

# THE TRINITY REVIEW

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

Number 391 Copyright 2026 The Trinity Foundation Post Office Box 68, Unicoi, Tennessee 37692 May, June 2026  
www.trinityfoundation.org Email: tjtrinityfound@aol.com Telephone: 423.743.0199

## *Romanism and the Reformation: Lecture 1* The Daniel Foreview of Romanism by Henry Grattan Guinness

*Editor's note: The following is Lecture 1 of 9 from Guinness' Romanism and the Reformation first published in 1887 then this second edition in 1891. Guinness follows the Historicist interpretation of eschatology.*

### Preface

The following lectures were delivered, by request, under the auspices of the Protestant Educational Institute, at Exeter Hall, in the spring of this year [1887]. That Institute exists to do a much-needed work to keep alive, especially in the hearts of the rising generation, some measure of intelligent sympathy with the Protestant traditions of our country. England's Protestantism has long been England's glory, and the direct cause of her unrivaled prosperity and peculiar preeminence among the nations of Europe. That Protestantism is now sustaining a double attack, from without and from within. Yet few seem fully alive to the danger. The late Lord Beaconsfield saw it clearly enough, however. "Your empire and your liberties are more in danger at this moment," he said, "than when Napoleon's army of observation was encamped at Boulogne." What would he have said had he lived to see the present position of affairs!

The Reformation of the sixteenth century, which gave birth to Protestantism, was based on Scripture. It gave back to the world the Bible. It taught the Scriptures; it exposed the errors and corruptions of Rome by the use of the sword of the Spirit. It

applied the Prophecies and accepted their practical guidance. Such Reformation work requires to be done afresh. We have suffered prophetic anti-papal truth to be too much forgotten. This generation is dangerously latitudinarian indifferent to truth and error on points on which Scripture is tremendously decided and absolutely clear.

These lectures, simple and popular as they are, will, it is hoped, open many minds to perceive that the Bible gives no uncertain sound as to Romanism, and that those who will be guided by its teachings must shun an apostasy against which the sorest judgments are denounced.

The lectures are given as delivered, with the exception of the first and last, which have been extended and modified. In recasting and enlarging the opening lecture on the Daniel foreview, and the closing one on the Reformation, I have availed myself of the valuable help of my beloved wife, who has for so many years been my fellow laborer both in literary and evangelistic work.

I shall rejoice if these lectures obtain a wide circulation, for they contain, I am sure, truth for the times, truth deeply and increasingly needed, not only for the preservation of the civil and religious liberties of our country and empire, but for the practical guidance of the people of God in these last days.

H. Grattan Guinness, Harley House, Bow E. June 1<sup>st</sup> 1887

## Preface to the Second Edition

From the first appearance of these lectures in the form in which they were originally published, I have been urged to produce a cheap popular edition suited for wide-spread distribution. I do so now the more willingly because the need of testimony to Protestant Truth is increasing instead of diminishing. Romanism and Ritualism are making extensive progress year by year and seriously imperil "The Protestant Religion and Liberties of England." The duty of diffusing information on the true character and history of "Romanism and the Reformation" is one which presses on God's faithful people in these days. The apathy of many as to the present crisis only increases the danger and intensifies the call for clear and cogent teaching suited to counteract the Rome-ward tendencies of these times. The testimony of Scripture, especially of the "sure word of Prophecy," should be set forth afresh, as in the days of the Reformation that those in danger of departing from the faith once delivered to the saints may be warned, and those who have so departed may be delivered. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Our combat is with error, therefore let us diffuse the Truth. Books and pamphlets bearing on the questions at issue, and taking the side of Truth, should be circulated by the million. Let our readers do what they can in this direction, without delay, committing the result to Him who has promised that His word shall not return to Him void, but shall accomplish the ends for which He has sent it.

H. Grattan Guinness, Harley House, Bow, London, E., May 1<sup>st</sup> 1891

## Lecture 1 The Daniel Foreview of Romanism

Fifty years ago, the eminent statesman, Sir Robert Peel said, with remarkably clear foresight: "The day is not distant, and it may be very near, when we shall all have to fight the battle of the Reformation over again."

That day has come. It has been upon us for some time. It has found us unprepared, and as a result the battle is to some extent going against us. More than three centuries of emancipation from the yoke of Rome, three hundred years of Bible light and liberty had made us overconfident and led us to

underestimate the power and influence of the deadliest foe, not only of the Gospel of God, but also of Protestant England. Britain's honorable distinction of being the leading witness among the nations for the truth of the Gospel and against the errors of Romanism had come to be lightly esteemed among us. Our fathers won this distinction through years of sore struggle and strife; they purchased it with their best blood and prized it as men prize that which costs them dear. It had cost us nothing, we were born to it; we knew not its value by contrast as they did. In the early part of this century the power of Rome was in these lands a thing of the past, and it seemed to be fast decaying even in other lands. The notion grew up among us that there was no need to fear any revival of that deadly upas tree, which is the blight of all that is great and good, pure and prosperous. The light of true knowledge had forever dispelled the dark fogs of superstition, so it was supposed; medieval tyrannies and cruelties cloaked under a pretense of religion could never again obtain a footing in these lands of light and liberty. We might despise and deride the corruptions and follies of Rome, but as to dreading her influence – no. She was too far gone and too feeble to inspire fear, or even watchfulness.

This was all a delusion, and we have been roughly undeceived. The difficult and dangerous crisis through which England is now passing is the direct result of the course of action taken under this delusion, and God only knows what the ultimate consequences may be. A serpent may be scotched yet not killed; it may retain life enough to turn and inflict on its foe a fatal wound. The ground may be purged from a destructive weed, but the little remnants left behind may sprout and spread so as speedily to pervade the plot anew. It has been thus with Romish influence in Protestant England.

Let facts speak. Fifty years ago, there were not five hundred Roman priests in Great Britain; now there are two thousand six hundred. Fifty years ago, there were not five hundred chapels; now there are fifteen hundred and seventy-five. Fifty years ago, there were no monasteries at all in Britain; now there are two hundred and twenty-five. There were even then sixteen convents, but now there are over four hundred of these barred and bolted and impenetrable prisons, in which fifteen thousand Englishwomen are kept prisoners at the mercy of a

celibate clergy, who have power, unless their behests are obeyed, to inflict on these hapless and helpless victims torture under the name of penance. Fifty years ago there were but two colleges in our land for the training of Roman Catholic priests *i.e.*, of men bound by oath to act in England as the agents of a foreign power, the one great object of which is avowed to be the dismemberment of our empire and the ruin of our influence in the world; now there are twenty-nine such schools. And, strangest of all, England, who once abolished monasteries and appropriated to national uses the ill-gotten gains of Rome, is now actually endowing Romanism in her empire to the extent of over a million pounds of money per annum. The exact amount is 1,052,657 pounds.

Results even more serious have arisen from the dropping on the part of evangelical Christianity of its distinctive testimony against Romish doctrine and practice. An apostasy has taken place in the Reformed Church of England itself, and multitudes of its members, uninstructed in the true nature and history of the Church of Rome, and ignorant of the prophetic teachings of Scripture about it, have rejoiced in a return to many of the corruptions of doctrine and practice which their forefathers died to abolish. Our reformed faith is thus endangered both from without and from within, and it can be defended only by a resolute return to the true witness at home by saints and martyrs of other days. We must learn afresh from Divine prophecy God's estimate of the character of the Church of Rome if we would be moved afresh to be witnesses for Christ against this great apostasy.

As Protestants, as Christians, as free men, as philanthropists, as those who are acquainted with the teachings of history, we deplore the existing state of things; we regard all these changes as a retrograde movement of the most dangerous character, and we feel constrained to renew the grand old *protest* to which the world owes its modern acquisitions of liberty, knowledge, peace, and prosperity. We recognize it as a patent and undeniable fact, that the future of our race lies not with Papists, but with Protestants. Its leading nations this day are not Papal Italy, Spain, and Portugal, but Protestant Germany, England, and America. What has made the difference? The nations that embraced the Reformation movement

of the sixteenth century have never since ceased to advance in political power, social prosperity, philanthropic enterprise, and general enlightenment; while the nations that refused it and held fast to the corruptions of Rome have as steadily retrograded in all these respects.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”

The present course of lectures is intended to arouse fresh attention to the great controversy between the Church of Rome and evangelical Churches. In this war the Roman army stands on one side and Protestantism in one unbroken phalanx on the other. The regiments of Rome wear but one scarlet uniform, fly but one Papal flag, and use in their religious ceremonies but one dead language – Latin; the Protestant army, on the other hand, consists of many divisions, clad in differing uniforms, flying different flags, and speaking different tongues. But, like the composite hosts of Germany in the struggle with France, they are all the stronger for their voluntary union; they can cordially join in the great struggle. The secondary denominational differences existing between Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Nonconformists are all lost sight of in their common conflict with Rome; and the sole issue is between those who hold to the old gospel of Christ, and those who teach another gospel – which is not another.

Our subject in these lectures is Romanism and the Reformation from the standpoint of prophecy: that is, we propose to give you, not any merely human view of the subject, but the Divine view; not the opinions of the lecturer about it, but the teachings of prophets and apostles, the judgment of the only wise God as expressed in His sacred Word, in this blessed Divine revelation which sheds its beams on every subject of interest to the people of God. It is a fact that though the canon of Scripture was closed ages before Romanism began to exist, and fifteen centuries before the Reformation, yet it presents the Divine judgment as to both. The Bible records the past in its histories and the future in its prophecies, which are simply history written beforehand. It expresses moreover moral judgments as to the individuals it describes and the acts which it records, and it similarly expresses moral judgments respecting the individuals and actions which it predicts. It warned the Church against the wiles of

Rome Papal, even from the days of Rome Pagan. John, the victim of Nero and Domitian, painted for posterity pictures of the martyrs of the Inquisition, and of the cruelties of tyrants more merciless than the Caesars.

In viewing this question from the standpoint of prophecy, consequently, our object is, not merely to trace the fulfillment of sacred prediction in the broad facts of history, as a proof of the inspiration of Scripture – though our lectures must of course do that – but it is even more to present the Divine view of the Roman Papal system, to show what infinite reprobation and abhorrence Scripture pours upon it, and what an awful doom it denounces against it. If we know what God thinks of any system, we know what we ought to think of it and how we ought to act towards it. Forewarned is forearmed. Had the youth of the last two or three generations of England been carefully instructed in the Scriptures bearing on this subject, we should not have lived to see our country troubled and in peril of dismemberment through Jesuit intrigues, nor our national Church divided against itself, to its own imminent danger, and one section of it relapsing into the apostasy from which the Reformation had delivered it.

Let me first define distinctly the three terms in our title – Romanism, the Reformation, and Prophecy. Let me answer the questions: What is Romanism? What was the Reformation? What is Prophecy?

I. *Romanism Is Apostate Latin Christianity* not apostate Christianity merely, but apostate *Latin* Christianity. The Greek Church, the Armenian Church, the Coptic Church are all apostate in greater or lesser degrees, and the Protestant Church itself has no small measure of apostasy in it; but it is of Romanism, or Latin Christianity, alone that we now speak, because it is the great and terrible power of evil so largely predicted by the prophet Daniel and by the Apostle John; it is the special apostasy which bulks most largely in prophecy, and it is the culmination of Christian apostasy. It includes all whose public worship is conducted in Latin and who own allegiance to the Pope of Rome.

Dean Milman's history of the Church of Rome is called *The History of Latin Christianity*. Archbishop Trench speaks of Gregory the Great as "the last of the Latin Fathers, and the first in the modern sense of the popes," and says he "did more than any other

to set the Church forward on the new lines on which it must travel, to constitute a Latin Christianity with distinctive features of its own, such as broadly separate it from the Greek."<sup>1</sup> Romanism is this Latin Christianity become apostate.

II. The Reformation was a *Return to Primitive or Non-Apostate Christianity* accomplished between three and four centuries ago in this country, in Germany, and some other countries of Europe. One feature of this great movement was the abandonment of the use of Latin in public worship, and the translation of the Scriptures into living language, so that all nations might read the Word of God in their own tongue and understand for themselves its sacred messages. The names of Luther, Zwingli, Erasmus, Tyndale, Knox, Calvin, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, Hooper, and others, are associated with this "Reformation."

III. And, in the third place, Prophecy is *the Divinely Given Mirror of the Future*. "Things not seen as yet" are reflected on its surface with more or less distinctness. They may be partially discerned beforehand and clearly identified when the time of fulfillment comes. Thus, the first advent of Christ was shown, though but as in a glass darkly, thousands of years before it took place; and so the tragic episodes of the siege of Jerusalem were presented to the mind of Moses ages before the city was even built. Romanism and the Reformation both lay afar in the distant future when Daniel and John foresaw their history; but their prophetic visions and writings reflect both one and the other with a distinctness and clearness which is the exact equivalent of their magnitude and importance in the history of the Church and of the world.

Bear in mind these three brief definitions:

1. Romanism is apostate Latin Christianity.
2. The Reformation was a return to primitive non-apostate Christianity accomplished three centuries ago.
3. Prophecy is the mirror of the future.

Let us next inquire, What is this Romanism, or Latin Christianity, as distinguished from Greek, or Protestant, or any other form of the faith of Christ? As to its doctrines and practices, we will answer this question later on in our course of lectures, quoting from its own acknowledged standards. For the present we must confine ourselves to a

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mediaeval Church History*, 14.

consideration of its history. But before I give you a brief outline of this, I may state that there are three distinct sets of prophecies of the rise, character, deeds, and doom of Romanism. The first is found in the book of *Daniel*, the second in the epistles of Paul, and the third in the letters and *Apocalypse* of John; and no one of these three is complete in itself. It is only by combining their separate features that we obtain the perfect portrait. Just as we cannot derive from one *Gospel* a complete life of Christ, but in order to obtain this must take into account the records in the other three: so we cannot from one prophecy gather a correct account of antichrist; we must add to the particulars given in one those supplied by the other two. Some features are given in all three prophecies, just as the death and resurrection of Christ are given in all four *Gospels*. Others are given in only two, and others are peculiar to one. As might be expected from the position and training of the prophet who was a statesman and a governor in Babylon, Daniel's foreview presents the *political* character and relations of Romanism. The Apostle Paul's foreview, on the other hand, gives *ecclesiastical* character and relations of this power; and John's prophecies, both in *Revelation* 13 and 17, present the *combination of both*, the mutual relations of the Latin Church and the Roman State. He uses composite figures, one part of which represents the political aspect of Romanism as a temporal government, and the other its religious aspect as an ecclesiastical system.

In this lecture we deal with Daniel's political foreview, with his predictions of the great power of evil which was revealed to him as destined to arise in the fourth empire, and which he describes in chapter 7 of his book. Before we consider this prophecy you must allow me briefly to recall a few well-known historical facts, that none can deny or question.

The last twenty-five centuries of human history – that is, the story of the leading nations of the earth since the days of Nebuchadnezzar – has been divided into two chronologically equal parts, each lasting for about twelve and a half centuries. During the first half of this period four great heathen empires succeeded each other in the rule of the then known earth the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. They lasted from the eighth century before Christ to the fifth century of

our era and ended with the fall of the last emperor of Rome, Romulus Augustulus, AD 476. During the second half of this period no one great empire has ever ruled over the whole sphere dominated by these old pagan governments. Power has been more divided, and modern kingdoms have replaced ancient empires. A commonwealth of nations has, for the last twelve hundred years, existed in the territory once governed by old Rome, and no monarch has ever succeeded in subjecting them all to himself. This makes a broad distinction between ancient and modern times, and the dividing line is the fall of the old Roman Empire, the break-up of the last form of ancient civilization, the one which preceded our modern Christian civilization.

Rome itself, that great and ancient city, was founded about the beginning of the long period I have named and has therefore been in existence for nearly two thousand six hundred years, though for many centuries it had but a local reputation. Gradually it rose to importance, and in the second century before Christ it attained supremacy in the Earth. After that it was for about five hundred years the magnificent metropolis of the last and mightiest of the four great empires of antiquity, the seat of its government – the very heart and center of the then known world. Nineveh and Babylon had each in its day been great metropolitan cities of wonderful size, wealth, and influence; but the realms they ruled were small compared to those over which Rome in its zenith of power exercised her imperial sway. She was for long ages, in the esteem of all civilized nations as well as in her own, “mistress of the world.” Her proud pre-eminence of position was based on an unequaled degree of military strength and power. It was a rule, not of right, but of might, and it subjected the world to itself. Remains still extant, not only in all parts of Europe, but in Africa and Asia, and above all in Rome itself, sufficiently attest the wide extent of the sway of Rome, the luxury of her princes and people, and the refinements of her civilization. Roman roads, Roman camps, Roman baths, Roman coins, statues, and remains of every kind abound, even in our own little isle, some of which have been examined with interest by most of us. Roman laws, Roman literature, and the fundamental relation of the Latin language to the languages of modern Europe afford clearer evidences still of the universal, mighty, and

long-enduring influence of the ancient masters of the world.

Up to the beginning of the fourth century of our era Rome was a pagan city, and the emperor was the high priest of its religion. The ruins of its old heathen shrines still adorn the city. The Pantheon, which is now a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs, was formerly a heathen temple dedicated to Cybele and all the gods of the ancient mythology. But in the fourth century of our era heathenism fell prostrate before that faith of Christ which for three centuries Rome had persecuted and sought to exterminate; the religion of Jesus of Nazareth overthrew the religion of Jupiter Olympius, and the Emperor Constantine established Christianity as the creed of the world. Rome had become the seat of a Christian bishop before that date, and in the division and decay of the Roman Empire which soon followed, this bishop, owing to his metropolitan position, became a person of great importance and the head of Latin Christianity. As other rulers passed away, and as the power of Rome waned before the hordes of Gothic and Vandal invaders, the Christian bishopric, sole survival of the old institutions in Rome, raised its head like a rocky reef in the midst of a wild expanse of roaring billows. It remained when all else failed around it. At first, it had itself been a small, weak, new thing under the shadow of a great, mighty, and ancient power. But time brought changes, and gradually it became the stable, strong, and only ancient thing in the midst of the turbulent young Gothic nations into which the fragments of the old Roman dominions slowly crystallized. To these rude and recently evangelized people the Church of Rome was naturally the mother Church, and the Bishop of Rome the chief of Christian bishops. The tendency of the Latin episcopate thus enthroned in the old metropolis of the world, in the midst of ignorant, superstitious, and childlike Gothic nations, was to become first a monarchical, and then an imperial power. This tendency was deep and enduring; it worked for centuries, till at last it produced that singular blasphemous usurpation and tyrannical government which we call the Papacy.

The rise of this power was, like all great growths, gradual and slow. From the middle of the fifth century to the end of the thirteenth – *i.e.*, for between eight and nine hundred years it was

steadily waxing greater and greater, rising higher and higher, reaching forth its branches more widely, and making more extravagant claims and pretensions. Time would of course fail me to trace the rise of ecclesiastical power in the Middle Ages to the monstrous proportions it assumed in the thirteenth century. After the conversion of Constantine, when Christianity became the established religion of the Roman world, the Church passed rapidly from a state of persecution, poverty, and distress to one of honor, wealth, and ease; and it degenerated as rapidly from its early purity. Covetousness and avarice came in like a flood, and ecclesiastical power became an object of eager ambition, even to ungodly men. The bishop was a wealthy, influential, worldly dignitary, instead of a humble Christian pastor. Opulence poured in upon the priesthood, alike from the fears and the affections of their converts; and their intellectual superiority over the barbarian nations had the effect of increasing still more their ascendancy. The time came when they alone retained any semblance of learning, or could prepare a treaty or write a document, or teach princes to read. By a variety of sordid frauds, they contrived to secure to the Church immense wealth and an enormous share of the land. But they recognized their own subjection to the secular power and respected mutually each other's independence. Claims to supremacy over other bishops began however before long to be advanced by the bishops of Rome, sometimes on one ground and sometimes on another, but it was long before they were admitted.

Papal authority indeed made no great progress beyond the bounds of Italy until the end of the sixth century. At this period the celebrated Gregory I, a talented, active, and ambitious man, was Bishop of Rome. He stands at the meeting place of ancient and medieval history, and his influence had a marked effect on the growth of Latin Christianity. He exalted his own position very highly in his correspondence and intercourse with other bishops and with the sovereigns of Western Europe, with whom he was in constant communication. Claims that had previously been only occasionally suggested were now systematically pressed and urged. He dwelt much on the power conferred on the bishops of Rome in the possession of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which were committed to

Peter and his successors. The Gothic nations were too ignorant to unravel the sophistries of this clever and determined priest, and they permitted him to assume a kind of oversight of their ecclesiastical matters.

His successor, Boniface III, carried these pretensions still higher. He was the last of the bishops of Rome and the first of the popes. In his days the claim to supremacy over all other bishops was, not only definitely made, but it was acknowledged by the secular power and confirmed by an imperial edict. The wicked usurper Phocas, to serve his own selfish purposes, conceded to Boniface III in AD 607 the headship over all the Churches of Christendom. A pillar is still standing in Rome which was erected in memory of this important concession. This was a tremendous elevation, the first upward step on the ladder that led the bishops of Rome from the humble pastorate of a local Church to the mightiest throne in Europe. But still all that was claimed or granted was simple episcopacy, though of a universal kind; no thought of secular government existed at this period. The matter, however, did not stop here. This supreme episcopal jurisdiction led to constant interferences of the Roman bishop in the affairs of the various nations of Christendom, and to ever-increasing pretensions to authority in matters secular as well as ecclesiastical, until five hundred years later, in AD 1073, Pope Gregory VII took a great stride in advance and established a *Theocracy on Earth*.

He was the first who claimed, as the representative of Deity, to be above all the kings of the world. This proud and self-exalting man strove, and strove successfully, not only to emancipate the spiritual power from all control by the State, not only to secure for it absolute independence, but, further, to subject the secular power of princes to the spiritual power of priests, and thus to establish at Rome in his own person and in the succession of the Roman pontiffs an absolute and supreme ruler of the world. Nor did he propound this new and startling doctrine as a theory only. With daring and audacity, he excommunicated the German emperor Henry IV, released his subjects from allegiance to him, and forbade them to obey him as sovereign.<sup>2</sup>

He actually succeeded in exacting humiliating concessions from the emperor, and yet he subsequently bestowed his kingdom on another. This pope turned the bishopric of Rome into a universal and unlimited monarchy, and the sovereigns of Europe were unable to oppose his unprecedented usurpations. He established also an undisguised and irresistible despotism over the national Churches in other lands, by enacting that no bishop in the Catholic Church should enter on the exercise of his functions until the pope had continued his election, a law of far-reaching and vast importance, by which perhaps more than by any other means Rome sustained for centuries her temporal power as well as her ecclesiastical influence.

Many of the constant quarrels between our own early English kings and the popes of Rome, as well as many similar feuds on the Continent, arose out of this flagrant usurpation of national rights and invasion of national liberties. It virtually took from the Churches the power to appoint their own bishops and placed them under a foreign despotism. The clergy of all nations were by this time enslaved to the Papacy, and by obeying its bulls of excommunication and giving effect to its interdicts they placed in the pope's hand a lever to move the world. During the interdict the churches in a country were all closed, bells silent, the dead unburied; no masses could be performed, no rites except those of baptism and extreme unction celebrated. This state of things was so dreadful to a superstitious age, that monarchs were obliged to yield lest their people should revolt. The result of every such interdict was an increase to the power of the Papacy, and they soon brought all refractory rulers in Europe to terms.

When the maxims of Gregory VII had been acted out for a century, and the power to trample on the necks of kings had come to be regarded by churchmen as an inherent right of the Papacy, the proud spirit of Papal aggression reached its climax. The period of climax may be dated from the

---

Henry and all his adherents I excommunicate and bind in the fetters of anathema; on the part of God Almighty, and on yours, I interdict him of all royal power and dignity. I prohibit every Christian from rendering him obedience as king. I absolve all who have sworn or shall swear allegiance to his sovereignty from their oaths." – Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, volume, 4, 121.

<sup>2</sup> "Wherefore, trusting in the justice and mercy of God, and of his blessed mother, the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, on your authority (that of St. Peter and St. Paul), the above-named

pontificate of Innocent III, AD 1198. The leading objects which the Roman pontiffs had steadily pursued for centuries seemed at last attained: independent sovereignty, absolute supremacy over the Christian Church, and full control over the princes of Europe.

The historian Hallam says of this man: "He was formidable beyond all his predecessors, perhaps beyond all his successors. On every side the thunder of Rome broke over the heads of princes."<sup>3</sup> He excommunicated Sweno, king of Norway; threatened the king of Hungary to alter the succession; put the kingdom of Castile under an interdict; and when Philip Augustus of France refused at his bidding to take back his repudiated wife, Innocent did not hesitate to punish the whole nation by putting France also under the same dreaded penalty, until her king humbly submitted to the pope's behest. King John of England and Philip II of Aragon were both constrained to resign their kingdoms and receive them back as spiritual fiefs from the Roman pontiff, who claimed also the right to decide the election of the emperors of Germany by his confirmation or veto. "The noonday of Papal dominion extends from the pontificate of Innocent III inclusively to that of Boniface VIII, or, in other words, throughout the thirteenth century. Rome inspired during this age all the terror of her ancient name; she was once more the mistress of the world, and kings were her vassals."<sup>4</sup>

Innocent III claimed also the right to dispense with both civil and canon law when he pleased, and to decide cases by the plenitude of his own inherent power. He dispensed also with the obligation of promises made on oaths, undermining thus the force of contracts and treaties. The military power of the Papacy dates also from this man, as the crusades had left him in possession of an army. Systematic

persecution of so-called heretics began also in this pontificate. The corruptions, cruelties, and assumptions of the Papacy had become so intolerable that protests were making themselves heard in many quarters. It was felt these must be silenced at any cost, and a wholesale slaughter of heretics was commenced with a view to their extermination. The Inquisition was founded, the Albigenses and Waldenses were murderously persecuted, and superstition and tyranny were at their height. From this century Papal persecution of the witnesses for the truth never ceased until the final establishment of Protestantism at the end of the seventeenth century.

In AD 1294 Boniface VIII became pope, and by his superior audacity he threw into the shade even Innocent III. He deserves to be designated the most usurping of mankind, as witness his celebrated bull *Unam Sanctam*. In this document the full claims of the Papacy come out. We have noted several ever-increasing stages of Papal assumption already, but now we reach the climax – the claim which, if it were a true one, would abundantly justify all the rest; we reach the towering pinnacle and topmost peak of human self-exaltation. What was the claim of Boniface VIII? It was that *the Pope represents God on Earth*.

As this claim is the most extraordinary and audacious ever made by mortal man, I will state it, not in my own words, but in the words of the highest Papal authority. In the summary of things concerning the dignity, authority, and infallibility of the pope, set forth by Boniface VIII, are these words: "The pope is of so great dignity and excellence, that he is not merely man, but as if God, and the vicar of God (*non simplex homo, sed par quasi Deus, et Dei vicarius*). The pope alone is called most holy...Divine monarch, and supreme emperor, and king of kings. The pope is of so great dignity and power, that he constitutes one and the same tribunal with Christ (*faciat unum et idem tribunal cum Christo*), so that whatsoever the pope does seems to proceed from the mouth of God (*ab ore Deo*). The pope is as God on earth (*papa est Quasi Deus in Terra*)."

That which was claimed by Boniface VIII in the thirteenth century has been claimed ever since by a succession of popes down to Pius IX and Leo XIII in the nineteenth century. The pope speaks today as

---

<sup>3</sup> "The three great sovereigns of western Europe, the kings of Germany, of France, and of England, had seen their realms under Papal interdict, themselves under sentence of excommunication. But the Papal power under Innocent aspired to humble not only the loftiest. Hardly one of the smaller kingdoms had not already been taught, or was not soon taught, to feel the awful majesty of the Papacy. From the Northern Ocean to Hungary, from Hungary to the Spanish shore of the Atlantic, Innocent is exercising what takes the language of protective or parental authority, but which in most cases is asserted by the terrible interdict." – Milman, volume 5, 805.

<sup>4</sup> Hallam, *History of the Middle Ages*, 368, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.

the Vicar of Christ, as God's vice-regent. The great ecumenical council of 1870 [Vatican 1] proclaimed him such and declared him to be *infallible*! A professor of history in the Roman university, writing on the council of 1870, uses the following language, which strikingly expresses the Papal ideal: "The pope is not a power among men to be venerated like another. But he is a power altogether Divine. He is the propounder and teacher of the law of the Lord in the whole universe; he is the supreme leader of the nations, to guide them in the way of eternal salvation; he is the common father and universal guardian of the whole human species in the name of God. The human species has been perfected in its natural qualities by Divine revelation and by the incarnation of the Word, and has been lifted up into a supernatural order, in which alone it can find its temporal and eternal felicity. The treasures of revelation, the treasures of truth, the treasures of righteousness, the treasures of supernatural graces upon earth, have been deposited by God in the hands of one man, who is the sole dispenser and keeper of them. The life-giving work of the Divine incarnation, work of wisdom, of love, of mercy, is ceaselessly continued in the ceaseless action of one man, thereto ordained by Providence. This man is the pope. This is evidently implied in his designation itself, the Vicar of Christ. For if he holds the place of Christ upon earth that means that he continues the work of Christ in the world and is in respect of us what Christ would be if He were here below, Himself visibly governing the Church."<sup>5</sup>

Do you hear these words? Do you take them in? Do you grasp the thought which they express? Do you perceive the main idea and central principle of the Papacy? The pope is not simply man, but "as if God" and "the vicar of God," as God on Earth. No wonder the sentence is addressed to every pope on his coronation, "Know thou art the father of princes and kings, and the governor of the world"; no wonder that he is worshipped by cardinals and archbishops and bishops, by priests and monks and nuns innumerable, by all the millions of [Roman] Catholics throughout the world; no wonder that he has dethroned monarchs and given away kingdoms, dispensed pardons and bestowed indulgences,

canonized saints, remitted purgatorial pains, promulgated dogmas, and issued bulls and laws and extravagants, laid empires under interdicts, bestowed benedictions, and uttered anathemas!

Who is like unto him on Earth? What are great men, philosophers, statesmen, conquerors, princes, kings, and even emperors, of the earth compared to *him*? Their glory is of the earth, earthy; his is from above, it is Divine! He is the representative of Christ, the Creator and Redeemer, the Lord of all. He is as Christ; he takes the place of Christ. He is as God, as God on Earth. This blasphemous notion is the keystone of the entire Papal arch; it is the stupendous axis on which the whole Papal world has rotated for ages and is rotating at this hour.

But to complete this very brief sketch of the history of Romanism, I may just remind you that the long and checkered decline of Papal dominion may be dated from the pontificate of Boniface VIII, from the end of the thirteenth century. Early in the next century Clement V took the strange and fatal step of removing the seat of Papal government from Rome to Avignon, where it remained for seventy years, greatly to the detriment of its authority and power. There it was to some extent dependent on the court of France, and it also lost the affections of Italy and the prestige of Rome. Then came the great schism which seriously weakened and discredited the Papacy. Rival popes ruled at Rome and Avignon. Corruption and rapacity, demoralization and disaffection rapidly increased, and there supervened that darkest hour of the night which precedes the dawn.

Ere long Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, arose, and at last came the blessed movement itself, with Martin Luther and the rest of the reformers, which delivered Germany, England, and other lands from the Papal yoke, dividing Christendom into two camps, Romanist and Protestant. Vainly did Rome seek with frantic efforts to arrest or reverse this movement! Hecatombs of martyrs, oceans of blood, centuries of war could not stop it. At the beginning of the sixteenth century Rome boasted that not a single heretic could be found; now Christendom contains a hundred and fifty millions of those whom the Papacy calls heretics, and whom it would exterminate by fire and sword if it could. It did succeed in crushing out the Reformation movement

---

<sup>5</sup> Cited in Revelation William Arthur, *The Pope, the Kings, and the People*, Volume 1, 211.

in France, Spain and Italy by awful Inquisition tortures, by bloody massacres, by cruel wars, by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by the deeds of such men as Philip of Spain with his armada, and the Duke of Alva with his cruelties in the Netherlands. Rome recovered some of the ground she lost in the Reformation, and she still exercises spiritual power over a hundred and eighty millions of mankind. Though her temporal power was overthrown for a time in the French Revolution, and to the joy of Italy brought to an end in 1870, her claim to it is in no wise abated, nor her pretension that she has a right to rule the world. The religion of Rome has so disgusted the continental nations that, knowing nothing better, they have drifted into practical infidelity, and with one consent, they have to a large extent despoiled the Church of her revenues, secularized her property and her religious houses, and repudiated her interference in their respective governments.

For the last five hundred years the authority of the Papacy has been declining. "Slowly and silently receding from their claims to temporal power, the pontiffs hardly protect their dilapidated citadel from the revolutionary concussions of modern times, the rapacity of governments, and the growing aversion to ecclesiastical influence. Those who know what Rome has once been are best able to appreciate what she is. Those who have seen the thunderbolt in the hands of the Gregories and the Innocents will hardly be intimidated at the sallies of decrepitude, the impotent dart of Priam amid the crackling ruins of Troy." So wrote Henry Hallam in the early part of this century; and while the fall of the temporal power has since taken place, and carried to low-water mark that steady ebb tide of Papal influence which he alleges, yet there has been during the last half century a revival of Romish influence in Protestant nations, which Hallam probably did not expect. I must not pause to estimate the causes or the importance of this revival here but shall have occasion to allude to it again later on.

Let me now propose to you a puzzle. It is to condense into some brief, simple sentences, which could be read in a few minutes, an accurate, comprehensive, graphic summary of the thirteen hundred years of Papal history. Milman's *History of Latin Christianity* is here on the table. It occupies nine octavo volumes and would take weeks to read.

Ranke's *History of the Popes* is three volumes and does not cover the whole subject. D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation* is five volumes and takes up only one episode of the long story. The Papacy has existed for thirteen centuries, has had to do with forty or fifty generations of mankind in all the countries of Christendom. Its history is consequently extremely complicated and various. It embraces both secular and ecclesiastical matters and has more or less to do with all that has happened in Europe since the fall of the old Roman Empire. The time is long, the sphere is vast, the story exceedingly complex. I want you to tell it all, in outline at least in a narrative that you could read in less than five minutes or write in ten. You must bring in every point of importance: the time and circumstances of the origin of the Papacy, its moral character, its political relations, its geographical seat, its self-exalting utterances and acts, its temporal sovereignty, and a comparison of the extent of its dominions with those of the other kingdoms of Europe; its blasphemous pretensions, its cruel and long-continued persecutions of God's people, the duration of its dominion, its present decay, and the judgments that have overtaken it; and you must moreover add what you think its end is likely to be, and explain the relation of the whole history to the revealed plan of Divine providence.

You must get all this not in the dry style of an annual Times summary of the events of the year but in an interesting, vivid, picturesque style, that will impress the facts on the memory, so that to forget them shall be impossible.

Can you do it? I might safely offer a prize of any amount to the person who can solve this puzzle and write this story as I have described. But hard, even impossible as it would be for you to do this, even if you perfectly knew the history of the last thirteen centuries, how infinitely impossible would it be if that history lay in the unknown and inscrutable future, instead of in the past and present! If no eye had seen, nor ear heard it; if it was an untraversed continent, an unseen world, a matter for the evolution of the ages yet to come – who then could tell the story at all, much less in brief?

Now this is precisely what the prophet Daniel, by inspiration of the omniscient and eternal God, has done. He told the whole story of the Papacy twenty-five centuries ago. He omitted none of the points I

have enumerated, and yet the prophecy only occupies seventeen verses of a chapter which can be read slowly and impressively in less than five minutes. This is because it was written in the only language in which it is possible thus to compress *multum in parvo*, the ancient language of hieroglyphics. God revealed the future to Daniel by a vision in which he saw, not the events, but the living, moving, speaking hieroglyphics of the events. These Daniel simply describes, and his description of them constitutes the prophecy written in the seventh chapter of his book. Our consideration of this remarkable prediction we must however postpone for the present, as we have already claimed your attention long enough for one lecture.