inspired writings should be rather than let the nature of the Bible itself teach us those things. And when we approach Revelation, we should find the meaning of its numbers and symbolic language within the context of scripture.

Perhaps Paul's experience in Berea best illustrates the lesson in all this. He had just come from Thessalonica where his opponents had stirred

up a mob and made unfounded accusations based on partial truths. This made ministry impossible there so he left. But Acts 17:11 notes: “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”

Keep in mind that these folk could not stop by their local Berean Book Store and pick up the latest paperback edition of the Bible complete with cross references and maps. Their “Bible” was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which we call the Old Testament. Furthermore, these scriptures only existed in the form of scrolls and were likely housed in a synagogue. And that implies that a rabbi must have allowed people access to the scrolls and even studied with them every day. Knowing how modern rabbis and synagogues protect their precious scrolls, you can imagine what an unusual and intentional act this was to make sure Paul’s message was biblically validated. But people who care about evidence for their faith are willing to go out of their way for the sake of truth. And they don’t let tradition stop them.

But there is another aspect to this that I hope we can learn. And that is the practice of disagreeing without being disagreeable—being when necessary, the loyal opposition. We will not all agree on everything. As I am fond of telling my members, if we both think exactly alike, one of us is unnecessary.

Regarding the issue at hand, I suspect that no amount of evidence will convince everyone that the pope never had a tiara with the notorious title on it. And some people will continue to use a numerological approach to interpreting 666. If you are one of those people, I will continue to vigorously oppose what you say, but at the same time defend your right to say it. I will be your loyal opposition.

In the final analysis, what we have in common is far more important than how we differ on minor details. And what we have in common is most importantly this: we are all sinners, desperately in need of a Savior. And our Savior has provided salvation as a gift of grace, which we receive by faith. On that we should take our stand.

“The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity”**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.****Retired Professor of Theology and Church History,
Andrews University**

The doctrine of the Trinity was really the first doctrine that captivated the early church, causing an enormous investment of time and money. The first seven ecumenical councils from Nicea in 325 to Constantinople in 687, were convened mostly to define and refine the church position on the nature and relationship among the three members of the Trinity. Somebody said that the roads were filled with bishops travelling to attend councils addressing trinitarian questions.

In a very real sense, it was on the doctrinal issues of the Trinity that early church leaders cut their intellectual teeth. The matter was forced upon them by the need to explain to Greek thinkers how the three Beings of the Godhead can be defined and worshipped as one God. It is unfortunate that those apologetic endeavors often resulted in heretical anti-trinitarian teachings that have plagued Christianity until our time. In fact, most of today’s anti-trinitarian heresies found in such religious movements as the Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Unitarians, and liberal theologians, trace their roots to the early church.

NEW CHALLENGES TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

Besides the survival of the historic anti-trinitarian heresies, we are facing today new challenges to the doctrine of the Trinity, coming from such contemporary theologies as liberation theology and feminism.

Liberation Theology

In its more radical forms, liberation theology views the doctrine of the Trinity as part of the doctrinal system that has been used to justify the oppression and exploitation of the masses. It alleges that the historic formulation of the doctrine, with God the Father as the supreme Ruler of the universe, has fostered a hierarchical system where secular and religious leaders emulate the role of God by dominating and oppressing the masses.

Feminism

Feminism has been even more outspoken in its objections to the doctrine of the Trinity. Some feminists view the concepts of “Father” and “Son” as inherently sexist, and largely responsible for male domination in the church and society. Thus, they are clamoring for a resymbolization of the Trinity, based on impersonal or feminine categories.

To bring about a resymbolization of the Trinity, feminist theologians are employing several methods. Some are proposing dropping the personal terms for God, adopting instead nonpersonal or suprapersonal ones, such as “Fire, Light, Almighty, Divine Providence, Heavenly Parent, Cosmic Benefactor, Source of Sustenance.”

Donald Bloesch notes that a growing number of feminists, “object to calling Christ ‘Lord’ and ‘Master,’ since these terms reflect a patriarchal vision. They offer instead the alternatives ‘Companion’ and ‘Friend,’ which denote a relationship of mutual fellowship and equality rather than superordination and subordination.” (Donald G. Bloesch, *Is the Bible Sexist?* 1982, p. 56). These attempts to redefine the Trinity by means of generic, unisex titles, reduces the doctrine to functional categories, thus, eliminating the distinction of persons taught in the Bible.

New Age Movement

The doctrine of the Trinity is also challenged by such new forms of religion as the New Age Movement, which has a pantheistic view of God. Humans are to be channels of divine power, but the source of this power is not limited to the Trinity. Other divine sources are available, especially to those belonging to non-Christian religions. New Agers openly reject any attempt to make the Trinity the exclusive and normative view of God.

The Religion of the Father Alone

In a more subtle way, the doctrine of the Trinity suffers also from the devotion given by some Christians to one member of the Trinity at the exclusion of the other two. There is, for example, *the Religion of the Father Alone*, practiced by those Christians who believe that God the Father is the central figure of the Trinity. He is the Almighty Ruler who

decides the life or death destiny of every person. Therefore, Christians must submit themselves to Him without questioning as minors. “Such an understanding,” as Catholic theologian Leonardo Boff points out, “can lead Christians to feel resigned to their misery and to nourish a spirit of submission to those in charge, to the pope and the bishops, with no creativity. God is certainly the Father, but the Father of the Son, who, together with the Holy Spirit, lives in communion and equality.” (Leonard Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, 2000, p. 9).

Shortly we shall see that the monarchical conception of the Trinity is reflected especially in the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church, where the pope acts as God’s official representative on earth, invested with special powers to govern the church. The outcome of this monarchical practice is the passive submission of believers who fail to exercise their spiritual gifts within the body of Christ. By contrast, the biblical view of the Trinity as perfect communion of the Three, gives rise to a community of believers with a variety of gifts that are valued and exercised as expressing the communion of the Trinity itself.

The Religion of Christ Alone

There is also the *Religion of Christ Alone*, practiced by those Christians who make Christ the central figure of their beliefs and worship. There are various churches that call themselves “Church of Christ” or “Church of Jesus Christ.” These churches largely ignore the Old Testament which they associate with the revelation of God the Father—a despotic God unattractive to them. Instead, they use primarily the New Testament, because they believe it contains the superior revelation of Jesus Christ—a merciful and loving God with whom they can identify.

Religions that focus primarily on God the Son, ignoring God the Father, cause Christians to lose sight of the fact that the Father and the Son are one (John 10:30). We cannot worship One without the Other, because Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are an indissoluble unity, jointly responsible for our creation, redemption, and final restoration. Love characterizes just as much the nature of the Father as that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. John explicitly tells us that “love comes from God . . . because God is love” (1 John 4:7). Such love is manifested in our life when we love one another (1 John 4:12).

The Religion of the Holy Spirit Alone

Pentecostal and charismatic churches focus primarily on the figure of the Holy Spirit, largely ignoring the work of the Father and the Son. What is most important for them is the manifestation of the power of the Spirit in their lives through prayer, speaking in tongues, healing, and emotional outbursts. The worship experience of the Spirit takes precedence over the worship of the Father and the Son. The impressions attributed to the Spirit are more important than God's revelation in His Word.

The problem with charismatic Christians is their failure to recognize that the Holy Spirit always acts in harmony with the Father and the Son. The Spirit is always the Spirit of the Son, sent by the Father to continue Christ's work on behalf of believers. The Holy Spirit cannot be worshipped apart from the Father and the Son. The three must be integrated in our thinking and living, because they work together for our salvation and restoration.

The preceding observations suffice to show that the doctrine of the Trinity is attacked today in different ways, not only by those who openly reject the divinity of the Son or Holy Spirit (As in the case of some Adventist pioneers), but also by those who focus on one of its member at the exclusion of the other two. If all the members of the Trinity are equally God in their being, power, and holiness, then all three must be properly recognized in our beliefs and worship.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

Some Christians question the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity because no one can explain how the three Beings of the Godhead can be one. They reason that if no one can explain this mystery, then it cannot be that important after all. Such reasoning ignores that the Christian faith is based on mysteries. The creation of the universe, the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, the final resurrection and translation of believers, are all mysteries that defy rational explanations. Yet, to reject them because they cannot be rationally explained, means to empty the Christian faith of meaning, value, and hope. The importance of a Christian doctrine is determined not by its rationality, but by its relevancy for the Christian message, mission, and lifestyle.

A Distinguishing Feature of Christianity

A major reason for the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity is its significance for the uniqueness of Christianity. This doctrine sets Christianity apart from all other religions. On the one hand, it clearly distinguishes Christianity from the strongly monotheistic religions such as Judaism and Islam. On the other hand, it separates Christianity from polytheistic and pantheistic religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism.

Traditionally, Christians have seen this distinction as the reason for their evangelistic outreach to non-Christians. Bringing to them the knowledge of Jesus Christ was seen as indispensable for their salvation. In recent times, however, Christians are becoming increasingly tolerant toward non-Christians. They are promoting “interfaith dialogue” with people of non-Christian religions. The strategy is to minimize the differences and maximize the similarities. The reasoning seems to be that “if you cannot beat them, join them.”

An example is the attempt of the Pope and other Christian leaders to build a partnership with the Muslims by acknowledging their God, Allah, as being essentially the same as the God of biblical revelation. This belief is clearly expressed in the new official *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which speaks of the new Catholic relationship with the Muslims in these terms: “The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994, Paragraph 841).

The Catechism continues affirming that “The Church has also a high regard for the Muslims. They worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has also spoken to men. They strive to submit themselves without reserve to the hidden decrees of God, just as Abraham submitted himself to God’s plan, whose faith Muslims eagerly link to their own.” Ibid.

Are the Koranic God and the Biblical God the Same?

Can the unitarian view of the Koranic God (“There is only one God, Allah, and Muhammad, his prophet”), be legitimately reconciled with the trinitarian view of the biblical God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? The answer is “No!” The two Gods are different, not only in numbers, but also in nature and character. The God of the Bible is a triune Being because HE IS LOVE. Love cannot be exercised in isolation. You cannot be all-loving and be alone at the same time. Love is manifested in relationships. Augustine expressed this truth eloquently, when he said: “*Ubi amor, ibi trinitas*—Where there love, there is a trinity.” By that he meant, that where there is love, there is a lover, a beloved, and a spirit of love.

By contrast the god of the Koran is “ONE,” because he is SELF-CENTERED, living in solitary aloofness, “far above” and beyond any intimate relationship. The notion of a triune God is blasphemous to Muslims, because the Koran teaches: “They do blaspheme who say: God is one of three in a Trinity, for there is no God except One God” (Surah 5:76). Islam’s teaching of the absolute Oneness of God derives from gnostic sects that lived in Saudi Arabia at the time of Muhammad.

Gnostic Origin of the Koranic God

Gnostics believed that God is transcendent, living in eternal aloofness, with no direct contact with the material world which is evil. For this reason they rejected the incarnation of the Son of God (1 John 4:1-2), just as the Moslem do. By contrast, the God of biblical revelation consists of three Beings who live in eternal fellowship. He is both transcendent and immanent, beyond and within His creation. He humbled himself to the point of becoming part of his created order through the incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ. By becoming part of His created order, God sanctified humanity. The Sonship of Jesus in the Bible, is a testimony of divine love—a love that transcends human understanding.

Those who minimize the uniqueness of the doctrine of the Trinity, by accepting the gods of other religions as being similar to the biblical God, are undermining the Christian identity and mission. They are facilitating

the growing missionary efforts of non-Christian religions, particularly of the Muslims. Their number in the USA now exceed the number of Episcopalians and they are constantly growing.

The increasing evangelization of Christians by those of non-trinitarian religions, makes it imperative today to reaffirm the biblical revelation of God, consisting of three Beings, equally divine and yet inseparably one. This unique doctrine is of great importance because, as we shall now see, it is intimately connected with the message of salvation.

Trinity and the Message of Salvation

The doctrine of the Trinity is of great importance because it affects the formulation of other doctrines. Theology is organic and the alteration of one doctrine affects the formulation of other doctrines. For example, the doctrine of the Trinity is intimately connected with the biblical message of salvation. In the Bible salvation, involving forgiveness of sins and the reception of new life, is a divine provision made possible through the incarnation of the Son of God, who took on human form without giving up His deity. In His incarnate form Christ bore the sins of humans as their substitute. On the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice, God can forgive our sins and the Holy Spirit can empower us to live a new life (Rom 8:1-4).

If the doctrine of the Trinity is not true, then the biblical message of salvation must be radically changed. Instead of a voluntary self-sacrifice by a member of the Godhead, the atonement becomes an unfair and unethical treatment of Jesus by God, who punished His own Son for something he did not do. Conversely, in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, the atonement is not an unfair treatment of Jesus, but God's self-sacrificial action to meet the demands of His justice.

A correct understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity, can clarify some popular misconceptions about God and His dealings with humans. For example, some believe that God is a stern judge who wants to punish us because we are sinners. But Jesus is a loving Savior, who saves us from God, the righteous judge, who wants to punish us. But a correct understanding of the Trinity teaches us that "God was in Christ, reconciling

the world unto himself” (2 Cor 5:19). This means that the Father shared vicariously the agony of the death of His Son, and is actively involved in our salvation.

The Trinity enshrines truths that affect the way we think about God, people, and the world. This point becomes clearer as we consider now the practical implications of the Trinity for our religious, political, social systems.

THE TRINITY AS A MODEL FOR RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The importance of the doctrine of the Trinity is indicated especially by its impact on religious, social, and political institutions. The exercise of power in most societies generally reflects the prevailing understanding of how God rules the universe. The tendency has been to represent God as the only all-powerful ONE, who rules the world as a monarch. The usual conclusion has been that those who wield power on earth, are to act as God’s natural representatives.

Much of the medieval struggle between church and state revolved around the so-called Divine Rights of Kings. Kings claimed to be invested by God with the right to rule the people as His representative. The Popes rejected such a claim, affirming instead that they were the only official representatives of God on earth. Popes compared themselves to the Sun, describing kings as the Moon. Just as the Moon receives her light from the Sun, so kings were to receive their power and authority from the Pope. The result was a constant struggle for supremacy between popes and emperors.

The struggle has been inspired by misconception of the Father’s role within the Trinity. God was envisioned, not as the perfect communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but as the sole Ruler of the universe, wielding all the power without questioning by any one. This monarchical conception of God has served to justify authoritarianism in religion, totalitarianism in politics, and machismo in the family.

Authoritarianism in Church Government

Historically, the autocratic form of church government has been inspired by the vision of God as the almighty sole Ruler of the universe, rather than the biblical conception of God as the communion of three equal Beings. “Even today,” writes Leonardo Boff, “it is said that just as there is one God, just as there is one Christ, so there ought to exist on earth one sole official representative of Christ—the pope for the whole church, the bishop for the diocese, the pastor for the parish, and the coordinator for the base community. A great deal of power is thereby being concentrated in a single figure. In relating to others such persons inevitably assume a paternalistic attitude and a handout mindset.

“Those wielding power feel invested with huge responsibility, for they must represent God before others, wielding this power for the sake of others and for their eternal salvation. . . . They cease to recognize and value the intelligence of the people, their experience of faith, their ability to evangelize and their character as representing God and Christ. This monarchical practice is likely to give rise to authoritarianism matched by subservience. There is a shift from a church-as-communion-of-believers, all equal and sharing responsibilities, to a church-as-society, with unequal distribution of functions and tasks” (Ibid., p. 66).

Boff continues urging, especially his own Catholic church, to overcome the historic concentration of power in few hands, by recapturing the biblical vision of the Trinity as the perfect communion of the divine Three, making them one God. From this vision will emerge a community oriented church, where “each one has his or her own characteristics and gifts, but all live for the good of all. . . . Each one, in so far as he or she creates community and becomes part of that community, represents the Blessed Trinity. In the Trinity what unites the divine Three is the communion among them and the complete self-giving of one person to the others. The same thing ought to happen in the church. It is by overcoming the centralization of power and distributing among all, that dynamic unity emerges, reflecting trinitarian union.” (Ibid., p. 66).

The problem of the concentration of power in few hands, exists not only the Catholic church, but in other Christian churches as well. As de-

nominations become established there is the tendency for the governing power to become centralized in the hands of few leaders, who run the church with only a token lay representation. Thus, it is imperative for all churches to recover the biblical vision of the Godhead as the perfect communion of three Beings acting in unison. Such a vision can encourage Christians to strive for a more egalitarian, democratic, pluralistic, and family-oriented church and society, where collaboration, union, equality, and good relationships prevail in the family, church, and society.

Totalitarianism in Politics

The monarchical view of God has influenced, not only authoritarianism in church government, but also totalitarianism in politics. As mentioned earlier, during the middle ages kings and emperors claimed to have been invested by God to rule the people. The reasoning was that just as there is one God in heaven who alone governs the world, without explaining anything to anyone, so there must be rulers on earth who act like the God in heaven.

The outcome of this misconception of the Trinity has been, as Boff explains, “Political totalitarianism which has created arrogance among the leaders and submission among the led. Dictators claim to know what is best for the people. They want to exercise freedom; everyone else must accept their orders and obey. Most countries are heir to such an understanding of power. It has been thrust into people’s head. That is why it is hard to accept democracy in which everyone exercises freedom and all are children of God.” (Ibid., pp. 7-8).

Boff’s insightful observations can help us understand why the ongoing efforts of the American government to establish a democratic form of government in Iraq, holds little hope of success. Why? Simply because the Iraqis are Muslims who believe in a rigid monotheism. Their god, Allah, is not a perfect communion of the three equal Beings, but a sole despotic Ruler who teaches the use of the sword to promote Islam. Moslem rulers are expected to imitate Allah by ruling the people with an iron fist. Sooner or later the Iraqis are going to be governed again by an autocratic regime, simply because such a regime is inspired and sanctioned by their rigid monotheism.

Moslem Totalitarianism

It is worth noting that not a single strong Moslem country has embraced democracy during the past fourteen centuries. Today, like in the past, strict Moslem countries are governed by royal families, military dictators, or fanatical clerics, all of whom deprive their people of certain fundamental liberties. The only hope for democracy to flourish in Iraq or in any other strict Moslem country, is for the people to repudiate their rigid monotheism which sanctions their totalitarian regimes, and embrace instead the biblical view of God as the perfect communion of three equal Beings. It is unlikely that the American government will ever take on such a bold reeducational project, which is bound to stir up the ire of Moslem leaders around the world.

Democracy as a New Vision of God

Western democratic governments are a rather late development of the past two centuries. During most of human history people have been governed by emperors, pharaohs, kings, princes, and popes, who viewed themselves as God's representatives on earth. In some instances Rulers wanted to be worshipped as gods. For examples, several Roman emperors pushed the "emperor cult," expecting the people to worship them as "gods." John the Revelator was exiled to Patmos for refusing to worship Domitian as "*Dominus and Deus*—Lord and God." Concerned over the threat posed by the emperor worship upon the Christians, John warns his fellow believers against the worship of the Beast and its image—a threat that will find an unprecedented fulfilment at the end.

The evolution which has taken place in Western countries from totalitarian to democratic forms of government, appears to have been partly inspired by the evolution in the concept of God. During the Middle Ages Christians perceived God as a transcendent Being "beyond us," who rules the universe. People were concerned to honor the infinite and omnipotent Ruler of the universe, rather than to seek personal enjoyment. They lived to serve God in the persons of their religious and political leaders, who acted as representatives of the Ruler of the Universe.

The medieval conception of “God beyond us” was gradually replaced with the view of “God for us” beginning with the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. The “distance” between God and the believer was gradually shortened. By emphasizing the priesthood of all believers who have direct access to God, the Reformation helped people to see God as a “kind” Being, “for us” and close to us, more than “above us.”

The medieval vision of God as an exacting, unapproachable Ruler, was gradually replaced by that of a loving God eager to save all those who accept the reconciliation provided through the atoning sacrifice of His Son. Though God was still recognized as above and beyond, the shift in focus was on the loving Savior whom the believers could approach directly and personally.

The new vision of God as a loving communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, encouraged a much greater participation of Christians in the religious and political life. New music was composed, new worship styles were developed, new forms of democratic government gradually came into existence. The priesthood of all the believers in the church was interpreted as a mandate for the participation of all citizens in the social-political institutions of the state.

Machismo in the Family

The understanding of God as a male who controls everything and hold all power for Himself, has fostered male domination in macho-oriented cultures. Believing to be acting in the name of God, the man views himself as the “boss” and “owner” of his wife and children. This culture has hardened family relationships, preventing them to express tenderness especially toward women, whose function is to serve men.

This macho-culture ignores that God has a Son and lives with the Holy Spirit in perfect communion and equality. The rediscovery of the biblical vision of the Godhead, living as equal in perfect communion, can undermine the macho mentality that is so harmful to family relationships. Believing in the Trinity, as the perfect communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a much needed corrective in the family, church, and society. It can provide a powerful inspiration to live lovingly in a world where pride and selfishness prevail.

Conclusion

The preceding observations have served to highlight the importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for our religious and socio-political life. We have seen that the belief in God as a perfect communion of Three, sets Christianity apart from all other religions. It affects the formulation of other doctrines, especially the message of salvation. It helps us to accept the atonement, not as an unfair treatment of Jesus, but as God's self-sacrificial action to meet the demands of His justice. Finally, we have seen that the biblical vision of the Trinity can serve as a model for our religious, political, and social institutions.

In the next newsletter Prof. Woodrow Whidden will lead us in a Bible study of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. If you wish to have access to his study immediately, to help you in studying or teaching the Sabbath School, you can order through your ABC the book *The Trinity: Its Implications for Life and Thought* (Review and Herald, 2002). The nationwide toll free number of the ABC is 800-876-9222.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SERVICES AND PRODUCTS**UPCOMING WEEKEND SEMINARS**

As a service to our subscribers, I am listing the date and the location of the upcoming seminars for the months of May and June 2006. I wish to extend my personal, warm invitation to all who are able to attend one of the followings rallies.

MAY 5-6: ALBANY SDA CHURCH - NEW YORK

Location: 298 st. Agnes Highway, Cohoes, New York 12047.
For information call Pastor Don Bozarth at (607) 397-1848.

MAY 12-13: CHICAGO: HINSDALE SDA CHURCH

Location: 201 N. Oak Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521.
For information call Pastor Ante Geroncic at (630) 730-3075 or (630) 323-0182.

MAY 19-20: LONDON - HOLCOMBE ROAD SDA CHURCH

Location: John Loughborough School, Holcombe Road, Tottenham, London, England. For information call Pastor Augustus Lawrence at 01923 894355.

MAY 26-27: LONDON -PLAISTOW SDA CHURCH

Location: 97 St. Anthonys Road, Forest Gate, London E7 9QB, England
For information call Pastor Felix McPherson at 020 8524 9402

MAY 28-29: GLOUCHESTER - FRIENDS OF THE SABBATH

Location: The Conference will take place at the Quedgeley Community Centre, School Lane, Quedgeley, Gloucester GL2 4PJ, England.
For directions, registration, and general information visit the website: <http://www.friendsofsabbath.org.uk/taylor.pdf> or call Robert Taylor at 01452 417116

JUNE 2-3: LONDON- BRIXTON SDA CHURCH

Location: Santley Street, Clapham, London SW4 7QG, England
For information call Pastor Hamilton Williams at 020 8670 5255

JUNE 9-10: NEW YORK CITY - PATCHOGUE SDA CHURCH

Location: 184 North Ocean Avenue, Patchogue, NY 11772
For information call Pastor Daniel Zabaleta at (914) 681 1842.

JUNE 16-17: LOS ANGELES - TEMPLE CITY SDA CHURCH

Location: 9664 East Broadway, Temple City, CA 91780.
For information call Pastor Benjamin Del Pozo at (626) 374-9984 or (626) 292-1305.

NEWLY RELEASED (MAY 1, 2006) CD-ROM WITH ALL OF PROF. JON PAULIEN PUBLICATIONS.

Prof. Jon Paulien is one of the most respected Adventist scholars. Besides serving as the chairman of the New Testament at Andrews University Theological Seminary, he writes and lectures extensively in many parts of the world.

Until now Prof. Paulien books and articles were available only in a printed form, often unavailable at local ABC stores. In view of my

indebtedness to Prof. Paulien's scholarship, I have offered to help him to place all of his books and articles on a CD disk. This makes it possible with the ACROBAT global search, to locate immediately what he has written on biblical texts or current topics.

The new CD-ROM, released on May 1, 2006, contains more than a dozen of books and scores of articles written by Prof. Paulien during the past 20 years of research. This new CD-ROM supersedes the previous one that contained less than half of his publications. The reason for this delay is the time it took to obtain permission from the publishers to use Prof. Paulien's publications for this recording.

You will find in this collection a priceless resource to enrich your understanding and experience of biblical truths. Prof. Paulien examines fundamental biblical beliefs in a profound and yet popular way. He is a recognized expert on the book of Revelation. Several of his books will help you to unlock the secrets of Revelation.

The special introductory offer of the newly released CD-ROM ALBUM with all of Prof. Paulien books and articles is only \$35.00 instead of the regular price of \$50.00. The price includes the airmailing expenses to any overseas destination. If you purchased the previous limited version of his publications, your special price is only \$20.00, mailing expenses included. Call us at (269) 471-2915 for your special price or contact us by email at <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com>

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SPECIAL TEN COMMANDMENTS DAY OFFER ON THE NEW DVD ALBUM ON THE MARK AND NUMBER OF THE BEAST

In occasion of TEN COMMANDMENTS DAY I decided to offer **TWO DVD albums on The Mark and Number of the Beast, for only \$50.00, (that is \$25.00 each), airmailing expenses included**, instead of the regular price of \$200.00 (that is \$100.00 each). This special offer will last the whole month of May 2006.

The reason for offering **TWO DVD albums for only \$50.00**, is to provide you with one album for your personal use and one for witnessing. At a time when Christian leaders are promoting the Ten Commandments, while claiming at the same time that the Sabbath Commandment is part of the OT Jewish laws nailed to the Cross, it is imperative for them to understand that Sabbath will play a critical role in the final conflict. The DVD will help them to see how God in Revelation makes the final appeal to mankind to worship Him in the context of the Sabbath commandment (Rev 14:7). Your efforts to share this timely study is greatly appreciated.

The DVD album consists of two disks which contain the live recording that was done at the Andrews University Towers Auditorium on Wednesday, February 1, 2006. The marathon lecture lasted over two hours and was delivered with the help of 175 powerpoint slides. The lecture was introduced by Prof. Jon Paulien and Prof. Ranko Stefanovich, two foremost Adventist experts on the book of Revelation.

You will be thrilled by this passionate lecture that will help you understand what the mark and number of the beast are all about. This prophecy is not about external markings, barcodes, biochips, or pope's titles, but rather about the internal control of the mind of every human being. It is a battle over who will people worship: the true God or Satan. This visual presentation will help you to see the role of the Sabbath in the battle over worship in the endtime showdown.

At the end of the second DVD disk, there is a separate powerpoint file with all the 195 slides and accompanying script. This should prove to be a valuable resource for evangelists, pastors, and anyone engaged in sharing the prophetic message of Revelation. They can use some of the stunning pictures for their own presentation.

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(3) **Email:** By emailing your order to <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com>. Be sure to provide your postal address, credit card number, and expiration date.

(4) **Regular Mail:** By mailing a check for \$50.00 to BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES, 4990 Appian Way, Berrien Springs, Michigan 4990, USA. We guarantee to process your order immediately.

SPECIAL OFFER ON THE 5 ALBUMS CONTAINING ALL OF DR. BACCHIOCCHI'S PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDINGS

In occasion of the release of the new DVD album on *The Mark and Number of the Beast*, I am pleased to offer you the complete package of all my DVD and CD recordings, consisting of **5 Albums for only \$100.00, instead of the regular price of \$500.00**. This is a one-time incredible offer.

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SPECIAL OFFER ON PROF. JON PAULIEN'S 5 CD-ROM ALBUMS, called The Bible Explorer Series on Revelation.

The book of Revelation has both delighted and frustrated readers ever since it was written. Sensational but senseless interpretations of the book abound. In this unique package consisting of 120 lectures professionally recorded in 60 CD disks, Prof. Jon Paulien guides you through a verse by verse study of the intriguing messages of Revelation.

Prof. Paulien is rightly regarded inside and outside the Adventist community, as a foremost authority in Johannine literature, especially the book of Revelation. Students have told me that listening to his lectures, is a mind-opening experience. Personally I esteem Prof. Paulien as the leading Adventist authority on the prophetic books of the Bible.

If you wish that you could go back to school and seat in Prof. Paulien classes, I have good news for you. You do not need to worry about your age or your financial limitations. You do not even need to enroll at Andrews University and spend thousands of dollars of tuition to benefit from Prof. Paulien's instruction.

All what you need to do is simply to order his 120 lectures which have been professionally recorded and packaged in FIVE ALBUMS,

EACH CONTAINING 12 CD-ROMs, for a total of 60 CD-ROMs. The set is called *The Bible Explorer Series on Revelation* and takes you verse by verse through the whole book of Revelation. These lectures are the equivalent of four Seminary courses (about \$2000.00 of tuition), yet they are presented in a way that lay people can understand. Each lecture concludes with spiritual lessons for everyday life.

To express my appreciation for the contribution that Prof. Paulien has made to the understanding of Revelation, I am promoting and distributing his *The Bible Explorer Series on Revelation* consisting of 5 albums with a total of 60 CD-ROMS, as a free service without any commission. I have offered my service to facilitate the purchase of this timely set of 120 lectures through the shopping cart at my website: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/paulien/>

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(3) **Email:** By emailing your order to <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com>.

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TOSHIBA LAPTOPS COMPUTERS FOR ADVENTISTS

TOSHIBA has agreed to offer to Adventists the new TECRA A4 for only \$1195.00, instead of the regular price of \$1650.00. This is a outstanding business model with a very fast processor, extra bright screen, double memory, CD/DVD burner, wireless, etc. The new model arrived from China on February 13, 2006. If you are looking for an outstanding TOSHIBA laptop at a bargain price, visit my website at <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/Toshiba/Notebooks.html>

If you cannot surf the web, feel free to call us at 269-471-2915 or email us a message at <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com>. We will email you immediately all the information about the TECRA laptops. Call me for details at 269-471-2915.

DOES YOUR CHURCH OR SCHOOL NEED A SCREEN?

If your church/school is looking for a screen, the DA-LITE SCREEN COMPANY, the largest manufacture of screens in the world, has agreed to offer their line of screens to our Adventist churches and schools at a about 30% discount.

To order a screen the procedure is very simple. Visit the DA-LITE SCREEN COMPANY website at <http://www.da-lite.com>. You will see hundreds of models of screens with their respective prices. Once you find the screen that you need, give us the model number by phone (269) 471-2915 or email your request <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com> We will forward your order immediately to DA-LITE that will ship the screen directly to your address. You will receive the screen at about 30% discount.

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If you are looking for an outstanding REMOTE for your PowerPoint presentations, you will be pleased to know HONEYWELL has just come out with the smallest and most powerful remote in the market.

The size of the transmitter is smaller than a credit card. You can stick it inside the palm of your hand and nobody can see it. I tested the remote in an open environment, and the radio signal can go up to 400 feet of distance. IT IS INCREDIBLE! The transmitter has three buttons: forward, backward, and laser.

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