

ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER No. 208
IS PRESIDENT BUSH CONVERTING TO CATHOLICISM?
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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,

This newsletter should prove to be of interest to many Adventists who have been asking me to analyze the reports of American and European newspapers regarding the possible conversion to Catholicism of President Bush. At first I hesitated to invest my time in this research, because I thought the reports were a pure speculation of the media.

But as I started reading the various newspaper articles and the way Catholic intellectuals and politicians have influenced President Bush's domestic policies, it became evident that the President has an enormous attraction for Catholic beliefs and practices and enjoys a close relationship with Benedict XVI

For the sake of clarity, I have surveyed the sources in a chronological order, beginning with the Catholic influence in Texas where Bush served as a Governor, until the recent visit of Benedict XVI to the White House and President Bush to the Vatican. The picture that emerges from this survey is abundantly clear. Bush is strongly attracted to the Catholic and may well follow the footsteps of his brother Jeff and of former Prime Minister Tony Blair in converting to Catholicism.

In the last part of this newsletter we will reflect on the prophetic significance of the recent conversion to Catholicism of important political figures and the emergence of the pope as the political, moral, and spiritual leader of mankind. We will seek to understand how these developments fit into our Adventist prophetic interpretation of Revelation 13.

UPDATE AND SPECIAL OFFER ON *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?*

When *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* came off the press on April 25, 2008, I never anticipated that the book would be so popular and influential. The first printing of 10,000 copies was sold out in less than a month. The second printing is also sold out. We keep a few hundreds copies to fill out small orders, until the third printing is out to process some of the large orders from overseas.

A major reason for the overwhelming demand for *Popular Beliefs*, is the urgent need felt by many Adventists for a compelling witnessing book they can give with confidence to people inquiring about our faith. Many Adventists have emailed me messages of appreciation, saying that they have waited for years for a book like *Popular Beliefs* that shows why the most popular Catholic and Protestant popular beliefs are unbiblical, while the less-popular Adventist beliefs are biblically correct.

To ensure that your pastors and local church leaders to become acquainted with this timely book, **we are offering until August 30, 2008, two copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* for the price of one.** This means that for \$30.00 you can order two copies, one for yourself and to give to your pastor.

After reading *Popular Beliefs* many pastors have ordered the book by the case of 30 copies for only \$6.60 per copy. Many churches have ordered 100 copies at the special offer of \$5.00 per copy, to give to non-SDA attending the Mark Findley's Satellite program *Discoveries 2008* or other evangelistic meeting in the Fall.

Thank you for introducing your pastor and local church officers to this timely book. The details for ordering the book are given at the end of the newsletter or by clicking at this link: http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26_35

SPANISH TRANSLATION OF *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?*

During the past few weeks several subscribers to our newsletter, have been urging me to translate and publish in Spanish ***Biblical Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** In fact, one subscriber has already sent me the money to pay for the translation, editing, art-work, and lay-out of the book.

The translation will begin immediately. I have already found a professional translator from the South America Publishing House. The translation will be done in two months and the printing in less than a month. This means that the Spanish edition of ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** will be out in about three months.

At this time I would like to find out the degree of interest for a Spanish edition of ***Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?*** To gage the interest, I am asking any Hispanic subscribers to inform their Hispanic pastors and congregation and to let me know how many copies of ***Popular Beliefs*** in Spanish their churches would purchase at the special price of \$6.00 per copy for a case of 30 copies. The regular price of ***Popular Beliefs*** is **\$30.00 per copy.**

Please do not send us orders at this time. We simply wish to find out how many copies of the Spanish Edition of ***Popular Beliefs*** you or your church would purchase when the book comes off the press in about three months. Your response is very important because it will give us an idea of how many copies we should print.

To learn more about this best-selling, timely book, click at this link: http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26_35 We will keep you updated about the progress of the translation and publication of the Spanish edition of ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?***

AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTOR OF MY BOOKS

For a long time I have been praying that the Lord would help me to find Adventists with marketing skills interested to distribute my books in major English-speaking countries.

The release of the new book ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** has inspired some Adventists to become distributors of my 20 volumes in their countries.

At this time I am pleased to announce to our Australian believers that you can now order my books at a considerable saving through an Australian distributor. This is the name and address of the distributor:

Ivan Jakovac
Albury Storage
107 North Street Albury NSW 2640

Phone 02 6021 8088

Mobile 0406 854 500

email: <ivan@alburystorage.com.au>

web site: <<http://www.alburystorage.com/>>

If you live in Australia, feel free to contact Ivan Jakovac by phone or email. You will save time and money. For example, the cost of airmailing to Australia ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** is \$40.00, that is, \$30.00 for the book and \$10.00 for the airmail. You can order the same book from Ivan Jakovac for about half of the price. The reason is that the books will be sent to Jakovac by sea-freight, which costs a fraction of the airmail.

The first shipment should reach Jakovac in about a month. So please allow some time for your order to be processed. In the future your orders be processed immediately.

For a description and picture of each book, click at this link:
<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26>

ADVENTIST OUTSTANDING SOPRANO, CRISTINA PICCARDI, WILL GLADLY PRESENT A SACRED CONCERT AT YOUR CHURCH

The cancer-recovery program is causing me to reduce considerably my travels. My oncologist tells me that I need to slow down because rest is an important component of my recovery. Thus, I will no longer hold seminars every weekend, but only once or twice each month.

This means that Cristina Piccardi, the outstanding Brazilian soprano who joined my ministry nine months ago, can now sing one or two weekend every month for churches, campmeeting, evangelistic meetings, weddings, homecoming events, etc.

You can enjoy a preview of Cristina's outstanding singing by clicking at this link: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cristina/> She sings the first stanza of THE HOLY CITY. If you prefer, we will be glad to mail to you FREE OF CHARGE her latest DVD Album ***By His Grace*** with 16 sacred songs recorded in Loma Linda. To order a free album for your church board to preview, simply call us at (269) 471-2915. We will take down by phone your name and address, and mail you immediately the DVD album.

Who is Cristina Piccardi?

Cristina is a charming Brazilian young lady (26 years old), who came to Andrews University with her husband who is studying at the seminary. In my view Cristina is by far the best Adventist soprano I have heard during the past 35 years of speaking at rallies and campmeeting around the world. I have heard the best Adventist singers at various General Conference Sessions and on 3ABN, HOPE, and LLBN. None of the soprano I have heard come close to Cristina in terms of volume and quality of voice.

Cristina has won international competitions and a few days ago she was invited to sing in a Sacred Opera on the Life of Christ that will debut at Carnegie Hall—the most prestigious American theater.

Bringing Cristina to your church, campmeeting, or rally, will enhance the program enormously. Her singing will be for many an unforgettable experience. Her powerful and passionate singing touches the hearts of people and moves them to tears. A week ago at the large Miracle Temple SDA Church in Baltimore, she received a standing ovation for her singing of the Lord's Prayer. She does not approve of clapping, because her singing is designed to praise God, not to receive praises herself.

To book Cristina for a special event, it is very simple: Just call her at (269) 470-1476. You can also contact her by email: <crisrina_piccardi@hotmail.com> If you have difficulty to reach Cristina by phone (she is busy giving voice lessons), call me at (269) 471-2915 and I will pass on your message to her.

The cost of inviting Cristina for a sacred concert is reasonable. It consists of a refund of her travel expenses and a small honorarium. The sale of her albums helps her to meet her financial obligations. If your church plans for a major even, feel free to invite Cristina. The people will enjoy not only her powerful and passionate singing, but will also be inspired by her testimony of how the Lord led her to give up promising opera career to sing sacred music.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AT THE END OF THIS NEWSLETTER

- * **Upcoming Seminars for August and September**
- * ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?***
Update and Order information
- * **Special Offer on the Package of 14 DVD/CD Albums**
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IS PRESIDENT BUSH CONVERTING TO CATHOLICISM?

**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,
Retired Professor of Theology and Church History,
Andrews University**

Is President Bush considering converting to Catholicism? The answer of several American and European Newspapers is “YES.” For example, on April 13, 2008, the *Washington Post* published an article by Daniel Burke, a national correspondent for Religion News Service entitled “A Catholic Wind in the White House, “

In his article Burke details the likelihood of Bush’s possible conversion to Catholicism by quoting those close to the President. For example, “Rick Santorum, former U.S. senator from Pennsylvania and a devout Catholic, was the first to give Bush the ‘Catholic president’ label. He’s certainly much more Catholic than Kennedy.” Similarly, “John Di Iulio, Bush’s first director of faith-based initiatives, has called the president a ‘closet Catholic.’ And he was only half-kidding.”

The English newspaper *The Telegraph* reports that various Italian newspapers have been commenting on the possible conversion of President Bush to Catholicism after the end of his presidential terms (*Catholic News Agency* June 13, 2008).

Perhaps the most impressive example of President Bush sheer reverence for Pope Benedict XVI, is the affirmation he made on Friday, April 11, 2008, when he answered the last question posed him by Raymond Arroyo, anchor of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN). Arroyo asked the President, “You said, famously, when you looked into Vladimir Putin’s eyes you saw his soul.” The President replied, “Yes.” Arroyo followed with this final question: “When you look into Benedict XVI’s eyes what do you see?” The President replied “God” (*ZENIT.org News Agency*, April 13, 2008).

This is a shocking affirmation that speaks volumes about Bush's misconception of God. For the President to see "God" in the eyes of Benedicts XVI, means to ignore the historical role that the papacy has played in promoting false worship and persecuting sincere Christians. The "god" represented by the Pope, is not the biblical God, but a Catholic-made god, who claims divine titles, like "God on Earth, Vicar of Christ, Holy Father," The Pope is a god fabricated by the Catholic Church to lead sincere people away from the true worship of God into the false worship of a church-made god. For a Methodist President to see "God" in the pope's eyes, means to have lost sight of the biblical commandment not to identify God with "anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath" (Ex 20:4). It means that he has been brainwashed by those Catholic theologians whom he has invited at his Texas residence and at the White House to teach him the fundamentals of the Catholic Faith.

Objectives of this Newsletter

This newsletter has two major objectives. The first is to evaluate the various reports about President Bush's fascination and attraction to the Catholic church. We want to establish if these reports are a pure speculation of the media, or an accurate portrayal of the close relationship that President Bush has established with the Catholic Church.

The second objective is to reflect on the prophetic significance of Bush's possible conversion to Catholicism. The recent conversions to Catholicism by the President's brother, Jeff Bush, former Governor of Texas, and by Tony Blair, former British Prime Minister, are causing thinking Adventists to ask: "Are we witnessing the fulfillment of the prophetic scenario of Revelation 13 that speaks of "all the world marvelled and followed the beast" (Rev 13:3)?

Adventists from different parts of the world have been asking me to help them understand how the recent conversion to Catholicism of important political figures and the emergence of the pope as the political, moral, and spiritual leader of mankind, fits into our Adventist prophetic interpretation of Revelation 13.

This newsletter offers only a limited analysis of these developments from a prophetic perspective. Part of the reason is that medical treatments I received this past week, have reduced considerably the time I intended to spend on this research. Remember me in your prayers.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S ATTRACTION TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In the late 1950s, J. F. Kennedy's Catholicism was a political albatross. He sought to divorce his religion from his office. Upon accepting the Democratic nomination in 1960, he declared that his religion was "not relevant."

By contrast, *The Washington Post* observes that "Bush and his administration have had no such qualms about their Catholic connections. At times, they've even seemed to brandish them for political purposes. Even before he got to the White House, Bush and his political guru Karl Rove invited Catholic intellectuals to Texas to instruct the candidate [Bush] on the church's social teachings. In January 2001, Bush's first public outing as president in the nation's capital was a dinner with Washington's then-archbishop, Theodore McCarrick. A few months later, Rove (an Episcopalian) asked former White House Catholic adviser Dean Hudson to find a priest to bless his West Wing office" (*The Washington Post*, Sunday, April 13, 2008).

On a similar vein the British Newspaper *The Telegraph* reports that "prior to his presidency, Bush's political advisor invited Catholic intellectuals to Texas to explain the teachings of the [Catholic] Church to the president. Bush has also appointed Catholic judges to the Supreme Court, has selected Catholic speech-writers and consultants, and has read the Pope's theological books" (Friday, June 13, 2008)

PRESIDENT BUSH IS CAPTIVATED BY THE POWER OF THE CATHOLIC LITURGY

President Bush is captivated by the power of the Catholic liturgy. This was evident at the funeral of John Paul II, which brought together the single largest gathering of heads of state in history, surpassing the funeral of Winston Churchill. The picture of President George W. Bush, former President George H. W. Bush, and former President Bill Clinton, kneeling together before the casket of John Paul II will long be remembered as a telling evidence of the outpouring of respect and devotion for the pope by American presidents. It is hard to believe that three American Presidents would kneel in prayer before the casket of John Paul II. No other religious leader has ever been so honored by American Presidents.

As President Bush flew back from Rome to the United States on Air Force One, he talked with reporters “in extraordinarily personal terms, saying it [the funeral] strengthened his own belief in a ‘living God.’ He remarked on how affected he was by the services, particularly the music and the sight of the plain casket being carried out with the sun pouring down on it. . . . ‘I knew the ceremony today would be majestic but I didn’t realize how moved I would be by the service itself,’ the president said. ‘Today’s ceremony, I bet you, was a reaffirmation for millions” (AP article). He also admitted that witnessing firsthand the outpouring of respect and devotion to John Paul II, was “a high point of his presidency.”

President Bush’s testimony reminds us of Ellen White’s description of the captivating power of the Catholic liturgy: “Many Protestants suppose that the Catholic religion is unattractive and that its worship is a dull, meaningless round of ceremony. Here they mistake. While Romanism is based on deception, it is not a course and clumsy imposture. The religious service of the Roman Catholic Church is a most impressive ceremonial. Its gorgeous display and solemn rites fascinate the senses of the people and silence the voice of reason and of conscience. The eye is charmed. . . . The ear is also captivated. The music is unsurpassed. The rich notes of the deep-toned organ, blending with the melody of many voices as it swells through the lofty domes and pillared aisles of her grand cathedrals, cannot fail to impress the mind with awe and reverence” (*Great Controversy*, p. 566).

The captivating funeral service served to promote worldwide in a subtle and deceptive way such fundamental Catholic heresies as the veneration of Mary whose name was carved on the coffin with a large letter “M,” and the intercession of the saints, a host of whom were invoked during the so-called “Litany of the Saints.” The saints were petitioned to help John Paul’s soul to ascend immediately to heaven without suffering in Purgatory. This would make it possible for John Paul, as expressed in the eulogy of Cardinal Ratzinger, to bless the crowd in St. Peter’s Square from “the window of heaven”—an allusion to the custom of the pope to bless the crowd from the window of his residence.

It is evident that President Bush does not realize that the majesty and splendor of the Catholic liturgy is based on a host of heresies such as immortality of the soul, survival of the soul in Purgatory, Hell, or Paradise, and the veneration of Mary and the Saints. All these heresies are traced historically and exam-

ined biblically in my latest book *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* Most likely Bush's Methodist religious education never helped him to understand the pagan origin of Catholic beliefs and rituals.

The fact that President Bush currently belongs to a Methodist church in Texas but he attends the St. John's Episcopal church in Washington, D.C., shows that he has no deep religious roots. For him to attend the Episcopal Church seems to be just as good as worshipping in the Methodist Church. Keep in mind that the Episcopal Church is the closest to the Catholic church in beliefs and liturgy. In fact the two churches are conducting serious talks to achieve a possible unification. Thus, it is only a small step for Bush to transition from the Episcopal to the Catholic Church.

BUSH BELIEVES THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WAS FOUNDED BY CHRIST

People close to Bush say that he respects the Catholic Church because it was willed by God who appointed Peter as the first pope. George William Ruther, a New York Priest who has befriended the president, stated: "Bush respects how Catholicism was founded by Christ who appointed Peter as the first Pope. I think what fascinates him about Catholicism is its historical plausibility. He does appreciate the systematic theology of the church, its intellectual cogency and stability." Rutler also mentioned that the president believes that "evangelicalism -- by comparison with Catholicism—seem more limited both theologically and historically" (*Catholic News Agency*, June 13, 2008).

Apparently Bush has no problem in accepting the Catholic claim that their church was founded by Christ who appointed Peter as the first pope. This teaching was reiterated at the papal Mass attended by sixty thousand people at Yankee Stadium on April 20, 2008. Benedict XVI pointed to the visible unity of the Church, present there around the altar, saying: "The presence around this altar of the Successor of Peter, his brother bishops and priests, and deacons, men and women religious, and lay faithful from throughout the fifty states of the Union, eloquently manifests our communion in the Catholic faith which comes to us from the Apostles." He stressed that the unity of the Catholic Church is "apostolic," a "visible unity" grounded in the authority Christ bestowed upon Peter and the Apostles – an authority which was transmitted to their successors.

The Petrine Theory

In view of the fundamental importance attached to the claim that Christ founded the Catholic Church by appointing Peter as the first Pope (a teaching apparently accepted by President Bush), it is important to briefly comment on the pivotal text of Matthew 16:18 used to prove the so-called “Petrine Primacy.” Christ told Peter: “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the power of death shall not prevail against it.”

The question is, Who is the “rock” upon which Christ built His church? Obviously for Catholics, the “rock” is Peter as the foundation stone upon which Christ built His church. They rightly point out that the play on words “You are *Petros* and on this *Petra*” shows that there is an unmistakable connection between the two. Thus, Peter is the *Petra* upon which Christ has built His Church.

Protestants obviously reject this Catholic interpretation, arguing instead that the “rock” is either Jesus Himself or Peter’s confession of Christ. According to the former the text would read: “You are Peter and on myself as a rock I will build my church.” According to the latter: “You are Peter and on the rock of Christ you have confessed, I will build my church.”

Peter is the First Building Block

The problem with both of these popular Protestant interpretations, is that they do not do justice to the play on words. In the Greek there is an unmistakable connection between “*Petros*” and “*Petra*.” The question is not whether “*Petra*—the rock” refers to Peter, but in what sense Peter is “*Petra*—the rock.”

In my view Peter is “*Petra*—the rock,” not in the Catholic sense of being the foundation stone upon which Christ built His church, but in the sense that Peter is the initial stone or building block of the church, which is built upon the foundation of the apostles, with Christ as the corner stone.

This interpretation rests on two major considerations. First, the New Testament pictures the church as a building, “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (Eph 2:20; cf. 1 Pet 2:4-8; 1 Cor 3:11). The imagery of the church as a building suggests

that the church does not rest on the foundation rock of Peter, but that began with Peter as the first stone.

Peter is the first building block because he was the first person to confess and accept Jesus of Nazareth, as the Christ, that is, the Messiah, “the Son of the living God” (Matt 16:16). Being the first convert to publicly accept Christ, Peter became in a sense “the first charter member” of the new community of believers, or the first building block of the spiritual edifice which is the church.

The Church is an Invisible Community of Believers

A second important point, ignored by Bush and the Catholic Church, is that the New Testament views the church, not as a visible hierarchical organization run by the Pope with his bishops, but as an invisible community of believers who are united by the same faith in Christ. In the Bible “the church” is not a hierarchical structure, governed by one man, but the “people of God,” united by the common bond of faith and love. Both the Hebrew *qahal* and the Greek *ekklesia*, translated “church,” actually refer to the “congregation” of believers, who have been called out from the world (Deut 7:6; Hos 11:1; 1 Peter 2:9) in order to be a light in the world (Deut 28:10; 1 Pet 2:9).

This means that when Jesus spoke about building His church, He meant, not the establishment of a hierarchical religious organization, but the building up of a community of believers who by faith would accept Him and confess Him before the world. In this context, Peter, by being the first person to confess and accept Jesus as “Christ,” which means “Messiah,” became the first living stone of the spiritual edifice consisting of a community of believers. The idea of Peter being the foundation of the church as a hierarchical organization identified with the Catholic Church, is foreign to the text, to the teachings of the New Testament, and to the organization of the Apostolic Church.

A Fatal Blow to the Catholic View of the “Petrine Primacy”

A fatal blow to the Catholic view of the “Petrine Primacy,” is the lack of any New Testament support for the primacy of Peter in the Apostolic Church. If, according to the Catholic claim (accepted by Bush), Christ appointed Peter as His vicar to govern the church, then we would expect Peter to function as the leader of the Apostolic church. But this is hardly the case.

For example, there are no indications that Peter ever served as the presiding officer of the Jerusalem church. The organizational structure of the Jerusalem Church is characterized as *collegiality with a presidency*. But there are no indications that Peter ever served as the presiding officer of the church. At the Jerusalem Council, it was James, not Peter, who presided in the deliberations (Act 15:13).

Furthermore, the ultimate authority of the Jerusalem Church resided, not with Peter, but with the apostles, who were later replaced by “elders.” For example, it was “the apostles” who sent Peter to Samaria (Acts 8:14) to check on the new Christian communities. Had Peter been the leader of the apostolic church, he would have counseled the apostles to send him to Samaria, rather than being told by the apostles to go there.

It was the “apostles” who sent Barnabas to Antioch (Acts 11:22). It was “the apostles and the elders” who sent Judas and Silas to Antioch (15:22-27). It was “James and the elders” who advised Paul to undergo a rite of purification at the Temple (Acts 21:18, 23-24). Had Peter been appointed by Christ to serve as the Head of the Church, he would have played a distinctive leadership role in the decisions mentioned above.

Paul Did not Acknowledge Peter as the Head of the Church

Moreover, there are no indications that Paul viewed Peter as the leader of the church. We are told that when Peter went to Antioch, Paul “opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned” (Gal 2:11). Paul’s action hardly suggests that Peter was recognized and respected as the infallible head of the church.

Furthermore, Paul explicitly says that Peter was entrusted with preaching the Gospel to the Jews, while his mission was to preach to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7). This suggests that Peter’s mission was predominantly to the Jews, and not over the whole church.

Paul refers to the “pillars” of the Apostolic Church as being “James, Cephas, and John” (Gal 2:9). The fact that “James,” the Lord’s brother, is mentioned before “Cephas,” the Aramaic for of “Peter,” indicates that James, rather than Peter, served as the leader of the church. Had the apostles understood that Christ had appointed Peter to serve as the Head of the church, they would

have entrusted to him the leadership of the church. But the fact is that Peter is never seen in the NT as the sole or chief leader of the Apostolic Church. The above indications discredit the popular Catholic claim (apparently accepted by Bush) that Christ founded the Catholic Church by appointing Peter as the first pope. There were no popes in the Apostolic Church. The leadership was shared in a collegial fashion by the Apostles and Elders, but no mention is made of Peter serving as the presiding officer.

CATHOLIC INFLUENCE IN THE WHITE HOUSE

The Catholic influence in the White House is reflected in a variety of ways. For example, the *Washington Post* reports that “shortly after Pope Benedict XVI’s election in 2005, President Bush met with a small circle of [Catholic] advisers in the Oval Office. As some mentioned their own religious backgrounds, the president remarked that he had read one of the new pontiff’s books about faith and culture in Western Europe.” [The title of the book is *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*]

“Save for one other soul, Bush was the only non-Catholic in the room. But his interest in the pope’s writings was no surprise to those around him. As the White House prepares to welcome Benedict on Tuesday, many in Bush’s inner circle expect the pontiff to find a kindred spirit in the president.”

WITHOUT ROOTS: THE WEST, RELATIVISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM

President Bush’s interest in Benedict XVI’s book *Without Roots*, offers a clue to understand what draws the two men together. The book consists of two parts. Part one is a speech given by Marcello Pera, President of the Italian Senate and Professor of philosophy. Part two was originally an address given by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger to the Italian Senate on May 13, 2004.

Benedict XVI laments “Europe’s denial of its religious and moral foundations.” “At the hour of its greatest success, Europe seems hollow, as if it were internally paralyzed by a failure of its circulatory system that is endangering its life, subjecting it to transplants that erase its identity. At the same time as its sustaining spiritual forces have collapsed, a growing decline in its ethnicity is also taking place.”

Benedict XVI believes that “Europe, unlike America, is on a collision course with its own history.” Often he voices an almost visceral denial of any possible public dimension for Christian values.” In the Pope’s estimate, the future of Europe looks bleak, because the European States have denied their religious heritage, replacing it instead with reason and relativism. He often speaks of the “Dictatorship of Relativism,” a phrase that Bush has used in some of his speeches.

By contrast, Benedict XVI notes that the United States is “built on the foundations created by the free churches, it adopts a rigid dogma of separation between church and state. Above and beyond the single denominations, it is characterized by a Protestant Christian consensus that is not defined in denominational terms, but rather in association with the country’s sense of a special religious mission toward the rest of the world. The religious sphere thus acquires a significant weight in public affairs and emerges as a pre-political and supra-political force with the potential to have a decisive impact on political life.”

Simply stated, the Pope deplores the loss of a religious and moral foundation in Western Europe, but admires the religious and moral foundation that gives to the United States “a sense of a special religious mission toward the rest of the world.” Though even in the United States “the Christian heritage is falling apart at an incessant pace,” religious values and convictions still guide the political process.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MORAL RELATIVISM OF WESTERN EUROPE

Benedict XVI must be commended for his frank analysis of the socio-religious-political situation of Western Europe. What he fails to realize, however, is that the Catholic Church is largely responsible for the pervasive secularism and moral relativism in Europe today. After all the Catholic Church has influenced and controlled for centuries the social, religious, and political life of Western Europe and Latin America. The fruits of Catholic religious indoctrination are evident in all the dominant Catholic countries where political corruption is rampant and indifference toward religion is the order of the day.

By teaching people that salvation is a *dispensation* of the church, administered through the sacraments, the Catholic Church has fostered the moral relativism pervasive in Catholic countries. The reason is that Catholics are taught that no matter how sinful their life will be, at the end the sacramental powers of the Church can hasten their transition from Purgatory to Paradise.

By contrast, Protestantism teaches that salvation is a *disposition* of the believer. Christians are expected to live morally responsible toward God and fellow-beings. This is known as “Protestant ethics.” The fruits of Protestant religious indoctrination can be seen in the influence of religion in the social-political life of countries like the United States.

Benedict XVI is attracted to President Bush because he is a born-again Christian, who seeks to implement social and political programs in accordance to his religious conviction. He can serve as a shining example of what a Christian politician should be like.

Born-again politicians in Europe are hard to find. Take, for example, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who divorced his wife to marry the Italian-born former supermodel Carla Bruni. If an American President had divorced his wife to marry a model, he would have become a disgrace to the nation. In France, however, this is not a problem because Christian values have long been replaced by moral relativism.

On his part President Bush finds in Benedict XVI the moral strength to make difficult decision. In an interview given on April 13, 2008 at the eve of the Pope’s visit to the USA, President Bush said: “The moral strength of the Pope is the key for politicians. And I am going to remind His Holy Father how important his voice is in making it easier for politicians like me to be able to stand and defend our positions that are, I think, very important positions to take” (*ZENIT.org* News Agency, April 14, 2008).

IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH “A ROCK IN A RAGING SEA”?

In a private interview with Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kiun of Hong Kong, Bush said: “The [Catholic] church is the rock—it is the only thing that can withstand the wave of secularization, which says you can kill someone else to make your own life more convenient. He said the Catholic Church must never give in on this” (Michael Abramowitz, “Building Ties with Catholics: A Bush Priority,” *The Washington Post*, April 15, 2008).

The President expressed the same view at the White House dinner for Catholic Leaders, when he said: “The [Catholic] Church is ‘a rock in a raging sea.’” Bill McGurn, a President’s speech writer who was present at the meeting, said: “It was striking that a Protestant president would see the Catholic Church as a rock. But it was also characteristic of a politician who has come to identify closely with Catholics and the powerful men who have led the church during his tenure in the White House” (*The American Spectator*; June 13, 2008).

In the mind of Bush and of many evangelicals, what makes the Pope “a rock in a raging sea” is his strong stand for certain fundamental doctrines of Biblical faith. Though evangelicals cannot agree with the Pope on such points as the role of the Virgin Mary, the Mass, the intercession of the saints, Masses for the dead, priestly celibacy and so on, they admire his strong commitment to the sacredness of marriage, to a Biblical sexual ethics, to protect the life of unborn babies, and to discipline the most blatant opponents of evangelical faith.

Unintentionally, perhaps, liberal Protestantism has contributed to enhance the authority of the Pope by eroding confidence in the authority of the Bible. *One might say that to the extent that Protestantism weakens the authority of the Bible for defining Christian beliefs and practices, to that same extent it strengthens the authority of the Pope.*

The reason is simple. Most Christians resent tyranny but welcome the voice of authority, certainty and assurance. They want to hear from their church leaders, “This is the way, walk you in it!” When they fail to hear this voice of authority from the Scripture as proclaimed by their pastors, they become attracted to the Pope who claims to offer the infallible interpretation of Scripture. This climate offers to the Pope an unprecedented opportunity to fill the void of moral and religious relativism created by liberal Protestant churches by presenting himself as the voice of certainty.

BUSH’S DOMESTIC POLICIES INFLUENCED BY CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHINGS

During the past eight years, President Bush domestic policies have largely been influenced by Catholic teachings on social justice. Former Bush speech writer Michael Gerson says that “the key to understanding Bush’s domestic

policy is to view it through the lens of Rome” (*The Washington Post*, April 13, 2008).

Francis X. Rocca, Vatican correspondent for Religion News Service, writes: “[T]he Vatican is grateful for Bush’s gesture of coming to the airport, but also they want to show their appreciation for someone who upholds Catholic teaching in a number of controversial areas.

“Indeed, Bush has stood for many of the principles espoused by Pope and Church during his presidency. He has on many occasions voiced his appreciation for the Catholic Church’s commitment to human life. He has backed up those remarks with his own opposition to embryonic stem cell research and appointment of staunchly pro-life judges” (*The American Spectator*; June 13, 2008).

David Burke writes in *The Washington Post*: “This Protestant president has surrounded himself with Roman Catholic intellectuals, speech writers, professors, priests, bishops and politicians. These Catholics—and thus Catholic social teaching—have for the past eight years been shaping Bush’s speeches, policies and legacy to a degree perhaps unprecedented in U.S. history.

“‘I used to say that there are more Catholics on President Bush’s speech writing team than on any Notre Dame starting lineup in the past half-century,’ said former Bush scribe—and Catholic —William McGurn.’

“Bush has also placed Catholics in prominent roles in the federal government and relied on Catholic tradition to make a public case for everything from his faith-based initiative to antiabortion legislation. He has wedded Catholic intellectualism with evangelical political savvy to forge a powerful electoral coalition.

“‘There is an awareness in the White House that the rich Catholic intellectual tradition is a resource for making the links between Christian faith, religiously grounded moral judgments and public policy,’ says Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and editor of the journal *First Things* who has tutored Bush in the church’s social doctrines for nearly a decade” (*The Washington Post*, April 13, 2008).

The fact that Bush domestic policies has been largely influenced by Catholic teachings on social justice, offers another significant indication of the President's attraction to the Catholic Church. This attraction suggests the possibility that he is considering converting to the Catholicism.

PRESIDENT BUSH WELCOMES BENEDICT XVI

A sign of Bush's great respect and admiration for Pope Benedict XVI came on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, when in a rare gesture, President Bush traveled from the White House with first lady Laura Bush to greet Pope Benedict XVI after his plane landed Tuesday afternoon at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington, D.C.

This was the first time that Bush left the White House to greet a foreign dignitary, and the first official papal visit to the United States since the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican 24 years ago. "The president said that the pope is a worldwide spiritual leader and that millions of American citizens are excited about having him in this country and that he, the president, wanted to go to Andrews Air Force Base as a sign of respect."

In an interview with Eternal Word Television Network, a Catholic news agency, Bush said that the White House "robust welcome for Benedict reflects the pope's immense significance as a religious and moral leader. . . . I want to honor his convictions" (*The Washington Post*, April 15, 2008).

With pomp, pageantry, a 21-gun salute, military honor guard, the Lord's Prayer from soprano Kathleen Battle, and an impromptu chorus of "Happy Birthday," Pope Benedict XVI was welcomed in grand fashion at the White House before a record crowd of 13,500 people, the largest ever for an arrival ceremony there.

The fact that President Bush pulled out all the stops to give Benedict XVI an unprecedented welcome, shows the special attraction that he has for the Pope and the Catholic Church. The warm reception and ecstatic admiration of the Pope by the President of the United States and by millions of Protestants, clearly points to an unprecedented acceptance of the religious leadership role of the papacy. The gulf of separation between Catholicism and Protestantism is truly being bridged, but the bridge is being built at Protestant expenses.

BENEDICT XVI GREETES BUSH AT THE VATICAN

In a gesture of appreciation for the hearty welcome Bush gave him in Washington in April, Pope Benedict XVI welcomed the President Bush and first lady Laura Bush near St. John's Tower in the lush Vatican Gardens on Friday, June 13, 2008.

“Popes normally receive visiting heads of state in the pontiff's imposing library in the Apostolic Palace next to St Peter's Basilica, but Benedict wanted to return the special hospitality he had received at the White House on his 81st birthday during his sojourn in the United States in April, Vatican sources said” (*The Washington Times*, June 14, 2008).

“The two men had 30 minutes talks in the medieval St. John's Tower before standing on a terrace under a scorching sun to admire the view of the 108 acres making up the Holy See and listening to a performance by the Sistine Chapel choir while sitting on lawn chairs” (Ibid.). Afterwards, the pope and Bush went to a studio on the top floor of the tower to hold closed-door talk.

Italian newspapers suggested that the private conversations between President Bush and Benedict XVI, first at the White House in April and two months later at the Vatican, hinted at a possible conversion of Bush to Catholicism. For example, Marco Politi, a respected Vatican correspondent of *La Republic* newspaper, headlined his report “The Mystery of the Conversion during the Visit to the Pope.”

Similarly, “the leading *Corriere della Sera* of Milan newspaper noted that the apostolic nuncio, or the Vatican's ambassador, in Washington, Pietro Sambini, may have hinted at a possible conversion when talking about the conversations the pope held with Mr. Bush in the United States in April” (*The Washington Times*, June 14, 2008).

Conclusion

The various reports cited above from American and European newspapers offer no solid proof that President Bush is considering converting to Catholicism while still in office. Most likely, as in the case of Tony Blair, Bush may wait until he leaves office to formally announce his decision to convert to Catholicism. Incidentally, for several months before the end of his tenure as

British Prime Minister, rumors circulated that Tony Blair was considering converting to Catholicism. Eventually the rumors proved to be true. This may well be the case with President Bush.

At this point we can draw the following five conclusions from President Bush's statements and the testimonies of people close to him.

- 1) President Bush is captivated by the power of the Catholic liturgy.**
- 2) President Bush believes that the Catholic Church was founded by Christ who appointed Peter as the first pope.**
- 3) The Catholic influence has been evident in the White House during the past eight years as President Bush surrounded himself with Catholic intellectuals, advisers, speech writers, theologians, and politicians.**
- 4) President Bush social policies have been influenced by Catholic social teachings. He has stood for many of the principles espoused by Pope during his presidency.**
- 5) During the recent reception of Benedict XVI at the White House and of President Bush at the Vatican, an impressive welcome was planned with the kind of pomp and pageantry seldom given to a Head of State. In both instances the two men had private and informal conversations.**

In the light of the above facts, it is reasonable to conclude that Bush has a special attraction for the Pope and the Catholic Church. Thus, it would not be surprising if he would follow the footsteps of Tony Blair and his brother Jeff by converting to Catholicism after he leaves office.

PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The unprecedented world outpouring of sympathy and admiration for Pope John Paul II, and the warm reception and ecstatic admiration of Pope Benedict XVI by the President of the United States and by millions of Protestants, clearly points to an unprecedented acceptance of the religious leadership role of the papacy. The gulf of separation between Catholicism and Protestantism is truly being bridged, but the bridge is being built at Protestant expenses.

Thinking Adventists are asking: “Are we witnessing the fulfillment of the prophetic scenario of Revelation 13 that speaks of “all the world marvelled and followed the beast” (Rev 13:3)? How does the emergence of the pope as the political, moral, and spiritual leader of mankind, fits into our Adventist interpretation of the prophetic scenario of the two beasts of Revelation 13?

The radical Protestant change of attitude that has taken place, from foes to friends of the Pope and of the Catholic Church, should not surprise us Seventh-day Adventists, because for 100 years we have announced to the world, on the basis of their interpretation of Biblical prophecy, that American Protestantism would be foremost in bridging the gulf of separation from Roman Catholicism and in cooperating with Rome. A century ago Ellen White, a founder of Adventism, wrote with prophetic foresight: “The Protestants of the United States . . . will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power” (*Great Controversy*, p. 588).

A New Method of Papal Engagement with Political Powers

The above survey of the unique relationship that has developed between President Bush and Pope Benedict XVI, suggests that American Protestants are reaching “over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power.” But the way this is taking place differs from the understanding of our Adventist pioneers. They lived at a time when the papacy was still a powerful political power that governed the central part of Italy, known as the Papal States.

For one thousand years, from 756 to 1870, the popes influenced world affairs as the temporal rulers of a large part of central Italy, known as the Papal States. As temporal rulers, the popes played the political games of their times, often resulting in compromise, betrayal, and coercion.

The loss of the Papal States in 1870 liberated the papacy from the burden to exercise its political power in the social, economic, and political life of nations, and created the conditions for the popes to influence nations, not as temporal rulers, but as moral teachers.

As the old edifice of papal temporal power crumbled in the nineteenth century, a new method of papal engagement with political powers began to emerge. This new development can be traced from the end of World War

I through the pontificates of Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXII, Paul VI, and, especially, John Paul II and Benedict XVI. In essence, *the new method consists in achieving political effectiveness through the charisma of moral persuasion, rather than through the normal instruments of political power.*

A good example is the pontificate of John Paul II. The impact of his pontificate is evident throughout the new democracies of east-central Europe, Latin America, and East Asia. As Bishop of Rome and sovereign of the Vatican City micro-state, John Paul has no military or economic power at his disposal. Yet, through the power of moral persuasion, John Paul ignited in Poland a moral revolution that made the 1989 Revolution possible, which ultimately resulted in the collapse of Communism. This shows how a profound moral conviction can be translated into effective political power.

What is true of John Paul is also true of Benedict XVI. We have seen that President Bush domestic policies have largely been influenced by Catholic teachings on social justice. President surrounded himself with Catholic intellectuals, advisers, speech writers, theologians, and politicians, who have influenced his domestic policies. It is evident that the Pope exercised his influence in the American political process through his Catholic thought-leaders.

The shift from a political to a pastoral model of the papacy has been gradual. After all the Vatican maintains diplomatic relationship with 172 countries and uses diplomatic channels to negotiate agreements favorable to the Catholic Church. But John Paul II and Benedict XVI have deliberately adopted a dual strategy. On the one hand, they use the diplomatic corp to achieve whatever they can, but on the other hand they appeals directly to the people and political leaders arousing them to adopt Catholic beliefs and practices.

The future power of the papacy will lie in the charism of moral persuasion used by the pope to achieve political effectiveness. The political alliances that have plagued the papacy in the past, will no longer exist. The pope will engage with world powers with his own instruments of moral persuasion.

Adventist Reappraisal of the Endtime Prophetic Role of the Papacy

The evolution of the power of the papacy discussed above, calls for a reappraisal of the Adventist understanding of the endtime prophetic role of the papacy. Our Adventist pioneers lived at a time when the Papacy was still a powerful political and religious power. Consequently the “wounding” of the beast of Revelation 13 was interpreted as a political event that took place when Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner by the French General Berthier and the healing of the wound, the 1929 Concordat that delimits and protects the Vatican State.

Looking back into the history of the papacy during the past century, it would seem more logical to me to view the “wounding” of the papacy as a process that began with the imprisonment of Pius VI in 1798 and continued until the taking over of all the Papal States by Italian nationalists in 1870. The loss of the Papal States impacted the papacy far more than the temporary humiliation of Pius VI.

Similarly, the healing of the wound could be seen as a process that began in 1929 with the juridical delimitation of the Vatican State, but it has continued until our time with a revival of the power of the papacy. Such a revival, however, has taken place, not through political alliances as perceived by our pioneers, but through the pope’s charisma of moral persuasion capable of being translated into political effectiveness.

In the light of recent developments, it would seem that the future power of the papacy will depend, not so much on the political backing of the USA government (as perceived by our pioneers), but on the capacity of the Pope to influence the political process and thinking of the American people and other nations.

By promoting successfully the cause of social justice, Benedict XVI is predispose people around the world to more readily accept those teachings that have divided Protestantism from Roman Catholicism. The gulf of separation between Catholicism and Protestantism is truly being bridged, but the bridge is being built at Protestant expenses. To Protestants, it means that, on the one hand, we must admire John Paul’s courageous and unpopular stand for the Biblical view of the sacredness of marriage and human life as well as his uncompromising denunciation of homosexuality and of sex

outside marriage as sinful acts. On the other hand, we must never forget that the same Pope is equally uncompromising on the fundamental Catholic teachings that have divided Protestantism from Catholicism because they rest on venerable ecclesiastical traditions.

CONCLUSION

The warm reception and ecstatic admiration of Benedict XVI by the President of the United States and by millions of Protestants, clearly points to an unprecedented acceptance of the religious leadership role of the papacy.

We have noted how John Paul II and Benedict XVI have won the heart of many Americans, especially the evangelicals. Though evangelicals cannot agree with the pope on such points as the role of the Virgin Mary, the Mass, the intercession of the saints, masses for the dead, priestly celibacy and so on, they admire his strong commitment to the authority of Scripture, to the sacredness of marriage, to a Biblical sexual ethics, to protect the life of unborn babies, and to discipline the most blatant opponents of evangelical faith. To many evangelicals the Pope has become, as Prof. Martin E. Marty puts it, "*a walking fortress of faith*" (*TV Guide*, Sept 5, 1987, p. 34) in the midst of a godless society.

By promoting successfully the cause of social justice, Benedict XVI is predisposing people around the world to more readily accept those teachings that have divided Protestantism from Roman Catholicism. The gulf of separation between Catholicism and Protestantism is truly being bridged, but the bridge is being built at Protestant expenses.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

UPCOMING SEMINARS FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

As a service to our subscribers, I am listing the seminars scheduled for the month of August and September 2008. We wish to extend a warm welcome to those of you who live close to the location of our seminars. Our new seminars with Words and Songs will touch your heart and expand your mind.

AUGUST 8-9: VALLEY FELLOWSHIP SDA CHURCH

Location: 275 East Grove Street, Rialto, California 92376-5177

For directions and information call Pastor Robert Edwards at (951) 640-8567

SEPTEMBER 5-6: LONDON: WEMBLEY NORTH SDA CHURCH

Location: 217 East Lane North, Wembley, Middlesex HAO 3NG

For directions and information call Pastor Michael Anim at 01923 661 212

SEPTEMBER 10: LONDON: STANBOROUGH PARK SDA CHURCH

Location: 609 St. Albans Road, Garston, Watford, Hertz WD25 9JL.

For directions and information call Pastor Ian Sleeman at 01923 606130

SEPTEMBER 12-13: LONDON: CORNERSTONE/FULHAM SDA CHURCHES

Location: 259 Little Road, Fulham, London SW6 7LL

For directions and information call Pastor Clive De Silva at 0208 384 1710

SEPTEMBER 24: ORLANDO: FOREST LAKE SDA CHURCH

Location: 515 Harley Lester Lane, Apopka, Florida 32703

For direction and information call the church office at (407) 869-0680

SEPTEMBER 26-27: DAYTONA BEACH SDA CHURCH

Location: 401 North Williamson Boulevard, Dayton Beach, FL 32114

For information and directions call Pastor Bill Barrett at (386) 255-5144.

POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?

An Update on the Amazing Impact of this Best-selling Book!

When *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* came off the press on April 25, 2008, I never anticipated that the book would be so popular and influential. The first printing of 10,000 copies was sold out in less than a month and the second printing is sold out. We keep a few hundred copies to process small order while waiting for the third printing to process large orders, especially from overseas.

I believe that a major reason for the overwhelming demand for *Popular Beliefs*, is the urgent need felt by many Adventists for a compelling witnessing book they can give with confidence to people inquiring about our faith. Many Adventists have emailed me messages saying that they have waited for years for a book like *Popular Beliefs* that shows why the most popular Catholic and Protestant popular beliefs are unbiblical, while the less-popular Adventist beliefs are biblically correct.

The Influence of *Popular Beliefs: Are the Biblical?*

Though *Popular Beliefs* came out less than three months ago, I have received already a significant number of positive responses from church leaders, editors, and scholars of different denominations. An Evangelical Pastor called me on the Fourth of July to inform me that my book *The Sabbath Under Crossfire* helped his congregation to accept the Sabbath. Now he was eager to order a case of *Popular Beliefs* because he feels that the book will help his congregation to accept other vital Bible truths.

An editor of an Evangelical magazine ordered a case of 30 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* After reading it, he sent in for another 30 copies and encouraged their book store manager to place an order for 100 copies which we have already sent.

Few days ago I received a message from a learned Anglican minister, with a Doctorate in Philosophy and Theology, living in Lucerne, Switzerland. He wrote: "I was given a copy of *Popular Beliefs* from an Adventist friend. I am reading the book with great interest. Your thoroughness reminds me of St. Thomas of Aquinas [a foremost Catholic Theologian].

I hope to meet you some days. If you travel to Switzerland, please let me know. It would be a pleasure for me to meet you.

In Christ

.....

***Popular Beliefs* Expresses my Gratitude to God for His Healing**

When I read these encouraging messages, I can only say: Thank you God for extending me life and giving me wisdom and grace to research and write *Popular Beliefs*. When I was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer

on February 2007, one of my deep regrets was the inability to complete this important project during the remaining few months I was expected to live. I promised to the Lord that if He would extend my life, I would put forth my best efforts to complete *Popular Beliefs*, to express my gratitude to Him for His providential healing.

The Lord has answered my prayer by prolonging my life. Grateful to God for a new lease on life, I fulfilled my promise by devoting every spare moment of this past year to complete *Popular Beliefs*, designed to call many truth-seekers to “come out of her my people” (Rev 18:4)

When *Popular Beliefs* came off the press on April 25, I was overwhelmed by a deep sense of gratitude to God for restoring my health and for enabling me to complete this important research project. I felt that an appropriate way to express my gratitude to God, was to plan for a dedication service for the book. In a special way the service was a re-dedication of my life to His service. About 30 fellow believers, including three medical doctors and a few teachers, attended the dedication service at our home.

My Legacy to our Adventist Church

In many ways *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* represents for me my legacy to our Seventh-day Adventist Church. This may be my last and hopefully my most important contribution to the mission of our Adventist church. All my previous 17 books are making a contribution by helping truth-seekers to understand and accept fundamental Bible teachings held by our church. But the impact of *Popular Beliefs* is already proving to be greater than any of my previous books, because it examines, not one, but 10 popular beliefs, which are biblically wrong.

A Most Effective Witnessing Publication

Popular Beliefs is a much needed witnessing book that you can give with confidence to friends who want to know why their popular beliefs are un-biblical and the Adventist beliefs are biblical correct. Each of the 10 popular beliefs is traced historically and examined biblically. The ultimate goal is to lead people to appreciate the validity and value of our Adventist beliefs.

My Sincere Hope

I have written this book with the earnest desire to help Christians of all persuasions to re-examine their popular beliefs in the light of the normative authority of the Bible. At a time when most Christians still hold to popular beliefs that derive from human traditions rather than from biblical revelation, it is imperative to recover those biblical truths that God has revealed for our eternal salvation.

It is my fervent hope that this book, fruit of many months of dedicated research, will help Christians of all persuasions to “come out” of the Babylonian confusion of popular but unbiblical beliefs, and accept God’s glorious plan for our present life and our future destiny.

NEW SPECIAL OFFER ON *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?*

To facilitate a massive circulation of *Popular Beliefs*, I have decided to continue to offer the book at the following substantially discounted prices:

2 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* for the price of one, namely \$30.00 for two copies. Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$10.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

10 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$10.00 per copy, postage paid, instead of the regular price of \$30.00 (\$100.00 for 10 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$50.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

30 copies (one case) of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$6.65 per copy (\$200.00 for 30 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$100.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

100 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$5.00 per copy, postage paid. (\$500.00 for 100 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$300.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

NOTE: We can ship by sea-freight up to 1000 copies of *Popular Beliefs* (up to a cubic meter) to any foreign destinations for only \$500.00. This reduces the cost of mailing to only €50 per book. Fee free to contact me for further details.

HOW TO ORDER *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?*

You can order *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* in four different ways:

(1) ONLINE: By clicking here: http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26_35

(2) PHONE: By calling us at (269) 471-2915 to give us your credit card number and postal address.

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

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THE COMPLETE PACKAGE OF 14 DVD/CD ALBUMS FOR ONLY \$150.00, INSTEAD OF THE REGULAR ONLINE PRICE OF \$1400.00.

This offer may sound too good to be true. At this time we are offering together as a package all the **14 DVD/CD albums which contains 41 live, video lectures for only \$150.00, instead of \$1400.00.**

This package contains 41 professionally recorded live, video lectures with all the lectures of Prof. Bacchiocchi, Prof. Jon Paulien, Prof. Roy Gane, Prof. Graeme Bradford, and Soprano Cristina Piccardi.

Until now these recordings were sold separately, costing considerably more. But to make it possible for many to benefit from all these timely

messages, we offer them together as a package for only \$150.00, instead of the regular price of \$1400.00.

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The Package Includes the Following 14 Albums:

1) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI AND CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD Album with *Sabbath Seminar with Words and Songs* recorded at the Loma Linda SDA church. The album contains three DVD disks with 6 hours of lectures and sacred songs.

2) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S newly recorded DVD ALBUM called *ABUNDANT LIFE SEMINAR*. The album contains 2 video powerpoint lectures: The Christian and Alcoholic Beverages and How to Build a Happy and Lasting Marriage. These two lectures summarize the highlights of Bacchiocchi's two books *Wine in the Bible* and *The Marriage Covenant*. Two separate files with 225 powerpoint slides are included.

3) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM containing 10 video powerpoint lectures on the *SABBATH/ADVENT SEMINAR*. Some of the lectures show the documents Prof. Bacchiocchi found in Vatican libraries on the role of the papacy in changing the Sabbath to Sunday. This album contains the popular powerpoint SABBATH/ADVENT seminars Prof. Bacchiocchi presents in many countries.

3) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *CRACKING THE DA VINCI CODE*. The album contains a two hours video lecture, professionally taped with a virtual studio as a background. A separate file with 200 powerpoint slides is included. The two video lectures reveal the prophetic significance of Dan Brown's neo-pagan false worship promoted through his book and film. The two hours video lectures will help you appreciate the role that *The Da Vinci Code* plays in the prophetic endtime battle between true and false worship.

4) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *THE MARK AND NUMBER OF THE BEAST*. The album contains two hours professionally

recorded video lecture and a separate powerpoint file with the 200 slides used for the lecture. The project was commissioned by Prof. Jon Paulien and Prof. Ranko Stefanovich, who are the foremost authorities on the book of Revelation. With the help of 200 beautiful slides the video lecture shows the origin and historical use of 666. You will see stunning pictures of papal tiaras, including disputed one with the pope's title *Vicarius Filii Dei*.

5) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S CD ALBUM with all his *BOOKS AND POWERPOINT LECTURES*. The album consists of two disks. The first disk has all his 20 books and over 200 articles. The second disk has the 2000 slides and script of 25 of Prof. Bacchiocchi's popular PowerPoint presentations.

6) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *THE PASSION OF CHRIST*. The album contains the 2 hours live interview conducted by 3ABN on Prof. Bacchiocchi's book *The Passion of Christ in Scripture and History*. The live video interview show that that this movie is a strict Catholic film that in a subtle and deceptive way promotes fundamental Catholic heresies.

7) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S MP3 AUDIO ALBUM which contains 2 disks with 22 AUDIO LECTURES on on Marriage, Music, Temperance, Dress, Sabbath, Second Advent, State of the Dead, and others. You can enjoy these lectures while driving, working, or relaxing. Ideal for listening in your car while driving.

8) PROF. JON PAULIEN'S newly released DVD ALBUM video seminar on *Simply Revelation*. The four live video lectures focus on the essential messages of Revelation and their relevance for today. This mini *Revelation Seminar* will offer you and your congregation fresh insights into the Book of Revelation. Currently, Prof. Paulien is preparing a new *Revelation Seminar* at the request of the General Conference

9) PROF. JON PAULIEN'S CD ALBUM with a dozen of his books, and all his articles. 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.

10) PROF. GRAEME BRADFORD'S DVD ALBUM with a two hours video lecture on Ellen White. He shares the highlights of his book *More than a Prophet*. The album contains also Prof. Bradford's the publications and articles. A searchable data base enables you to access Prof. Graeme Bradford's published and unpublished writings, including his the latest book *More than a Prophet*.

11) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S CD ALBUM *REJOICE IN THE LORD*. The album consists of 11 sacred songs recorded with Marcelo Caceres, Professor of piano at Andrews University. The CD Album includes Gospel songs like How Great Thou Art, He Shall Feed His Flock, Softly and Tenderly, The Holy City, etc. You can play this audio recording in your car CD player, or on any CD or DVD players you have in your home.

12) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD ALBUM *SING UNTO THE LORD*. This DVD Album contains 12 sacred familiar songs that were recorded during a live sacred concert presented at Andrews University Pioneer Memorial Church. This is a video recording that you can enjoy in your living room and play in your church.

13) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD ALBUM *BY HIS GRACE*. This DVD album consists of 16 sacred songs recorded in Loma Linda with four high-definition cameras. The songs cover the major themes of God's creative and redemptive love. Her marvellous singing will touch your heart and inspire you to devote your life more fully to the Savior.

14) PROF. ROY GANE'S NEW DVD *ALTAR CALL: SACRIFICE, SANCTUARY, AND SALVATION*. The DVD contains four live video lectures on the relevance of the message of the sanctuary for today. You will learn how to get in touch with Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary where He is working to bring to completion His redemptive mission. Prof. Gane is rightly recognized an Adventist authority on the sanctuary which he currently teaches at Andrews University Theological Seminary.

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HOW TO CONTACT THE CENTER FOR CANCER CARE IN GOSHEN, INDIANA THAT TREATED MY CANCER

Two days following my 69th birthday, I learned that I had advanced-stage colon cancer requiring immediate surgery. Later I was told that the cancer had spread to the liver, infesting 90% of the organ and making its prognosis bleak. Several oncologists that I consulted, confirmed that I had Stage 4 terminal liver cancer, with only a few months to live. All what they could do was to prolong my life with chemotherapy for a few months or a year at best. No Cancer Center, including Loma Linda Cancer Center, had a clinical trial program for liver cancer. The impression I received is that nothing could be done to heal my cancer: I was doomed to die in a few months, at most a year.

Driven by my faith in God and optimistic attitude, I sought another opinion at the Center for Cancer Care in Goshen, Indiana, which is located only one hour away from Andrews University, where I live. Following a two-hour consultation with Dr. Seza Gulec (see the picture at my website by clicking <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/goshen>), a pioneer in the field of

nuclear oncology, I learned that my cancer was terminal but treatable with a combined strategy of chemotherapy and microsphere embolization - a treatment unavailable at most cancer centers. Within one month, the innovative treatment reduced the presence of liver cancer by almost 80% and decreased total tumor volume from 2435cc to 680cc. Within two months, two more treatments reduced my cancer by 95%.

Today I feel like a new man with a new lease on life. I feel like an old car with a decent looking body and a brand new motor. I have more energy than I have had earlier in my life. I can only thank God for His providential leading to the right place and for using the latest research to restore my health.

Click here to see the pictures of the various stages of my cancer: <http://www.biblicalpherspectives.com/goshen>

The Goshen Center for Cancer Care is one of the few treatment facilities in the world to offer this breakthrough technology primarily due to the commitment of Dr. Gulec. A world-renowned physician, Dr. Gulec has dedicated years to research and develop the combination therapy, which greatly increases survival rates in those with advanced types of cancer. He has also authored landmark publications in lymphatic mapping, sentinel node biopsy, radioguided surgery and radionuclide therapy. Dr. Gulec currently leads the endocrine surgery, hepatic oncology, molecular imaging and positron emission tomography programs at the Goshen Center for Cancer Care. To learn more about Dr. Seza Gulec click: <http://www.cancermidwest.com/main.asp?id=217>

Truly I can say that I believe that the Lord providentially placed me in contact with Dr. Gulec, who has done for me what appeared to be impossible. The Lord has used Dr. Gulec to give me a new lease on life. He is so proud of my recovery that he uses me as a show case at international nuclear oncological conferences. Now I feel like a new man energized to serve the Lord in a greater way in the sunset years of my life. Somehow I feel that I have more energy now than I had at 25 years of age.

You can contact the **CENTER FOR CANCER CARE** in Goshen, Indiana in the following ways:

1) **PHONE: (888) 491-4673**

2) **EMAIL: sgulec@goshenhealth.com**

3) **WEBSITES: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/goshen> or <http://www.cancermidwest.com/>**

INCREDIBLE NEW OFFERS ON HITACHI PROJECTORS

HITACHI has released the new **CP-X401 3000** lumens projector, which has an impressive high resolution, low fan noise, and a wealth of connectivity options. The most impressive feature of this projector is the incredible price of **only \$1395.00** to help especially our churches and schools in developing countries. The price includes a carrying case, a remote, DVD and VIDEO cables, and a three years replacement warranty.

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If you have a problem ordering online, simply call us at (269) 471-2915. We will take your order by phone. You can also email us your order at <sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com>, giving us your address, credit card number, and expiration date.

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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 about 30% discount.

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 best suits your church, 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.

BED & BREAKFAST FACILITIES IN LONDON, ENGLAND

If your travel plans call for a stop in London, you will be pleased to learn about a most gracious Adventist couple that offer the best accommodation and breakfast I have ever enjoyed. It has become my home away from home when in London. See details at: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/Promotions/BED&BREAKFAST.htm> Their new home phone numbers are: 020 8429-3140 or 020 8819-5708