

**REPORT OF THE RELIGION AND
MORALS COMMITTEE
Convener: Rev. G. G. Hutton**

RELIGION

Romanism and Paedophilia

The Roman Catholic Church is reeling worldwide as allegations concerning sexual abuse keep coming into the public domain. The greatest focus is on America where Cardinal Bernard Law in 1984, just before being ordained Cardinal of Boston, this making him the most powerful Roman Catholic in America, said, "After Boston, there's only heaven". Just weeks after Law's ordination John Geoghan, a priest, was accused of sexual misdemeanours. After counselling, Geoghan was then transferred to another parish where he re-offended, then to another parish. He was eventually convicted for molesting a total of 130 boys. Eighty-six victims sued the archdiocese, and Law was eager to settle, but when in March 2002 another 150 people filed similar suits, his financial committee advised him to withdraw agreement to settle with the others. When forced to testify in a civil action his lack of sympathy for the victims compared badly with the indulgence and forgiveness he offered to criminal priests. The arrest of Paul Shanley, one of the Cardinal's associates, for the rape of ten boys, however, proved the final straw, for it was revealed that despite Shanley's public pronouncements in favour of paedophilia, the Cardinal approved of his transfer to a New York student hostel in 1995.

The *Evangelical Times* of June 2002 states, "The suits for damages have begun to affect the Roman Catholic Church in America where it really hurts – in its wallet. It is estimated that since 1985 it has paid out in excess of \$1 million in financial settlements. . . . What the Vatican tried to dismiss as 'the American problem' is likely to cost it dear." The Boston archdiocese has let it be known that it is prepared to declare bankruptcy rather than agree to the \$1 million damages claimed by victims of sexual abuse. It seems that in such circumstances the Vatican claims to be a sovereign State, and therefore cannot be sued despite the church money which flows into her. The truth, of course, is that the Vatican is really a political entity, which uses religion, with the consequent destruction of countless souls, to further a political agenda, in which the whole world will be ruled by the Papacy, and her enemies destroyed. Many Roman Catholics have stopped contributing to their church, figures showing a drop of \$800,000 for one month. Fifty-eight priests from Law's diocese asked him to resign. The backlash against the Roman Church reached new heights in the acquittal by the court of a man charged with shooting a priest, and wounding him. He had been abused by the priest as a boy. He was cleared of attempted murder, and the jury asked for leniency.

Among cases made public in a dossier was a priest who destroyed young girls training to be nuns and by making them his "brides". Law merely sent him

to another parish. Another traded cocaine for sex with choirboys, and when found out he too was transferred. Many victims were in the fearful situation of having their abuser as their confessor. There was a total unwillingness to laicise these men or to take away their church privileges. No one underestimates the seriousness of this scandal, in particular, the revelations of the Church's role in covering up for priests who raped and molested children. "It is undoubtedly the greatest crisis in the modern Catholic Church since Henry VIII split from Rome," says Father Richard O'Brien of the Catholic University of Notre Dame in Indiana. There is a call for an end to celibacy, and this is also prompted by the huge decline in the number of priests. Since 1970 the men studying to be priests in the USA has fallen from 18,000 to 3,500 at present.

"Law's snivelling letter to the diocese, addressing the scandal, was neither one of explanation, nor one of apology. While the bodies and minds of hundreds of children were being sacrificed, through his inaction, he was moving his wily wolves between one hen coop and the next," says Nicholas Wapshott in the *Times* of 7th December 2002. A convocation of Roman Catholic clergy was called in Houston to address the epidemic of paedophilia in their midst, and the startling conclusion they came to was to notify the authorities only for the second offence, the first to go unreported. Zero tolerance, which had been widely mooted, was forgotten, the priests thinking they could now draw a line under it all. What trust can people have in such men? The Vatican went further than the convocation, rejecting its conclusion as it inadequately preserved the rights of the accused priests. The USA Roman Catholic Church leaders in a later meeting in Philadelphia, representing 25,000 Roman Catholic priests, said they would not seek to have paedophile priests unfrocked, but rather supervised.

Since the mid 1970s about 100 American priests have been convicted out of about 500 or so accused. In his book, *Religious Life Without Integrity: The Sexual Abuse Crisis Within the Catholic Church*, Dr. Barry Coldrey, an Australian Christian Brother, claims that at least ten per cent of priests in Australia have sexually abused children, with the figure rising to 15 per cent in America. "As many as two-thirds of all US bishops have allowed priests accused of molesting minors to continue working," says the *Dallas Morning News* of 13th June. Four American bishops have lost their positions. At a conference of 300 Roman Catholic bishops in Dallas in June it did not appear that the bishops intended to take any substantial responsibility for the scandal. This decision may have been influenced by the fact that five out of eight bishops on the Conference's Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse have been tainted by the scandal. They seek to bury the most squalid scandal in the history of their church. It stretches from Ireland to Australia, but is more pervasive in the USA. Only 97 of the 178 dioceses agreed to give information to groups such as SNAP (the Survivors' Network of those Abused by Priests).

Cardinal Law's resignation as archbishop has now been accepted by the Pope, but he remains a cardinal with voting rights in the next conclave. It is

widely thought that he will keep a low profile in a monastery for a few years, and then be given a senior post in the Vatican. The Pope holds him in high esteem and he helped to formulate the new Roman Catholic Catechism. It is a rare occurrence, but in 1995 Cardinal Hermann Groer, the Archbishop of Vienna, had to go as he was accused of sexual abuse. The Vatican thinks that the scandal will eventually disappear from the headlines, as the paedophilia affair is merely secondary to more important things it faces, and after all in Renaissance times Alexander VI, the Borgia Pope, got away with murder, intrigue and incest without giving a moment's thought to public opinion. In January a study by St. Louis University, Missouri, based on a survey returned by 1,164 nuns, concludes that 34,000 Roman Catholic nuns out of a total of 85,000 may have been abused by priests or nuns. It is doubtful if this can ever be made public to the extent of other scandals mentioned, nuns risking a lot in speaking of such matters, as their church is their home, their family, their everything.

Many noted that the Pope took an inordinate time in acting, that his statements stopped short of using the word paedophilia, and that they were considered not to be strong enough.

The Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Paedophilia

The leader of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Conner, has been struggling to explain why he gave the paedophile priest Michael Hill the job as a chaplain at Gatwick Airport, despite warnings from parents that he was a danger to children. The Police are investigating. Hill is currently serving his second five-year sentence for abusing nine boys. Another priest, Father Timothy Garratt, convicted of indecency previously, was also given a return to pastoral duties by the Cardinal, and this again raises questions. The Cardinal also faces accusations that he covered up the activities of paedophile priests during his 22-year tenure as Bishop of Arundel and Brighton. Meanwhile there is talk of suing the church, and Cardinal Murphy-O'Conner sent a letter to be read in all 214 churches in the diocese of Westminster speaking of a mistaken decision. He neglected to ask prayers for the victims, and Margaret Kennedy, founder of "Minister and Sexual Abuse Survivors", said that his letter was further proof that the Roman Catholic Church considered themselves, rather than those abused, to be the victims. She states that he castigates the media rather than the perpetrators, and that his letter is full of self pity. The Cardinal quoted from his own version of the Bible: "Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me."

On 20th November of last year it was revealed through the media that the Roman Catholics were paying hush money to people abused by priests. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Conner denied this, but the *Times* newspaper on 22nd November, stated that it had obtained a copy of the agreement that victims had to sign before they were compensated, and a leading lawyer called it "a gagging clause". Some of these people refused to be quiet. The Cardinal

went on the TV to be interviewed, and excused himself on the grounds of being “naive” and “ignorant” regarding paedophile behaviour in the 1980s – which is incredible. There is no body of people in the world who know more about sexual filth than the RC priests, as they probe pruriently into the lives of their people through the confessional. According to H. W. Crittenden in *Behind the Black Curtain*: “A major part of moral theology, in the Roman Catholic misconception of the meaning of both words, is devoted to sexuality; it covers all the normal relationships between male and female humans which are ‘sinful’ in respect to adulteries, fornications, and even as between husband and wife. It extends over the entire range of sexual perversions in homosexual relationships in disgusting details. Bestialities, such as few normal minds could even conceive of, are dealt with in the form of page after page of questions which the unwed bachelor ‘father’ has to memorise, so that he can pursue his enquiries further still into the deepest sewers and cesspits of the human mind.” If Crittenden is speaking the truth, and if those who warned the Cardinal are telling the truth, then Cardinal Murphy-O’Conner cannot possibly be naive nor ignorant regarding these moral improprieties. The teaching given to priests, added to what takes place in the confessional, plus again the fact that the priests are unmarried, must contribute, not only to the terrible scandal in the RC Church, but also to the vile state, morally, to which our nation has come. Cynically Cardinal Murphy-O’Conner refuses to resign, and continues to lecture the rest of us about morality and humility.

The Times newspaper, on 20th January 2003, reported that the convicted serial paedophile Michael Hill, who was first imprisoned in 1997, has not yet been unfrocked by the RC Church. At the beginning of year 2003 no moves had yet been made to unfrock Joseph Jordan, a priest in Cardiff who was jailed for sexual abuse in 2000.

Father Christopher Maxwell-Stewart is another against whom allegations have been made, and who has now disappeared into hiding. At one time he was sent to the States for treatment for paedophilia. His superior? Murphy-O’Conner. The Roman Catholic authorities in Birmingham, Arundel and Brighton, Cardiff, Salford and Northampton, are investigating cases of sexual abuse in their midst. The former Archbishop of Birmingham is to be investigated, over allegations that he protected paedophiles in the West Midlands. A former resident of Father Hudson’s Children’s Homes claimed that Monsignor Maurice Couve de Murville failed to report allegations of child sex abuse which took place over twenty years. Suspicions of a paedophile ring at the home have surfaced, and two priests were jailed for seven years. Maurice Couve de Murville has resigned. *The Scotsman*, of 17th February 2003, tells of Michael McConville, a former Roman Catholic priest, who was found guilty of abusing a position of responsibility at the St. Mary’s Home in Gravesend through sex with children, and also David Murphy convicted of indecent assaults in the same home. The RC Archbishop of Wales too, has resigned, following child abuse scandals in his area.

The problem is world-wide. The Pope has already accepted the resignation of Ireland's Bishop of Ferns after allegations that he protected a paedophile priest. Bishop Brendan Comiskey had kept quiet until exposed by a BBC documentary. The priest, Sean Fortune, committed suicide before his trial on 29 charges came up. Dublin too has its troubles. Father Brendan Smyth was known to have terrorised Roman Catholic children for thirty years, and was imprisoned, but now allegations of cover-ups of abuse are appearing. Cardinal Desmond Connell is under severe pressure to answer questions about concealment of sex-abuse cases, and was forced to make a courtroom apology to an altar boy molested by a priest. The Cardinal is the most senior Roman Catholic in Ireland. A huge sum was given to the altar boy in damages. A Roman Catholic Canon law expert, Tom Doyle, when interviewed for an Irish television programme, dubbed Dublin one of the worst cities in the world for covering up clerical child abuse. He said that the 450 separate civil cases pending put Dublin at the top of the heap compared to other places and countries. Recently 150 people staged a demonstration against sex abuse as Cardinal Desmond Connell celebrated Mass.

In Sydney, Australia, the Roman Catholic Archbishop has stepped down temporarily while he is investigated for the abuse of a boy years ago. He has given money to prevent a priest being sued for abuse. The appalling treatment of young people in church-run orphanages in Australia is well documented, and in June 2002 Archbishop George Pell said that up to 90 priests and religious brothers had been convicted of sexual abuse in the past six years, and the Church has paid out about one million pounds in compensation to sexual abuse victims in the state of Victoria alone since 1996.

Fears have been raised of widespread paedophilia in Germany's priesthood as there are 300 cases in the Essen bishopric. The Bishop of Mainz thinks the situation is as serious as in the USA. This virus has spread throughout the whole RC Church. It will do great damage to them just as the charge of gross immorality did during the Reformation in Europe, but the problem is that we are not really dealing with a church, but rather with an evil political entity which uses a religious disguise to hide its true nature, which disguise can change to absorb any religion which exists if it will further the political ends.

Entrants for the Roman Catholic priesthood have fallen dramatically since 1978, by 26 per cent in Britain and 65 per cent in Ireland. The total number of priests in England and Wales has now fallen to 5,600, its lowest level for 60 years. It used to be regarded as an honour to have a son who was a priest, but the number of applicants is now affected by the sex scandals throughout the English-speaking world. The average age of student priests has gone up to 33 and many are not "cradle Catholics". Some of the seminaries for student priests seem doomed to closure. Scotland has three colleges, at Glasgow, Rome and Salamanca in Spain, with only 35 seminarians training for the priesthood between them.

Church attendance too has gone down in the Roman community. The much-heralded decade of evangelisation in England and Wales was a failure. Those

attending Mass in England and Wales fell from 1.3 million in 1990 to one million in 2000. A spokesman for the RC Church in Scotland says that the number attending was stable, about one third out of 750,000.

By October 2002 the Pope had managed the canonisation of saint number 468, namely, Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, the founder of the organisation Opus Dei (God's work). Escriva, a monk, founded it in 1928. RC critics call it a secretive sect which binds its members through rules based on coercion and brainwashing. It seeks to infiltrate and control the financial and political world, especially in Latin America. Pope John Paul has now made more saints than all his predecessors put together, so it is evidently a matter of change in political policy. He also canonised Padre Pio, who was one of the 300-odd persons in the Roman Church said to have had stigmata, or the wounds of Christ, which were purported to bleed at times. He was said to lose a cupful of blood a day. Some Roman Catholics believed he was able to levitate, and to practise bilocation (being in two places at the same time). He was said to have ascended into the skies during the war to foil allied bombers. His shrine will draw more than Lourdes, it is said, and the sale of Pio souvenirs will develop wealth in the area.

Mother Teresa is on the fast track to sainthood as well, having the requisite qualifications according to the RC church. Another is an Aztec Indian who was said to have a vision of a dark skinned Mary in 1531, Mary leaving her own image on the man's garment. Four leading Church theologians openly question the man's existence, but what does that matter if millions visit the shrine? The saints are increased in number as are the chains tying the hearts of poor blinded Romanists. The utter paganism and idolatry of the RC system is seen in the thousands of pilgrims who recently went to see the image of Christ on a burnt piece of bread at the Renewal Retreat Centre at Bangalore, India. A mother charred it by mistake, the daughter would not eat it, then the mother recognised the image of Christ on the burnt bread. It was recognised as a miracle, and even Hindus and Moslems went to gaze on it. That is one way of promoting unity, but how did they recognise Christ's face when nobody knows what he looked like? Father Mychal Judge, the New York Fire Department chaplain, who was killed by falling debris during the World Trade Centre attacks, has those who push for his elevation to sainthood, as a boy who prayed to the dead priest was "miraculously" cured of speaking difficulties. The chaplain's grave has been made a shrine and his white fireman's helmet has been presented to the Pope. Other so-called healing miracles have since been reported. Father Mychal was a reformed alcoholic, and was said to swear like a trooper while alive.

The present Pope has done a great deal of service for the Roman Harlot Church, and it is expected, the *Times* of 14th October 2002 reveals that he will be granted the title John Paul the Great after his death. Cardinal Thomas Winning after his death is having an area in Glasgow named Cardinal Winning Square. Meanwhile, in contrast, before his death, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Conner, the head of the RC Church in England and Wales, despite

centuries of hostility to cremation in the RC Church, has become vice president of the Cremation Society. The ban was lifted in 1966. What has changed? Ironically Myra Hindley was cremated last November, although young Keith Bennett she had helped murder was left to moulder on Saddleworth Moor. Father Michael Teader said she believed she was going to heaven. The Roman Church only sends special saints to heaven. Did he not tell her that at best she was only going to purgatory, for that is RC teaching, when he took her last confession and absolved her from her sins (although that is blasphemy)? The tabloids seemed to believe she went to hell. The *Daily Mail* of 21st November says a mass was said for the repose of her soul for £340 of her savings. We know from Scripture that the blackest of sinners can be saved who trusts in Christ alone for salvation. Sadly she seemed to depend on a sinful priest.

The Roman Catholic Church, the Bible and the Free Church of Scotland

It is sad reading that in July the United Bible Societies (UBS) opened a major exhibition in Rome in co-operation with the Vatican Library, tracing the impact and culture of the printed Bible. We read in the *Quarterly Record* of the Trinitarian Bible Society that more than 100 guests attended the formal grand opening, which featured greetings from the RC Director of the Apostolic Library of the Vatican, and also Rev. Fergus Macdonald, the UBS General Secretary who was ordained in the Free Church of Scotland, and was its Moderator of Assembly in 1987. Mr. Macdonald said that “it was a privilege and an honour for UBS to co-sponsor the exhibition with the Vatican Museum”. We note that one of the reasons why the Trinitarian Bible Society was formed in 1831 was to oppose the inclusion of the Apocrypha in the Bible.

The English Churchman of May 2002 notes that a Bull was issued against the Bible Societies by Pope Pius VII in 1816 in which he speaks of “a pestilence which must be remedied and abolished; a defilement of the faith, eminently dangerous to souls”. A Trinitarian Bible Society pamphlet, *Ecumenism and the Bible Societies*, shows how Roman Catholic translators have been taken in to help in the translation and production of Bibles, so that now the Pope praises the work of these societies as an ecumenical project.

The Church of England

The Church of England is taken up with Rowan Williams, the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, “enthroned” in February 2003. The *Times* newspaper on 25th February stated that Cardinal Walter Kasper, from the Vatican, and Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor would participate. His views on women bishops, homosexual priests and remarriage of divorcees in church are liberal. In a BBC2 documentary, regarding homosexuality, he said, “My own personal conclusion is that I can see a case for acknowledging faithful same-sex relationships”. “Conservative” evangelicals have called on

him to resign, or recant, owing to his view that passages in the Bible on the issue of homosexual relationships are open to re-interpretation. One such body of conservatives, "Reform", has called him "a false teacher". Another body called "Church Society", asked him to resign, saying: "It is clear that he prefers his private judgment to the voice of Scripture." The "Church of England Evangelical Council", too, is fighting his liberal homosexual agenda, pointing out that the Anglican Church in America, has reached the point where homosexual rights are overtaking the rights of women and blacks. A fourth body opposing him is "The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies".

The Times on 3rd December 2002, gave the view that the new Archbishop will go along with the draft report as set forth by the Constitution Unit. The Bill of Rights of 1688 prevents a monarch from marrying a Roman Catholic. The Coronation Oath of that same year requires the monarch on his or her accession to make a declaration before Parliament rejecting Roman Catholicism. The Act of Succession of 1701 was designed to ensure a Protestant succession. Prince Charles, if he ever becomes king, would prefer to be the "Defender of Faiths" rather than of "The Faith". The Constitution Unit says: "There has been disquiet over the form of the next coronation . . . it is possible that legislation may be required to omit some of the contentious oaths." However, whatever the synod may do, Parliament has the right to introduce its own church legislation or reject synod measures. Rowan Williams was not of the Church of England but of the Anglican Church of Wales. As his church in Wales is disestablished, his thoughts may be going along these lines for the Church of England, and this may have dire effects for the constitution. Recently a spokesman for Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor said of the Act of Settlement: "This legislation is a historical relic which has no place in plural Britain of the 21st. century." Let people examine the oaths taken by Cardinal Murphy during his ordination and they will find that hatred of Protestantism is still very much alive in the RC Church.

The Anglican Church seems to be in "meltdown", with thousands of churches closing and many dioceses disappearing, it is thought, by 2030, if Ruth Gledhill is correct in her article in the *Times* of 30th October 2002. At the present rate of decline, attendance in 2030 will be about 500,000, which is less than two-thirds of those attending now. Child attendance fell by 28 per cent in the 1990s.

The Church in Scotland

In Scotland we have the same trend as in England. Forty years ago almost forty per cent went to church every week, but now only 18 per cent do so. The Kirk is 200 ministers short of its needs as well. The Church of Scotland turned its back on the Calvinistic Sabbath many years ago, and passed a "Brighter Sundays Act", to win people to church. The ministers too have turned away from the demand of preaching to the souls of men and women about salvation through Christ, and mostly favour the easy option of indulging in politics and social issues. Steve Bruce, a researcher from Aberdeen University, in making

a survey of churchgoing and belief in God, concluded that “Scotland is no longer a Christian country”.

The change in the Church of Scotland is seen clearly in how it has given up on the Roman Catholic issue. Last year it passed an overwhelming vote admitting religious bigotry, particularly against Irish Catholics, saying that “it regrets any part played in sectarianism by our church in the past, and affirm our support for future moves towards a more tolerant society”. It forgets that it came into being because our Reformation Fathers came out of the evil quagmire of Romanism, which quagmire remains, as the world wide sexual abuse by priests and the physical abuse by nuns, and others, of children in their homes has brought to light in these days. The truth is that the 416 publicly funded Roman Catholic schools in Scotland are harbouring sectarianism and teaching their pupils that Protestantism is evil. Despite this, however, twenty-nine per cent of RCs in Scotland believe that single-faith schools should go, and the figure is even higher among the young.

The curse of “political correctness” too affects the National Kirk as well as others. Some Psalms and hymns have been ditched as not politically correct, such as Psalm 23 and the hymn “There is a green hill” is deemed irrelevant to modern life. One third of old hymns were got rid of last year, and people will be expected to learn new ones which will be “green”, dealing with environmental damage, the careless use of water, ore and soil. That is how Kate Sherry reports matters in the *Daily Mail* of 25th March 2002. Rev. Charles Watson condemned the old hymnal for not having “liberation theology, feminism and the peace movement”.

Singing at funerals too has changed, as many now prefer pop tunes to hymns. The *Times* newspaper of 5th August tells us of the results of information gathered by the Co-operative Group’s funeral service. Pop tunes are gaining as the solemnity of death and eternity lessens in the eyes of people. We have all this because of Christless men preaching a Christless Gospel, producing a Christless generation. The result is not mourning but celebration at funerals, in a lifestyle full of strong drink, drugs, pop, and immorality.

Feminism in the Church

Rev. Professor Iain Torrance was chosen to be Moderator of the Church of Scotland. He was up against Rev. Margaret Forrester, darling of the liberal wing, and a campaigner for women, who blessed a lesbian relationship ten years ago. A letter signed by 140 women expressed disappointment at the Church’s failure to appoint a female moderator in the 30 years women were eligible for consideration.

In the Scottish Episcopal Church women were open to ordination as priests since 1994, two years after the Church of England. The push is now on for women to be bishops. At their Synod last May only 15 voted against a move towards the making of woman bishops, and at the Synod in 2003 it is expected that the final vote for women bishops will be a mere formality. At the moment only the Anglican churches in the US, Canada, Polynesia and New Zealand

have women bishops. In Scotland all seven bishops support the move. Churches are being paganised and the creation order turned upside down, namely the headship of the man over the woman. Society as a consequence can only be downgraded. Women will become rulers of men in the churches if the present pattern continues. The cohesion of family life must suffer, and the imbalance must affect families growing up. The Godhead will be replaced by a super goddess figure, perhaps Mary the mother of Christ.

A pamphlet distributed in the Church of England says God should be referred to as a woman, saying that it is offensive to some to think of God as exclusively male. The proposal was that they should pray that “the Holy Spirit will move amongst us and that we may recognise Her presence and co-operate with Her work”. The fate of the word “Chairman” will be decided by the General Synod of the Church of England this year. Critics say that failure to use “gender-neutral language” will prevent young people from turning to Christianity. They obviously think they are wiser than God who spoke in His holy Word and fixed its genders. If they accepted the authority of God’s Word we would not have such blasphemous nonsense.

A carefully conducted survey by “Cost of Conscience and Christian Research”, published on 30th July 2002, shows 51% of the clergy in favour of women bishops. On every item of the creed the women clergy were lower than their male counterparts in the survey of nearly 2,000. 78% of the males believe in the Trinity compared to 70% of females. 76% males believed Jesus died to take away the sins of the world, and 65% females. Christ as the only way of salvation was believed by 53% of males and 39% of females. The virgin birth was accepted by 58% and 33%.

The Superkirk

Various bodies all over the world are working towards the megachurch. Various modes of communication have made the world smaller, and various nations and bodies can work together more readily. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) Assembly will be held in Norway this year. It is a fellowship of 127 Orthodox, Anglican, Protestant and Old Catholic Churches from all over Europe, with offices in Geneva, Brussels and Strasbourg. It speaks of the “there is no alternative syndrome”, and makes the correct noises about working in unison. The Russian Orthodox Church is interested, but Patriarch Alexei is at present involved in a deep quarrel with Rome which has dared to set up four dioceses in Russia. Cardinal Kasper, the head of the Vatican Pontifical Council on Christian Unity, has spoken of the ecumenical movement as being in crisis. He says the positive signs were the joint declaration between the RC Church and the Lutherans on justification, the ecumenical events of the papal jubilee year, and the inter-faith gathering to pray for world peace at Assisi. He complains of there being no real response to the Pope’s call for a renewed “Petrine primacy”, which could be shared by all. Other churches dream of shared compromises, whereas Rome aims at total submission to Rome.

In England, Dr. Carey, former archbishop of Canterbury, stated that one day Britain would have a single united church. At Windsor, in front of the queen, he joined leaders of other mainstream churches in signing a covenant committed to that very end. For forty years “Christian Unity” has been prayed for. The Church of England and the Methodists are interested in each other. Cardinal Murphy-O’Conner, leader of RCs in England and Wales, preached at Sandringham at the invitation of the Queen.

The RC Archbishop of Edinburgh spoke to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland last year stating, “You were talking to us, and we were not even nodding our heads in reply”. The blueprint for a united superchurch, merging the various branches of Protestantism in Scotland, has been unveiled. The Church of Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, think of forming a single institution, with maxi-parishes and bishops. The convener of the discussion group is the Right Rev. Michael Henley, Episcopalian bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane. It is thought that falling attendance and finance may have something to do with it. It comes before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May. Opposition centres, the *Scotsman* tells us, on the fact that bishops are inconsistent with the presbyterian principle that the authority of elders is on a par with clergy. Bishops are essential to ecumenical progress because of the Roman belief in Apostolic succession. We have the old saying: “No bishop, no priest. No priest, no sacrament. No sacrament, no church. No church, no salvation.” Ecumenism is not a grass roots movement, but a priestly movement, which depends upon the acquiescence of the ignorant and the gullible.

Professor Donald Macleod, of the Free Church of Scotland, writing in the *West Highland Free Press* of 26th July, states: “In a few weeks time the Scottish churches will hold their first ever Ecumenical Assembly. . . . My own instant reaction on hearing of such an Assembly was regret and shame that my own church would not be part of it.” In speaking of his desire for ecumenical union he says: “If it would help, I would happily reduce the basis of faith to the Apostle’s Creed; and I would equally happily tolerate episcopacy (provided the church herself freely appointed the bishops), women ministers and even guitars, if these were the stated will of Scottish Christians.” Enough said!

Alan Bookbinder was made head of religion by the BBC less than two years ago. The son of a Jewish father and a Roman Catholic mother, he himself is an agnostic. More than 100 eminent writers and academics have written to the BBC’s governors complaining that the *Thought For The Day* slot on Radio 4 Today Programme discriminates against atheists. Religious programmes have declined enormously in volume, and what is left is usually bland. There are few people more dogmatic than militant atheists, and they colour so many programmes with their unproved beliefs, and now they demand that they be allowed to make use of this tiny slot as well to further propagate their godlessness.

Islam

According to the Central Institute Islam Archives in Soest, Germany, the number of Muslims in Europe has mushroomed to 51.8 million. In Belgium, France, Italy, Austria and Spain they have overtaken Protestantism. The breakdown given of religion in Europe out of 750 million is: 269 million Roman Catholic, 171 million Orthodox, 79 million Protestant, 28 million Anglican, Others 203 millions. Islam is growing at an annual rate of 6.5%. If this trend continues, Muslims will be the second largest religious grouping behind Roman Catholics by the year 2014. This is the reason behind the opposition in Europe to Turkey joining the EU. The Holy Roman Empire concept is threatened. The Vatican dreams of uniting Islam to itself, and then when it dominates politics in the USA it will control the world. Their word, however, will not be the last word in this matter, for Christ is the Ruler of heaven and earth.

Support for Islam is part of Rome's long-term strategy which generally is to weaken national governments, and then to make political parties it supports beholden to itself. We see that Rome, in following such strategy, is not behind President Bush but speaks of peace and reconciliation as it eyes Islam. It intends sending a mission of peace to Baghdad, stating that war with Iraq would be "a defeat for humanity". The Pope meets Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, but yet strangely enough, a Nestorian Catholic in a Muslim country. Rome knows that the *Koran* teaches the subjugation of all other creeds under Islam. In its early days Islam was spread by the sword, and today in Indonesia at least 8,000 have been forcibly converted to Islam. Those refusing were put to death, and these number about 10,000. In Nigeria too thousands of Christians have been killed, their homes and churches destroyed. In Sudan the Arab Islamic government wars against the African people of the South in the name of Islam, to wipe out and conquer. The Pope is wary of condemning this slaughter for the political agenda is uppermost in Roman Catholic eyes. Roman Catholic bishops warn the British government against ill treating immigrants for there too Rome is playing the Islamic card.

It is no wonder then that Romanising bodies, such as the WCC are blatantly anti Semitic, and inflame the Middle-East situation while they talk of peace and reconciliation. They too want to have dialogue with Islam. Dr. Carey, when in office, at a dinner at Lambeth palace, with senior Arab and Middle-East representatives present said, "At a time when many Muslims in this country are living in fear, I want to say loud and clear that as a Christian leader I deeply respect your faith".

In East Renfrewshire, the Council is demanding that the Scottish Executive act to make Christian assemblies in non-denominational schools part of national policy. The *Daily Mail* of 23rd January reports that the Council maintains that multi-faith assemblies are confusing. Inspectors of schools say that two out of every three non-denominational schools in Scotland have abandoned old-style Christian assemblies amid fears of causing discrimination

and disharmony. Obviously now paranoia about religious correctness has invaded our schools. What are we doing to our children whom we should be preparing for eternity? We now read in the *Daily Mail* of 22nd February that the Church of Scotland is seeking to downgrade the tradition of daily school assemblies, and would support the Scottish Executive religious observance review group which says that religious assemblies should be replaced by sessions where current affairs are discussed with soothing music in the background. Kirk officials are reported as saying, "There has to be a way to promote mutual understanding among faith groups that can celebrate diversity as well as shared values".

MORALS

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has always believed that it is the duty of the visible Church to preach the Gospel of the free and sovereign grace of God. It has desired to be an instrument in the hand of God for the gathering in of the elect, and the building up of God's people, in holiness and comfort through faith, unto the consummation of that salvation wrought on the behalf of His people by Jesus Christ, and applied by the Holy Spirit, through the ministry of the Word of God: "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15). Furthermore, this branch of the Church of Christ on the earth has acted on the principle that the Church ought to speak on moral issues within the nation, "*Declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin*" (Micah 3:8). Though we live in an age when moral absolutes are resisted, it is not the Church's business to follow philosophical fashions but to speak as God would require His servants to speak, "*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*" (Isaiah 8:20). We are firmly persuaded that the moral decline in the last 150 years (to go no further), is mainly due to the uncertain sound coming from the more influential churches in our land. That solemn charge lies heavily upon the ministers of the visible Church: "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . . that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen*" (1 Peter 4:11).

A time of Judgements

Judgements come on a nation because of its sins against God. We state with great sadness and with much foreboding, yet without reservation, that the scourge of terror threatens our shores with a new impetus because our nation has forgotten its obligation to God and His law, "*For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted*" (Isaiah 60:12).

That nation is ripe for judgements that forgets God, or that says that there is no God. The government that legislates contrary to the revealed will of God is, to all intents and purposes, an atheistic government. It might not state a theory

of atheism with respect to the essence of God but acts on a principle of atheism with respect to the will of God. The visible church might not officially agree with those who hold unbiblical and atheistic views within its ranks, yet by not exercising its divinely given powers of discipline against them, it makes an open question of the being of God, biblical doctrine and biblical morality. The testimony of God regarding atheism, in all its forms, is that it is folly: *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good”* (Psalms 14:1).

On account of the evidence of our national forsaking of God we fear that God is preparing more scourges for the United Kingdom, to teach us that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord.

1. The place that is given to false religion is growing increasingly prominent. In the devolved Scottish Parliament the devotions do not follow the pattern of the Westminster Parliament, where prayer is made to the Father in the name of the Son. In the devolved parliament in Scotland place is given to all faiths to lead the periodic devotions of the chamber. The King of kings is Christ. Scotland now repudiates Him; tramples her once renowned glory under her feet, and disowns Her once loved King. Fools may say that that is not a matter to tremble at, to disown the government and tutory of God’s anointed King. But the Word of God says it is a great dishonour to Him, evidence of crass spiritual ignorance, and a matter with grave and cataclysmic consequences: *“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? [saying] Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. . . . Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him”* (Psalm 2:1-5; 11, 12).

2. By practice and by statute we have desecrated the Lord’s Day. The moral degeneracy of our nation must be largely attributed to the profanation of the Lord’s Day, the Christian Sabbath. Rulers and people actuated by a principle of practical atheism see no benefit in keeping the Sabbath. The church today ought not to be silent regarding the desecration of the day set apart by God for the worship of His name and the instruction of the people in matters moral and spiritual. Godly Nehemiah was not silent: *“Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath”* (Nehemiah 13:17, 18).

3. The lives of millions are terminated in the womb, the vast majority of them without legitimate reason. Is this to be viewed with a pragmatic shrug, as is fashionable, or do we view it with the horror, which our troubled consciences suggest? Let the Word of God be the judge: *“These . . . are an abomination unto God: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed*

innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:16,17). *“And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood”* (Isaiah 1:15). Our hands, as a nation, are filled with innocent blood. We must give heed to the Word of God: *“Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction”* (Proverbs 31:8).

4. The name of God is blasphemed without fear of retribution. But the responsibility of rulers and people to the name of God is, *“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain”* (Exodus 20:7).

The laws of our land sometimes seem to be enforced with more rigour for the defence of sin than for the defence of righteousness.

5. The church and state condone and seem to actively encourage homosexuality by immoral laws, which normalise the homosexual relationship, to the extent that rights to adopt children are now granted to homosexual couples. While not only the state, but the church condones homosexuality, the Word of God abominates it: *“And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel”* (1 Kings 14:24). *“And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made”* (1 Kings 15:12). *“And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land”* (1 Kings 22:46). *“And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the grove”* (1 Kings 22:46 – see also Romans 1:26- 32).

6. There is a national moral consensus that seems not only to allow, but to require, immoral and violent scenes in television, film, books, magazines and billboards, encouraging all manner of uncleanness, violence and crime. How many judgements must visit our land before we realise that the charge against a sinful Judah is equally appropriate to our own national character, and that the deliverance of that nation to the sword and captivity for their sins is a warning to our own people: *“Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward”* (Isaiah 1:4). *“They are all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: they are brass and iron; they are all corrupters”* (Jeremiah 6:28).

A Time to Repent

Great is the burden of guilt on our nation. But greater yet is the mercy of the Lord which, on the basis of the infinite merits of the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, pardons sin upon repentance, and returning to the Lord. The nation seems to be bracing itself at the time of the writing of this report for the scourge of war and the renewed menace of terrorism. The only way for a guilty nation to turn away the holy wrath of God is by forsaking our sins and returning to God.

Some hindrances to repentance

1. The national forsaking of the Christian Sabbath and the Christian ministry is a hindrance to repentance.

Only a small percentage of our people go to any church on the Lord's Day. Furthermore from many of our pulpits preachers preach neither that which will convince a man that he is in need of repentance, nor that which will commend the remedy in Jesus Christ. How can we expect a people to see their sins and be alarmed at God's wrath, when church and state leaders are blind leaders of the blind? Those in influence do not speak as the oracles of God, and so there is no light in them. What we presently hear from leaders is talk of moral superiority, without any realisation, much less a confession, of our being a nation that is wringing judgements from God's hand. It would be well for those who think they stand on the high moral ground to remember that the Pharisees had a mistaken sense of their own moral worth. One flaw made their moralising obnoxious to scorn, and their religion to be rejected of the Lord Jesus Christ. While they sought to remove the mote from their brother's eye, they did not see that there was a beam in their own eye.

2. Intolerance of those who seek to speak according to the Oracles of God is a hindrance to repentance. [This subsection is a modified form of a letter intended to be a response to an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, at the end of last year. All expressions in inverted commas are from that article.]

When Dr. Williams was elected to be the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, there was great opposition amongst those who are regarded as evangelicals within the Church of England. This is not at all surprising for Dr. Williams has liberal views on the matter of homosexuality, he has written a book which admires Mariolatry, and has received a form of honour or recognition from the pagan religion of the Druids.

Those who cannot endure the voice of biblical ethics saw this opposition to the archbishop-elect, as an unwelcome, menacing power that had been unleashed upon the Church. The editor of one influential broad sheet feared that conservative evangelicals had "acquired an ominous momentum" in their opposition to the practice of homosexuality. This is most deceptive considering that the Christian Church, historically, has, until very recent times, held that the homosexual lifestyle is immoral. It is the clamorous voice of the homosexual lobby that has gained momentum.

When the church speaks plainly about the truly "ominous momentum" of immorality in our society and the necessity to debar people with an immoral lifestyle from church privileges, the liberals accuse her of exclusiveness, and that her "sense of church unity is defective". One wonders whom their liberal idea of inclusiveness could exclude.

Though it seems perfectly obvious that a house can be no broader than its foundation, and that the Christian Church has no foundation but the Bible, nor any authority for its existence, nor any warrant for its statements, but the Holy Scripture, yet the liberals incriminate her for having a "concept of authority

narrowly based on the Scriptures”. Again, one wonders what sources they would recommend for the Christian Church – to take their authority from – to speak on moral issues.

The church must speak about morality (how can it justify its existence if it doesn't?), yet the liberals identify its opposition to immorality with sectarianism. What is truly ominous, as far as the freedom of the church to speak is concerned, is, that persons in places of great influence are unable, or unwilling, to differentiate between the virtue of strongly held biblical principles and the vice of religious hatred or sectarianism.

Though the liberals (quite rightly) abominate sectarianism, the menacing accent of sectarianism is thinly disguised in their own opposition to the Word of God. Those who oppose immorality are called a “small group of ultras”, by which we understand them to be besmeared as fanatics.

3. Insensitivity to present judgements is a hindrance to repentance.

The threat of war, terrorism, the famine of Gospel preaching, the rise of false religion and the occult, the plagues of cancer and AIDS and other diseases; drugs and drug related crimes and deaths, rail disasters, ruin of our fishing and agriculture industries, are some of the thunderings with which God has spoken to our nation in the recent past.

One particular judgement we wish to mention particularly, being topical at the time of writing, is the judicial blindness to the identity of the enemies of our civil and religious liberties.

The British people are engrossed in the issues of war with the President of Iraq. We are told that he is a murdering tyrant, and that he is a danger to our nation. If that is so, then our leaders must be supported in wielding the sword, for the defence of our religious and civil liberties. However, while our people run about throwing their hands in the air about the danger to lives, liberty and prosperity, because of a distant tyrant, a very serious danger to the liberty, peace and prosperity of our nation is going on within Europe, almost unheeded. In the *Daily Telegraph* (7th February 2003) in a piece entitled “Brussels elite accused over ‘federalist coup’”, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard writes:

“Britain will lose control of foreign policy and defence and will be stripped of its sovereign power to legislate in almost all areas of national life, under the draft text of the European constitution released yesterday. Sweeping aside British objections, the document establishes the European Union on a ‘federal basis’, enjoying primacy over the law of the member states.”

The writer is referring to a draft constitution for a United States of Europe produced earlier this year. Another writer from the same source wrote a piece entitled “The superstate is here”:

“The Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe, a draft of which has just emerged from the constitutional convention in Brussels, would, if adopted by the Council of Ministers, be the coup de grace for the

European nation states. If the Government were to submit to such a constitution, it would be acquiescing in the abolition of our parliamentary democracy and the creation of a European superstate. The moment of truth, long feared by Labour and Conservative governments, when Britain might have to choose between EU membership and national independence, may soon arrive.”

What is additionally alarming is that the Pope was and is personally involved. He “interceded personally with M. Giscard [chairman of the committee drafting the constitution] not to forget the ‘cement of that extraordinary religious, cultural and civic heritage that has made Europe great down the centuries’ . . . the Vatican said it was appalled by the humanist text . . . deeming it ‘completely unsatisfactory’ since it ‘went against the explicit desire of a great part of Europe’s peoples’” [*Daily Telegraph*, 8th February 2003].

The dangers we fear are a curtailing of the liberties, and an eventual outlawing of the Protestant Church and Gospel preaching. We anticipate the grooming of our people and Parliament, luring them to the perversions of idolatry, Mariolatry, the blasphemous Mass, the unscriptural and unclean priesthood and the tyranny of the blood-shedding antichrist. Our fears are founded on such documents as an Encyclical called *Constitution of States* by Pope Leo XIII, promulgated on 1st. November 1885, which uses such ominous language as “The State . . is clearly bound to act up to the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God, by the public profession of religion. . . . Since, then, no one is allowed to be remiss in the service due to God, and since the chief duty of all men is to cling to religion in both its teaching and practice – not such religion as they may have a preference for, but the religion which God enjoins, and which certain and most clear marks show to be the only one true religion – it is a public crime to act as though there were no God. . . . All who rule, therefore, would hold in honour the holy name of God, and one of their chief duties must be to favour religion, to protect it, to shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws, and neither to organise nor enact any measure that may compromise its safety.” Needless to say the compulsory religion referred to is the Roman apostasy.

Though we do not wish to underestimate the danger posed by terrorism and rogue states, yet we are equally wary of the dangers to our liberties from a Romanist superstate. The British flag is an ensign which stands for religious and civil liberties. Our forefathers learned that the nation could not be free until the Papacy had been barred from political influences. Inscribed in the Act of Settlement is a statement which at the same time speaks of the bitter experience of our forefathers, and is a warning to succeeding generations regarding the rule of Romanism: “It hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince.” If this constitution is accepted it will be our misery to have been ruled by a company of perfidious and perjured persons.

4. *Continued countenancing of the antichrist, and other false religions is a hindrance to repentance.*

The idolatrous Roman antichrist is countenanced by our civil and religious leaders. The National press doffed its cap to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his vision that one day Britain should, and would, have a single, united Church. The words were spoken in the context of an ecumenical agreement. "At Windsor in front of the Queen he joined the leaders of Britain's other mainstream Christian churches in signing a covenant that committed them to achieving precisely that unity" (*Daily Telegraph*, 13th June 2002).

Our Prime Minister gave countenance to the head of the antichristian system by seeking an audience with him. Our Queen honoured the highest ranking officer of the kingdom of the antichrist in our land by asking him to preach to the Royal Family at Sandringham. If the church were speaking as the oracles of God, she would be as the prophet of old who warned his king of the evil of conniving with idolaters: "*Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet . . . king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord*" (2 Chronicles 19:2).

But far from speaking out, both the retired and the newly "enthroned" archbishop of Canterbury are silent. It would be difficult for the new incumbent of that unwarranted throne, Dr. Williams, to speak against idolatrous Rome. He is the author of a book entitled, *Ponder These things: Praying with Icons of the Virgin*, wherein "he argues that the images of . . . Mary portrayed in medieval icons are holy because they stand on the boundary between the spiritual and the everyday" (*Daily Telegraph*, 25th July 2002). The same reasoning might have justified the idolatrous calves of Aaron or of Jeroboam. But both were rejected, God saying of the former that by it Israel had corrupted themselves and of the latter that they were allied more to the worship of devils than of God: "*And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made*" (2 Chronicles 11:15). See also 2 Chronicles 13:8: "*There are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.*"

The Word of God forbids dallying with idolaters: "*And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you*" (2 Corinthians 6:16, 17).

Furthermore the Word of God identifies the pope as the antichrist that should be manifested upon the decline of the Roman Empire (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

"*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time*" (1 John 2:18).

"*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of*

perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-10).

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth” (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

Conclusion

The Free Presbyterian Church has from its inception held an optimistic general eschatology: that though we have now a long night of spiritual bondage in our land, there will be better days, and the Sun of Righteousness will arise upon the world. The Lord Jesus Christ will raise up His spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, the world throughout. We believe God has promised better days, when the Jewish people will recognise their Deliverer and Messiah in the Lord Jesus Christ, and when the Gentile nations will turn unto the Lord.

“That God in his appointed time will bring forth the kingdom of the Lord Christ unto more glory and power than in former days, I presume you are persuaded. Whatever will be more, these six things are clearly promised: —

1st. Fulness of peace unto the gospel and the professors thereof, Isaiah 11:6, 7, 54:13, 33:20, 21; Revelation 21:25.

2dly. Purity and beauty of ordinances and gospel worship, Revelation 11:2, 21:3. The tabernacle was wholly made by appointment, Malachi 3:3,4; Zechariah 14:16; Revelation 21:27; Zechariah 14:20; Isaiah 35:8.

3dly. Multitudes of converts, many persons, yea, nations, Isaiah 9:7, 8, 66:8, 49:18-22; Revelation 7:9.

4thly. The full casting out and rejecting of all will-worship, and their attendant abominations, Revelation 11:2.

5thly. Professed subjection of the nations throughout the whole world unto the Lord Christ, Daniel 2:44, 7:26,27; Isaiah 60:6-9 – the kingdoms become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ [Revelation 11:15], amongst whom his appearance shall be so glorious, that David himself shall be said to reign.

6thly. A most glorious and dreadful breaking of all that rise in opposition unto him, Isaiah 60:12 – never such desolations, Revelation 16:17-19.

[John Owen Volume 8, Sermon 7.]

As the godly Isaiah recognised the justness of God’s judgements against Israel, and sought to justify God in His judgements rather than to justify Israel in its sins, so we desire to do also: “*Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee*” (Isaiah 26:8).