

ROME SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Part 1

by C. C. Morris

For years we at *The Remnant* have traced the amillennial theory back to its roots, through the Roman Catholic Church, back through Augustine and his book *The City of God*; back through Origen and the Alexandrian School in Egypt, to its beginnings in Greek mythology, Gnosticism, and Origen's attempt to blend

- (a) **paganism** with
- (b) **the beliefs of unbelieving Jews** and
- (c) **New Testament doctrine**; and all this in
- (d) an **allegorical, figurative form of word-play called "spiritualizing."**

These historic facts have been met with silent disbelief by those who cleave to "spiritualizing" or making figurative allegories of the prophecies of the restoration of Israel and the one thousand year millennium of Revelation 20.

Some of our readers have said that words like **premillennialism**, **amillennialism**, and **eschatology** are new to them; that they have never heard them spoken of from the stand nor have they read about them in Primitive Baptist papers (except when they are mentioned negatively). They wonder. These words are new, long, strange, and hard to grasp.

Perhaps these readers should rather ask their pastors and writers why they are not addressing biblical prophecy. Where are the "Primitive Baptist prophets" these days?

At the risk of being repetitious, we will once more define a few words for our readers. Among those who believe Christ prophesied that He will come again,

and that He more or less meant what He said, there are four major schools of thought:

1. Premillennialism (also called **Chiliasm** and **millennarianism**): The doctrine that Christ will return visibly and personally to this earth to establish a literal earthly kingdom that will last for a thousand years.

The word *millennial* in *premillennial* has to do with a thousand years. The *pre* in *premillennialism* means before or preceding. The word Premillennialism, then, means Christ's second coming, His second advent, or His return, will precede or be before the thousand years of Revelation 20, where that period is mentioned directly, six times.

Premillennialism is based on a literal understanding of the Scriptures. Premillennialists believe that by "a thousand years" God means exactly that— a thousand years; and this millennial period is yet future and will follow the present church age.

2. Amillennialism: This is the figurative or allegorical approach to "interpreting" the language of the Scriptures. Its followers like to use the term "*spiritualizing* the Scriptures." Other than an *evil* spirit, there is nothing *spiritual* about twisting the Scriptures to mean something the Lord neither said nor meant. (Example: **God said**, "Then he said unto me, Son of man, **these bones are the whole house of Israel....**(Ezekiel 37.11)."
Immediately after reading this aloud to his congregation, the man I heard preaching from this text said: "**These bones are NOT ISRAEL; they are the church!**" I hope to believe what God said and not what the man said, merely because the restoration of national Israel does not fit his manmade ideas.)

Because amillennialists do not follow a strict word-for-word or grammatical understanding and interpretation, it is left up to the individual to make his or her own "spiritual interpretation" of any biblical passage. As another example,

they believe the church, at present, is (figuratively) the prophesied millennium.

3. Postmillennialism: *Post-* means later than or after the millennial thousand years. They believe the world, under the influence and preaching of the church, is getting better and better (*contra* Paul, 2 Timothy 3.13); they believe the whole world will be converted by the preaching of the Gospel, thereby bringing in a thousand year millennium of perfect peace, after which Christ will return and judge the world in the final judgment of the Great White Throne.

4. Preterism: Preterists believe ALL prophecies were fulfilled during the lifetime of the New Testament apostles. They base this belief on two misunderstood (and therefore misapplied) Scriptures: "...***This generation*** shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled (Matthew 24.34)" and "...***This generation*** shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled (Luke 21.32)." Preterists think Christ meant the generation that was living on earth at the time Christ said these things.

(Premillennialists, of whom I am one, believe Christ in context was speaking, not of the generation when the apostles lived, but He was describing the end of the age—"THIS generation" is the generation that would be alive and on the earth at the end of the church age.)

Why Not Go to the Source?

As a public service, the **Charles Borromeo Catholic Church** of Picayune, Mississippi, has been kind enough to post on their website (<http://www.scborromeo.org/>) the complete Catechism of the Catholic Church or **Catholic Church Catechism** ("**CCC**"), consisting of 2,865 indexed and numbered paragraphs or sections. They tell us the CCC is "an English

translation of the *Index Analyticus* that appeared in the Latin typical edition of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, promulgated on August 15, 1997.”

It is either dismal ignorance or the height of hypocrisy for Baptists and Protestants to call the pope “the antichrist,” and Roman Catholicism “Mystery Babylon,” while preaching Rome’s amillennial doctrine. For **Rome’s position**, which no Baptist amillennialist or other amillennialist can deny, see the Vatican’s official website, **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, paragraphs 668-682 at http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c2a7.htm#668, from which we extract the following:

675 Before Christ’s second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers.⁵⁷⁴ The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth⁵⁷⁵ will unveil the “mystery of iniquity” in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.⁵⁷⁶

Comment: According to the Roman Catholic position, this “pseudo-messianism” is the teaching of the premillennial return of Christ to establish His Messianic kingdom. The numbers 675, 574, *etc.*, are the paragraphs in the official *Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition*, which may be found on the Internet at either

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/

or at

<http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/p1s2c2a7.htm>

What, Then, Does Rome Say?

We go to a quote from no less an authority than Pope Pius XI himself:

676 The Antichrist's deception already begins to take shape in the world every time the [premillennial] claim is made to realize within history that messianic hope which can only be realized beyond history through the eschatological judgment. **The [Roman Catholic] Church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come under the name of millenarianism [i.e., premillennialism],⁵⁷⁷ especially the "intrinsically perverse" political form of a secular messianism.⁵⁷⁸** (Source : 578 Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, condemning the "false mysticism" of this "counterfeit of the redemption of the lowly"; cf. GS 20-21.)

Comments: By "The Antichrist's deception" Pope Pius XI seems to mean anything opposed to Roman Catholic dogma.

The "political form of a secular messianism" according to this statement is the political/secular kingdom of Christ's ruling as King (political) over the nations (political) with a rod of iron, *etc.* That Section 676 does indeed specifically oppose premillennialism, we cite Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego who most clearly spells out their position, found on the Internet at

<http://www.catholic.com/tracts/the-rapture>:

What's the Catholic Position?

As far as the millennium goes, we tend to agree with Augustine and, derivatively, with the amillennialists. The Catholic position has thus historically been "amillennial" (as has been the majority Christian position in general, including that of the Protestant Reformers), though Catholics do not typically use this term. **The**

Church has rejected the premillennial position, sometimes called "millenarianism" [i.e., premillennialism] (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 676). In the 1940s the Holy Office judged that premillennialism "cannot safely be taught," though the Church has not dogmatically defined this issue.

With respect to the rapture, Catholics certainly believe that the event of our gathering together to be with Christ will take place, though they do not generally use the word "rapture" to refer to this event (somewhat ironically, since the term "rapture" is derived from the text of the Latin Vulgate of 1 Thess. 4:17-"we will be caught up," [Latin: *rapiemur*])."

NIHIL OBSTAT: I have concluded that the materials presented in this work are free of doctrinal or moral errors. Bernadeane Carr, STL, Censor Librorum, August 10, 2004

IMPRIMATUR: In accord with 1983 CIC 827 permission to publish this work is hereby granted. *Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego*, August 10, 2004

Comments on the above quote:

Here this official Roman Catholic website

1. endorses amillennialism as derived from Augustine;
2. **rejects premillennialism, a.k.a. millenarianism, which "the Holy Office judged...`cannot be safely taught`";**
3. disapproves of the term "rapture," although Protestant dispensationalists who teach a "pre-tribulation rapture" got the term from the word *rapiemur* in the Latin Vulgate (the Roman Catholic version of the Bible);

4. uses the term “**Nihil Obstat**” (Latin, *nothing hinders*), indicating the approval by Roman Catholicism’s official Censor whose name (Bernadeane Carr) follows;

5. uses the term “**Imprimatur**” (“*let it be printed*”), meaning this material is officially licensed or approved by the Roman Catholic church for publication as their authorized position. “Also, where censorship of the press exists, approval of that which is published. Hence, sanction; approval.” (*Webster*, under **imprimatur**.) Since censorship of the press is indeed Rome’s practice, we are assured by *Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego*, that the above statement represents Roman Catholicism’s official position;

6. Points out that amillennialism is **the majority Christian position in general, including that of the Protestant Reformers;**

[Comment: Seeing that the majority is always wrong, this is noteworthy. Remember, the Protestant Reformers got their prophetic position (amillennialism) from Rome.—CCM]

7. It can be added that, by omitting Rome’s jargon such as *Nihil Obstat*, *Imprimatur*, and other in-house terms, Rome’s attitude toward the ancient premillennial position is the same as that of all other amillennialists, including Primitive Baptist and other Baptist amillennialists.

Continuing, we next quote from Jon Kennedy’s book (Note: this is **not** JFK!):

“With some variations, amillennialism is the traditional eschatology [prophetic view] of the [Roman] Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Calvinist (Presbyterian, Reformed), Anglican, and Methodist Churches.” (Source: Jon Kennedy, *The Everything Jesus Book: His Life, His Teachings*. Adams Media.)

Comment: We might add to this list many **Primitive Baptists** (and Conditionalists) who, without discernment, have derived their amillennialism from Anglican and Reformed sources dating back to the compromises of the late 17th century. It was by those concessions, in which they surrendered their earlier premillennialism, that the Baptist churches of that day eventually found acceptance within mainstream "Christianity."

We conclude, for now, with the following quote:

Modern times

Amillennialism has been widely held in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches as well as in the Roman Catholic Church, which generally embraces an Augustinian eschatology and which has deemed that premillennialism "cannot safely be taught." Amillennialism is also common among Protestant denominations such as the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Methodist Churches. It represents the historical position of the Amish, Old Order Mennonite, and Conservative Mennonites (though among the more modern groups premillennialism has made inroads). It is also **common among groups arising from the 19th century American Restoration Movement such as the Churches of Christ,[16]:125 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Christian churches and churches of Christ. It even has a significant following amongst Evangelical Christian denominations including Baptist denominations such as The Association of Grace Baptist Churches in England...** Amillennialism declined in Protestant circles with the rise of Postmillennialism and the resurgence of Premillennialism in the 18th and 19th centuries, but it has regained prominence in the West after World War II. (Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amillennialism>)

[All bold emphases were supplied, and all comments, including square-bracketed inserts within others' writings, are by CCM.]

ROME SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

PART 2

Amillennialism teaches *that there will **not** be a future "millennium" in which Christ will reign on earth prior to the eternal state beginning, but rather*

—that Jesus is presently reigning from heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father,

—that Jesus also is and will remain with the church until the end of the world, as he promised at the Ascension,

—that the binding of Satan, described in Revelation 20.1-3, occurred at Calvary; The power of Christ and the spread of the gospel has prevented Satan from "deceiving the nations." This is the first binding he suffered in history after his fall from heaven. Nonetheless, good and evil will remain mixed in strength throughout history and even in the church, according to the amillennial understanding of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares.

—the thousand year period of Revelation 20 is a figurative expression of Christ's reign being perfectly completed, as the "thousand hills" referred to in Psalm 50:10, the hills on which God owns the cattle, means all hills, and the "thousand generations" in 1 Chronicles 16:15, the generations for which God will be faithful, refers to all generations.

—that God is through with national Israel, and the Old Testament promises to Israel are now applied spiritually to the church.

—that at Pentecost, the millennium began, as is shown by Peter using the prophecies of Joel, about the coming of the kingdom, to explain what was happening.

—that, therefore the Church and its spread of the good news (gospel) IS Christ's "millennial" Kingdom.

[Note 1: The above is a partial summary taken from various amillennial (Roman Catholic) web sites. I trust it is a fair and accurate summary of the amillennial position. **Does any of it sound familiar to you?**

Note 2: The various words using any form of the word *millennia* are of Latin origin and mean the thousand years of Revelation 20; earlier writers also used the term *Chiliasm*, a word of Greek origin and also referring to the same thousand years.

Note 3: Since amillennialism and premillennialism are such long words, writers on this subject often abbreviate these and related terms by substituting **amill**, **postmill**, and **premill**. We will on occasion use this practice in this article.—
CCM]

Amillennialism is sometimes associated with *Idealism*, as both teach a symbolic interpretation of many of the prophecies of the Bible and especially the Book of Revelation. However, many amillennialists do believe in the literal fulfillment of Biblical prophecies; they simply disagree with (pre)millennialists about how or when these prophecies will be fulfilled.

The difference between the Roman Catholic view and the generally accepted Primitive Baptist view of what "the millennium" is and what it means, is (as Elder John Lee Smith used to say), "the difference between sheep meat and mutton."

In the last issue of *the Remnant* we gave a reasonable number of quotes from historians, encyclopedias, and Roman Catholicism's official authorities to document

(a) amillennialism's origin in the Roman Catholic Church and her forerunners, and

(b) Rome's unalterable stand against premillennialism in all its forms:

A. Rome's official **Catholic Church Catechism** (abbreviated by Rome as **CCC**):

B. The **Vatican**'s official Internet website

C. A direct quote from **Pope Pius XI**

D. Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, on another Roman Catholic sponsored website, <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/the-rapture>, bearing Rome's NIHIL OBSTAT designation and Bishop Brom's IMPRIMATUR

E. A quote from Jon Kennedy's book (another authoritative and authentic Roman Catholic source), *The Everything Jesus Book: His Life, His Teachings*

F. The Internet encyclopedia (Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>) article on Amillennialism

We did not have the space to fully develop some of the above statements, and we are not near finished. We hope in this present effort

I. to further develop some of the above, and

II. to provide more documentation further showing the clear connection of Rome and her forerunners with amillennialism.

I. Comments on the Above Quotes

A. The quote from **the Catholic Church Catechism (CCC)**

We will again give the quote from this source, the CCC's paragraph #675 (the numbers 675, 575, etc., are paragraph numbers within the official CCC):

675 Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers.⁵⁷⁴

The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth⁵⁷⁵ will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.⁵⁷⁶

Comments on the Above

1. Rome sees herself as THE Church, not as the agent of persecution ("final trial"), but the receiver of persecution in her "pilgrimage on earth." As she sees things, the "'mystery of iniquity' in the form of a religious deception" is, briefly and in general *whatever opposes the doctrines of Rome or detracts from her*. Specifically, it is aimed at those who, from apostolic days until now, were and are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2.13)" and "the glory that should follow (1 Peter 1.11)."

2. The **men** referred to in the phrase above, "*in the form of a religious deception offering **men** an apparent solution to their problems,*" are those

who have a premillennial hope in Christ's return to undo the damage Satan did in Eden [see 1 John 3.8], i.e., the millennial hope that Rome here calls "the form of a religious deception." This is "the apparent solution to their problems," the promised return of Christ and His establishing His kingdom on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, the resurrection and glorification of all saints from Adam's time until that day, and the saints' ruling and reigning with Christ during the thousand years. (This will indeed be the solution to all the problems of those who so look for His coming.—Ed.)

3. For anyone to believe in the millennial kingdom, especially for a Roman Catholic to do so, would be, according to the CCC, "at the price of apostasy from the truth." Although they do not all use such dramatic language as "apostasy from the truth," all amillennialists nevertheless follow Rome's lead here, either implying or saying outright that premillennialism is apostasy.

4. "The Antichrist's deception" Rome's representatives warn of, "*a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh,*" is the proclamation that Jesus will return, in the flesh, as Israel's Messiah. It is nothing if it is not ironic that Rome would warn against our proclaiming the second coming of Christ as a "pseudo- [false] messiah," when the Pope himself does exactly what they warn against ("man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh") by saying he is "the Vicar of Christ."

5. In their saying "Jesus will return, in the flesh, as Israel's Messiah," they fail to mention that His coming in the flesh will be in His **glorified resurrection flesh** as prophesied throughout the Scriptures: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye**

have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1.9-11).” “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1.7f).”

6. Evidently, one of the main reasons Rome resists the idea that the Creator God will literally come in His glory to take charge of His creation is because she presently has a usurper, who calls himself the Vicar of Christ, in charge of “the Church.” The usurper does not wish to give place to Him who is “the [real, authentic] Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

B. From the official Vatican Website:

What’s the Catholic Position?

As far as the millennium goes, we tend to agree with Augustine and, derivatively, with the amillennialists. The Catholic position has thus historically been “amillennial” (as has been the majority Christian position in general, including that of the Protestant Reformers), though Catholics do not typically use this term [amillennial]. The Church has rejected the premillennial position, sometimes called “millenarianism” [i.e., premillennialism] (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church 676*). In the 1940s the Holy Office judged that premillennialism “cannot safely be taught....”

(Bold emphasis supplied. The above is taken from the Roman Catholic web site at <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/the-rapture>, which bears Rome’s official **Nihil Obstat** and **Imprimatur**. When you seek Roman Catholicism’s official pronouncement on a subject, **you cannot get more official than her Imprimatur and Nihil Obstat.**—Ed.)

To restate Rome's position: Rome endorses amillennialism as derived from Augustine; declares premillennialism cannot safely be taught; and the "majority Christian position in general, including that of the Protestant Reformers," is amillennial.

To our seven remarks in the last issue of *The Remnant* we would add these:

8. Rome virtually recognizes the Protestant Reformers as part of herself, which is correct for her to do. It cannot be emphasized and repeated enough: The intent of Luther, Calvin, and the Reformation movement was not to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6.17)." Their proposal was only to reform Rome [hence *Reformation*], to remove certain idolatrous and superstitious practices from the Roman church, such as the selling of "indulgences" and "veneration of relics."

The Protestant movement is part of Rome and always has been. Rome awaits the Protestants' return to Romanism, which is happening nowadays; it is one of the main underlying thrusts of the worldwide ecumenical movement.

9. In general, Primitive Baptist support of amillennialism is in harmony with Rome's view and the Reformers' doctrine, that **premillennialism cannot safely be taught**. There are many premillennial exceptions among the Old Baptists, for which we thank the Lord God. But there are also many who will still say: **We will go along with doctrines like soul-sleep, non-resurrection of the body, no-hellism, weird "spiritual interpretations" and the like, but we will not tolerate the first-century church's millennialism.**

More Tidbits from History

We are told that in the second century AD there was a sect known as **the Alogi**. Those who know about this group say that (1) the Alogi rejected all of the apostle John's writings, and (2) they were amillennial. If these two allegations are so, then their rejection of the Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ should speak volumes about the merits (or the lack thereof) of amillennialism.

About the same time, a presbyter named **Caius** (under the influence of *Neo-Platonism* and *Dualism*), **Clement** of Alexandria, and Clement's successor **Origen** all **denied premillennialism**.

Historians are wonderful to pass on such things to us, because **they unwittingly prove premillennialism truly existed in those early days! Premillennialism had to be there for Caius, Clement, and Origen to deny!** Heretics excel at denying the doctrine of Christ: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son (1 John 2.22)." "Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which **deny** that there is any resurrection (Luke 20.27)."

Dionysius of Alexandria said Revelation was not written by John, and even if it was, it could not be taken literally. Dionysius, like all the others of the Alexandrian school, was a forerunner of amillennialism.

Origen tended toward an "Idealism" which considered only the spiritual world as real. Like Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy, he thought of the physical world of sin, broken teeth and skinned knees, lost contact lenses, hard, dirty jobs, bills to pay, cancer, disease, and worn-out cars (what most of us consider "the real world") as being a "rude" and "crude" illusion (what Mary B. Eddy called "a product of mortal mind"). One historian says, "Thinking that *only the spiritual is real*" [a belief that is also foundational to Eddy's "Christian Science"—Ed.] "was basic to his [Origen's] belief-system."

It should be of interest that amillennialism began gaining ground in and after the Medieval and Reformation periods, or, mainly after the Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity "a legal religion."

Premillennialists then found it increasingly difficult to say **all worldly religions, politicians, and politics, including the Emperor Constantine and other Emperors who followed (and who had the power of life and death over his subjects), are antichrist, and Christ will destroy them all when He returns to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth.** This is especially dangerous when religious and political leaders could (or can) enforce their decrees by sword and flame, as those Roman leaders in power in those days commonly did, and which the Man of Sin will do in the final days before Christ's return.

"Amillennialism is also common among 'mainline' Protestant denominations such as the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican churches. Amillennialism started declining in Protestant circles since the rise of postmillennialism in the eighteenth century and the resurgence of premillennialism in the nineteenth century, but it regained prominence in the West after World War II."(Source: <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Amillennialism>)

Augustine (AD 354-430)was originally premill, but later changed his views, stating the thousand years of Revelation 20 was "a metaphor for the church age." His view is generally accepted by Catholic theologians. In writing about St. Augustine's view of the millennium, **Fr. Vincent P. Miceli, S. J.**, states that "The real meaning of the thousand years is that the saints are reigning at the present time with Christ in His kingdom the Church. For the Church is now, today, His kingdom." (*The Antichrist* [Harrison, NY: Roman Catholic Books, 1981], 74).

(Source: <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/apologetics/ap0087.html> , which redirects to

<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religion-and-philosophy/apologetics/are-we-living-in-the-last-days.html>)

“Amillennialism was championed by St. Augustine and is the view held by the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and many Protestants... Like many theological beliefs, **amillennialism was born from a combination of human cultural influence and a reluctance to believe God meant His Word as literal truth.**” (Source: <http://www.compellingtruth.org/amillennialism.html>)

Augustine systematized amillennialism, and it became the standard view not only of the Catholic Church but also the Greek Orthodox Church. It is also adhered to by “mainline” Protestant denominations such as the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican churches...During the Medieval period, the Catholic Church suppressed radical premillennial groups such as the Franciscan Spirituals in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the Taborites in the fifteenth century.

We now turn to some additional quotes that bear out what we have been saying:

Martin Luther and the Augsburg Confession

Anyone who thinks Martin Luther and his Lutherans are not and were not still part of the Roman Catholic church after he nailed his 95 theses on the meeting-house door should become acquainted with *The Augsburg Confession*. Philip Schaff, who was certainly no friend of premillennialism, wrote in his history book:

“(4) **The distinctively Lutheran views—mostly retained from prevailing catholic tradition**, and differing in part from those of other Protestant churches—are contained in the articles on the sacraments (IX., X., XIII.), on

confession and absolution (XI.), and **the millennium (XVII.)**. The tenth article plainly asserts the doctrine of a real bodily presence and distribution of Christ in the eucharist to all communicants, and disapproves (*improbant*) of those who teach differently (the Zwinglians).⁹⁷³ **The Anabaptists are not only disapproved, but condemned (*damnamus*) as heretics three times:** for their views on infant baptism and infant salvation (IX.),⁹⁷⁴ Civil offices (XVI.), **the millennium and final restoration (XVII.)**.—Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, CHAPTER IX, Sec. 119 (4). [Bold type supplied—Ed.]

Schaff later adds: “**The doctrine of the second advent and millennium (rejected in Art. XVII.),...has found advocates among sound and orthodox Lutherans, especially of the school of Bengel, and must be regarded as an open question.**”

“**The [Augsburg] confession [of the Lutherans] was translated into English in 1536 and influenced the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglicans and the Twenty-five Articles of Religion of the Methodists.**”—*Encyclopedia Britannica* article, under *Augsburg Confession*

The confession itself begins with these words: “The churches, with common consent among us, do teach....” In the articles of faith that follow, the pronoun **they** refers back to these churches which were, by existing law, held both accountable and answerable to their then Emperor, Charles V, for their beliefs and teachings. “The churches with common consent among us” were those churches under the influence of Luther, Melancthon, and others of the early Protestant movement within the Roman Catholic church.

The more one studies church documents such as the Augsburg Confession, the more clearly may he see that *the entire Protestant movement is only an internal squabble within the Roman Catholic church.*

Article V of the Augsburg Confession says, "**We condemn the Anabaptists and all others who believe that the Holy Spirit can come to people without the external Word, through their own preparations, thoughts, and actions.**" The translation of the Augsburg Confession by **Glen L. Thompson** adds this "historical note" in the margin:

Anabaptists—A group whose name means "to be baptized again." The Anabaptists started as followers of Luther but came to believe that the Holy Spirit did not work through infant baptism, so adults needed to be baptized again. They also taught that the Holy Spirit would come to man directly, without use of Word or sacrament.

He says: "*The Anabaptists started as followers of Luther....*" Of course, producing any one example of the Anabaptists' existence **before** Luther's time (something most easily done) invalidates Mr. Thompson as an historian and ruins his so-called "historical note." However, what makes Thompson's note interesting for Old Baptists is that he verifies that the Anabaptists

(1) believed "the Holy Spirit did not work through infant baptism, so adults needed to be baptized again"; and

(2) "...also taught that the Holy Spirit would come to man directly, without use of Word or sacrament." (See our own principles, number 7, on the last page of this issue of *The Remnant*: "7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means.").

This verifies again what we stated in our series on *Regeneration Without Means*, in *The Remnant*, July-August, 2000, through January-February, 2001, namely, that Old Baptist doctrine in every age has been that God the Holy Spirit directly regenerates and calls His people without the use of any human means, methods, instrumentalities, or man's agencies, whether they are

scriptural means (e.g. preaching the gospel) or unscriptural means (as Sunday Schools, foreign missions, tract societies, so-called “soul winning,” and the like).

On the subject of the millennium, Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession states:

We condemn the Anabaptists...We also condemn all others who are now spreading the Jewish idea that before the dead are raised, the godly will rule this world and that everywhere the ungodly will be overcome.

Schaff elsewhere translates the above quote as:

“...others `who now scatter Jewish opinions that, before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall occupy the kingdom of the world, the wicked being everywhere suppressed.” (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.) 381. [Of the two translations, take your pick.—CCM]

Plainly, Article XVII verifies that the Anabaptists were spreading “the Jewish idea” that before the dead are raised [*i.e.*, before amillennial Rome’s “general judgment”], “the godly” will rule this world “everywhere,” and these godly saints, in ruling, will “overcome the ungodly,” reigning over them along with Christ and His rod of iron. [Amen!]

The amills—in that day, in our own, and in every age since amillennialism was invented—have always tried to make the Abrahamic-Davidic millennial kingdom to be nothing more than a “Jewish idea.”

The Swiss Reformer, Heinrich Bullinger, put the following in **the Second Helvetic Confession**: “We also reject the Jewish dream of a millennium, or golden age on earth, before the last judgment.”

John Calvin wrote in his *Institutes* that chiliasm [millennialism] is a “fiction” that is “too childish either to need or to be worth a refutation” (a simplistic dodge to avoid dealing with solid scriptural teaching). He interpreted the thousand years of Revelation 20 non-literally, calling it the “various disturbances that awaited the church, while still toiling on earth.” How he gets that from **the first resurrection and the resurrected saints’ ruling with Christ** is almost as great a mystery as is Mystery Babylon herself.

It should go without saying, **but we will say it anyway:**

For Origen, Rome, Calvin, Luther, Melanchthon, Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli, and many other notable names in church history in their respective days, to “reject the Jewish millennium” of the Anabaptists, those Anabaptists had to have been teaching chiliasm, which is what we now know as premillennialism!

Why this doctrine is referred to as a “Jewish millennium” is because high on Christ’s priorities in that millennial time will be His fulfilling all the promises God had made in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. Do not think the first verse of the New Testament was put there just to fill up space: “The book of the generation of JESUS CHRIST, the son of DAVID, the son of ABRAHAM.”

1. As for Abraham, he and his descendants are to occupy all the land God promised to him, not merely from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River valley and from Lebanon to Sinai, but **from the Nile to the Euphrates!** “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, **from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:** The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (Genesis 15.18-21).”

Remember, the only part of that land Abraham ever owned in his lifetime was the cave of Machpelah, which he bought for a burial-place for his wife and family. That's all. If God does not at some future time give Abraham all the land between those two mighty rivers, His oath to Abraham or to anyone else (including His bride, the church, which He purchased with His own blood) would be worthless. He then would be unworthy of the name and reputation of the living and true God.

Moreover, if those enemies of Israel who have vowed to destroy her because of her occupying a little part of the Promised Land, if those enemies realized what God had really promised Abraham as "the Promised Land," they would be more insane in their terrorism than they already are.

2. As for David, the Lord said to him through Nathan the prophet:

"Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? [David had proposed building a temple for his God.] Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

"Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, **and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more** [Genesis 15.18-21; if the present return of Israel to their ancient homeland is not this prophesied final regathering, then it must yet take place for God's word to be true]; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as

beforetime [yet to be fulfilled because they are still being afflicted daily by the children of wickedness], And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies.

“Also the LORD telleth thee [DAVID] that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee [thy seed, which is CHRIST], which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. [shortsighted men assume God means Solomon, but Solomon was only a weak prefiguring of The One who is greater than Jonah and greater than Solomon, Matthew 12.42, Luke 11.31]

“He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten **him** with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men [“the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53.5).”]: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established **for ever** before thee: thy throne shall be established **for ever**. [not merely for a generation or two, or even for “1,000 years,” but FOR EVER.—CCM] According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.”

We move ahead to Gabriel’s announcement to Mary:

“28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David [according to God’s

promises]: 33 And He shall reign over the house of Jacob **for ever**; and of His kingdom there shall be **no end**.”

Later, Mary told her cousin Elizabeth, “46 My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. 50 And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation. 51 He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away. 54 **He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy**; 55 As He spake to our fathers, to **Abraham**, and to his seed **for ever** (Luke 1.46-55).”

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, at John’s official public naming, in part said: “Blessed be the Lord God of **Israel**; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us **in the house of His servant David**; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He sware to our father **Abraham**, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life (Luke 1.68-75).”

More Quotes from Rome

1. The Catholic web site, **Catholic Doors** presents the following interesting series of questions and answers:

Q. 1. What does millenarianism mean?

A. Millenarianism, millennium, millennium, postmillenniaslism [*sic*] and premillennialism are words associated with the non-Catholic belief that Christ will return (Second Coming) to physically reign on earth for a period of 1,000 years.

Q. 2. What does the Catholic Church have to say about this belief?

A. The Catholic Church refers to it as the "Antichrist's deception." The following is stated under # 675-6 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

675 "Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. [Lk. 18:; Mt. 24:12] The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth [Lk. 21:12; Jn. 15:19-20] will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh." [2 Thess. 2:4-12; 1 Thess. 5:2-3; 2 Jn. 7; 1 Jn. 2:18, 22]

676 "The Antichrist's deception already begins to take shape in the world every time the claim is made to realize within history that messianic hope which can only be realized beyond history through the eschatological judgement. The Church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come under the name of millenarianism, [DS 3839] especially the "intrinsically perverse" political form of a secular messianism. [Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, condemning the "false mysticism" of this "counterfeit of the redemption of the lowly"; cf. GS 20-21.]

Q. 3. How come I have never heard of these terms before?

A. As a general rule, these terms are not part of the Catholic vocabulary.

Q. 4. Why are they not part of the Catholic vocabulary?

A. These terms are embraced by **non- Catholics who are waiting for the coming of the physical reign of Jesus on earth for a thousand years.**

The Catholic Church teaches that Jesus is presently reigning on earth in His invisible Kingdom. Jesus is presently reigning among us in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and in the Sacred Tabernacles.

To believe in the millenarianism is to deny the presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and the Sacred Tabernacles. Because we believe in the presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and in the Sacred Tabernacles, there is no need for us to refer to millenarianism that opposes what our faith teaches us.

(Source: <http://www.catholicdoors.com/faq/qu29.htm>)

2. "Amillennialism has been widely held in the Eastern Orthodox Church as well as in the Roman Catholic Church, which generally follows Augustine on this point and which has deemed that premillennialism 'cannot safely be taught.'" (Bernard LeFrois, *Eschatological Interpretation of the Apocalypse*, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 13 (1951): 17-20).

3. [Decree of the Holy Office, July 21, 1944]: 2296 In recent times on several occasions this Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office has been asked what must be thought of the system of mitigated Millenarianism, which teaches, for example, that Christ the Lord before the final judgment, whether or not preceded by the resurrection of the many just, will come visibly to rule over this world. The answer is: The system of mitigated Millenarianism cannot be taught safely. ("The Presence of Christ in the Mysteries of the Church") [From the Encyclical, "Mediator Dei," November 20, 1947]

(Source: <http://www.catecheticsonline.com/SourcesofDogma23.php>)

4. "The Church has rejected both millenarianism and its political form, secular messianism."

(Source: http://www.catholicity.com/catechism/coming_in_glory.html)

[Note: By *secular messianism* the author means a worldly or earthly kingdom (rather than just a *spiritual* kingdom) personally ruled over by the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.]

5. "So what is Amillennialism?"

"Well, Amillennialism is by definition a denial of a literal millennial Kingdom.

"It is the only truly "orthodox" position of Christianity (as demonstrated in part by the writings of St. Augustine).

"It states that the millennium, or thousand year reign of Christ, is solely a metaphor. A metaphor for the glorious nature of the work Christ accomplished 'in the tomb.' That is, the work Christ accomplished as described in the middle third of the gospel of the Kingdom but which is no longer taught in the modern church!

"Amillennialism, as taught by the historic church [i.e., Roman Catholicism], never taught the millennium was to be taken literally; never taught that there was to take place a thousand year reign of Christ here on the earth (see Augustine's *City of God*, Book 20, Chapters 7-9)." [From *AMillennialism—The Only True Teaching Of The Historic Church?* (c) Copyright - Paul Rakowicz.] (source: <http://www.cjrpress.com/blog/amillennialism/>)

6. John Wesley: A-millennialist Catholic

"We believe that John Wesley was 'catholic' enough in his Christian faith to be called an 'a-millennialist,' though he never attempted to refine an intricate system of futuristic prophetic understanding. Wesley believed what the universal Christian church had taught, in main, up until his day, that is, that Christ would come in the end of the world to resurrect the dead and judge all mankind." (Originally published in *The Lord's Coming Herald & Wesleyan Bible Prophecy Advocate*, Fall Edition 1999.) [Bold supplied.—Ed.] (Source: http://www.rapturerevival.org/Articles/john_wesley—amillennialist.html)

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**FROM THE STATEMENT OF
VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST
of
PHOENIX, ARIZONA:**

Amillennialism - The view the kingdom of God is in existence now and is realized in the church and in salvation with no literal, earthly millennium in store for the future. In amillennialism, the thousand-year reign is considered a metaphor and spiritual symbol. (Within the churches of Christ, amillennialism [or some variation thereof] is now the predominant view.)

Along with the doctrines of Calvinism, Dispensational Premillennialism is among the most damnable heresies in all the religious world. (Valley Church of Christ, 3535 West Georgia Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona, 85019)

(Source: <http://www.thevalleychurchofchrist.com/studies.asp?articleID=27>)

[Bold supplied.—Ed.]

This "Church of Christ" web site clearly sets forth the amillennial view, of which any amillennialist, including amill Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, amill Primitive Baptists, or any other amillennialist would be proud. Not content with that, this self-styled "Church of Christ" plainly opposes the doctrine of salvation by grace, which they obviously hate, oppose, and dismiss by using the inaccurate term, "doctrines of Calvinism."

[Of course, Old School Presbyterians, Baptists, and others who yet hold to sovereign grace principles would disagree with the Campbellite view of "the doctrines of Calvinism"; we only cite this quote here to demonstrate that their view of prophecy is the same as that of any other amillennialist.—CCM]

Should readers wish to do so, those with Internet connections may check this amillennial Campbellite site at their leisure.

Closing Comments:

1. Some may yet wonder why all this is so important to me. These things are vitally important because

a. Satan has opposed, ridiculed, and lied about Christ's second coming in every age, but especially since the New Testament church era began. Mr. C. Cooper notes in his article "*Chiliasm and the Chiliasts*," *Reformed Theological Review* 29 (1970): 12.), **"from the third to the fifth centuries Chiliasm was vigorously fought and ruthlessly put down, although it was not officially declared a heresy. It was all really rather awkward, because previously nearly everybody of note had been a Chiliast...."**

One might expect such a comment from a premillennial publication, but we owe a special thank-you to our Reformed Theological friends for verifying the presence of Chiliasm (premillennialism) in those early days of the New Testament church. Nowadays, most amills allege that "Darby, Edwards, and Scofield started Premillennialism," but now, thanks to quotes from knowledgeable men among their own, like that of Mr. Cooper, above, they cannot use that lie to deceive anyone who knows the true history of these things.

The doctrine of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ AND what He will do when He returns is prominent throughout the entire Old and New Testaments. We still hold that the Scriptures are our only complete and all-sufficient guide to our faith and practice. They must be adhered to according to the plain meaning of the words as they were inspired. They should be understood according to their grammatical meanings. That principle applies to prophecy as well as to any other part of the Holy Scriptures. (See Principle #2 on the last page of this issue:

"2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice....")

b. There are those who will yet be satisfied with their amillennial belief-system. We are glad to help them trace their doctrinal roots back to Rome.

2. You may have noticed, the quotes from Rome's spokespersons keep referring to a quote or two from the Vatican that "In the 1940s the Holy Office judged that premillennialism "cannot safely be taught...." and similar statements, and their continual citing of the CCC #676. If so, you may have wondered why there is not a wider choice of citations. The answer is simple. Roman Catholicism is more strictly controlled than are we who are used to hundreds of articles and opinions freely disagreeing among ourselves about "interpretations." Historically, Baptists have been at the forefront of those who have fought for religious liberty and freedom, first in what they believe a scripture means, and second, for the freedom to express their views in both speech and on the printed page, without fear of retaliation by those who disagree.

With Rome it is not so. When their Pope speaks, that usually settles the issue as far as they are concerned, especially on issues such as this, and no one scarcely dares to disagree with what the Vatican has decreed—under penalty of excommunication or worse.

Any newly converted child of God (truly born of God and led of the Holy Spirit), who has never been exposed to the differing schools of prophecy, were he or she given nothing but a Bible to read—never would such a one develop a theory like amillennialism, "replacement theology," or a system of "spiritual applications" of the prophecies concerning national Israel. It takes years of exposure to Roman Catholic and Protestant influence in countless books, articles, and sermons before such ideas sound natural.

On that note might be a stopping place. We could continue (there is much more information where this came from!), but for now we forbear. This issue of *The Remnant* and the previous issue have fairly well documented the sources of amillennialism, tracing it back to its fountainhead, Roman Catholicism and her forerunners. No doubt others could have done better and many have done so.

The historians and writers cited from among the various denominations are clear, plain, and unashamed to admit their spiritual pedigree. Nor am I ashamed to disagree with the pagans and their modern followers.—CCM

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