

## PART II: ROME, PAGAN to PAPAL A.D. 100 to A.D. 1300

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood." (Ephesians 6:12)

It is not men to whom we look as we seek the origin of the conspiracy against Christ and His church. We worry not whether mere mortals were aware of the part they played in the unfolding drama. We look behind the scenes to view the master conspirator, and to expose him. It is Lucifer who is behind the priesthoods of men. He is the one whose earthly throne always contains a *chief priest*, or *pontifex maximus*, offerer of the sacrifice. Wherever this supreme pontiff sits can be labeled Babylon. We ask not whether the man is good, or better than others, or possessor of certain acceptable doctrines. We ask if he sits in Satan's seat. Judge for yourself the progression of the following events.

### **SIXTEEN: THE EARLY CHURCH**

#### **c. A.D. 30**

During and following the days of the foundational writers, the church is new, strong, and freshly filled with the Holy Ghost. False teachings abound, but what a church is forming! Here is a brief sketch of that church, as a backdrop against which the *other* church can be set, for your later comparison. Whatever your present affiliation, it will be difficult to compare it favorably to those first days of the church.

The first Christians have all things in common. Not forced, all voluntary. They meet daily, in various homes or existing buildings or special hiding places, to keep themselves safe from the present "Babylon," Pagan Rome. No church buildings. No air conditioning. No loudspeaker systems. No mikes. There is a simplicity about their meetings which varies from town to town, but has the same basic elements, inspired by the same Spirit, and recorded by Luke in the book of Acts and Paul in his epistles:

- 1) the teachings of the apostles, Acts 2:42
- 2) prayers, Acts 2:42
- 3) worship, I Corinthians 12, 14
- 4) manifestations of the Spirit of God, I Corinthians 14
- 5) the breaking of the bread, or the "Lord's supper," Acts 2:42, I Corinthians

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6) often, fellowship dinners - love feasts - are a part of the meeting, but they soon become a problem (I Corinthians 11)

And, the Lord keeps adding to the church those who are being set free from sin, that is, *saved*. Great grace is upon them.

To see an involved pagan ritual in old Pagan Rome, and then to see a simple meeting of God's people is to see two totally different events, not even close to comparison. At least *in the beginning*, no one could compare Christianity to paganism. But things change.

In their personal lives, and in their communal life, the early Christians are a *separated* people. They use the world as needed, but keep their eyes on the heavens, whence they look for Christ to return at any moment.

People such as the above described have their descendants among us today:

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simple men and women, children too, who want nothing but the Word of God, the Spirit of God, the People of God, and a God-given job to do while waiting for Jesus' return.

But slowly another people evolve. Things are added. Things are subtracted. An evolution takes place, a mixing of good and evil, which always produces evil.

Now, Edward Gibbon, author of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, is not known to be a defender of the faith. In fact, one might label him a cynic, as he closely views the growing church of antiquity and grows sick watching. But his candid comments are worth hearing as he traces this development. From pages 376-383 of Volume I:

"The primitive Christians were dead to the business and pleasures of the world; but their love of action...soon revived and found a new occupation in the government of the church...The ambition of raising themselves or their friends to the honours and offices of the church was disguised by the laudable intention of devoting to the public benefit the power and consideration which, for that purpose only, it became their duty to solicit...and while they concealed from others, and perhaps, from themselves, the secret motives of their conduct, they too frequently relapsed into all the turbulent passions of active life...The government of the church has often been the subject, as well as the prize, of religious contention. The hostile disputants of Rome...struggled to reduce the primitive and apostolic model to the respective standards of their own policy."

Gibbon continues with a summary of the evolution of church government:

"The public functions of religion were solely intrusted to the established ministers of the church, the **bishops** and **presbyters**; two appellations which, in their first origin, appear to have distinguished the same office and the same order of persons...the order of public deliberations soon introduces the office of a president...the lofty title of Bishop began to raise itself above the humble appellation of presbyter...this episcopal form of government appears to have been introduced before the end of the first century...(it is ) still revered...as a primitive and even as a divine establishment...It is needless to observe that the pious and humble presbyters who were first dignified with the episcopal title could not possess, and would probably have rejected, the power and pomp which now encircles the tiara of the Roman pontiff..."

As to their general situation in the Roman world:

"...the Christian world was not yet connected by any supreme authority or legislative assembly...they discovered the advantages that might result from a closer union...Towards the end of the second century, the churches of Greece and Asia adopted...provincial synods...borrowed (from) the model of a representative council...of their own country...bishops of the independent churches should meet in the capital of the province...their decrees were styled canons...the Catholic Church soon assumed the form, and acquired the strength, of a great federative republic."

Things keep changing:

"The prelates of the third century imperceptibly changed the language of exhortation into that of command...(it was said that) the episcopal(bishop)

authority alone was derived from the Deity, and extended itself over this and over another world. The bishops were the vicereagents of Christ, the successors of the apostles, and the mystic substitutes of the high priest of the Mosaic law...as if the shepherd had been of a more exalted nature than that of his sheep...the inferior clergy (when in opposition) received the ignominious epithets of faction and schism. Prelates...soon acquired the lofty titles of Metropolitans and Primates (and) secretly prepared themselves to usurp over their episcopal brethren the same authority which the bishops had so lately assumed above the college of presbyters."

Soon they were playing "king of the mountain."

"...each of them affecting to display, in the most pompous terms, the temporal honours and advantages of the city over which he presided; the numbers and opulence of the Christians who were subject to their pastoral care; the saints and martyrs who had arisen among them, and the purity with which they preserved the tradition of the faith...It was easy to foresee that Rome must enjoy the respect, and would soon claim the obedience, of the provinces...the Roman church was the greatest, the most numerous..."

And so on, ad nauseam. Note these digressions, finally:

"The progress of the ecclesiastical authority gave birth to the memorable distinction of the laity and of the clergy, which had been unknown to the Greeks and Romans. The former of these appellations comprehended the body of the Christian people; the latter, according to the signification of the word, was appropriated to the chosen portion that had been set apart for the service of religion; a celebrated order of men which has furnished the most important, though not always the most edifying, subjects for modern history. Their mutual hostilities sometimes disturbed the peace of the infant church, but their zeal and activity were united in the common cause, and the love of power, which (under the most artful disguises) could insinuate itself into the breasts of bishops and martyrs, animated them to increase the number of their subjects, and to enlarge the limits of the Christian empire...The community of goods...was adopted for a short time in the primitive church...The progress of the Christian religion relaxed, and gradually abolished, this generous institution, which in hands less pure than those of the apostles, would too soon have been corrupted and abused..."

And when paganism is finally admitted to the church by law of the Caesars, most do not seem to care. This new breed gives to us the line of descent we can only call **Babylonian**.

The people of Babylon, whether old or new Babylon, can never feel at home with the people of Jerusalem, whether old or new Jerusalem. The harlot church can never accept the people who know their God through Jesus Christ. And the true Jew of the Old Covenant or the true Christian of the New is bound always to expose this harlotry.

### **c. 70 A.D.**

Before we get too far, let's stop a minute to look at the writings of the men of the first century church. In Part I, we looked carefully at apostolic writings. But after the

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apostles, men still wrote letters to one another and to churches. Some of these letters were at first thought to be a part of the New Testament canon. Though they are not, their words are important to us. For one thing, most of them had a direct link to a living apostle. These men are called the "apostolic fathers", and include Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, and Papias.

What Gibbon views from the outside of the church is verified from the inside: things are changing! Not just the necessary adaptations to changing culture, but basic changes in doctrine and principal:

Whereas Paul, Peter, and in the same time span, Clement, all condone a simple organization of the church, comprised of elder/bishops and deacons, by the time of Ignatius (shortly after 100 A.D.) one of that plurality has become "the" bishop.

Though there is not, as yet, Mary-veneration, Rome domination, or priest-sacrifice, there is a growing stress on works, less talk of grace. Though some see the Lord's Supper as a simple meal, others are raising it to the level of the very means for eternal life (as in Ignatius to Ephesians) and demanding that the bread is literally the flesh of Christ. In the Didache, actual prayers for the bread and wine are formulated.

Though women are still enjoined to keep silent (as in Clement to the Corinthians), and churches are admonished to submit to authority, that authority becomes centered in one person, as though he were the Lord himself (Ignatius to Ephesians). Ignatius goes so far as to say that without a bishop and a group of elders, there *is no church*. He would have had a problem with Philip the evangelist (Acts 8).

Baptism, the Greek idea meaning submerging, is transformed into a convenience that can be substituted with pouring on the head (Didache).

Legalism enters, as in this instruction of the Didache :

"...do not let your fasts coincide with those of the hypocrites. They fast on Monday and Thursday, so you must fast on Wednesday and Friday."

And in the Epistle of Diognetus, a somewhat anti-Semitic author puts down Jewish ways which in fact become the ways of Romanism shortly thereafter:

"(they)...observe months and days, ...and make distinctions between the changing seasons ordained by God, making some into feasts and others into times of mourning according to their own inclinations..."

To trace further the writings of the "fathers" is a study in disappointment. Many of them speak good and noble words. But in almost all, there is that deadly *mixture* which catches the unsuspecting and undiscerning off guard. Let us stay grounded on the very words of God, through Christ to the apostles, if we are to be His special people in this most confused world.

### **SEVENTEEN: THE GREATEST DECEPTION of the AGES**

**(so far)**

**c. 300 A.D.**

Pagan Rome rises and falls. Its history is clearly heralded by many. And as a true child of Babylon it plays its part well. Its hatred of and persecution of both Jews and Christians is well documented. Rome's mysteries I have already mentioned. They coincide with those of the beginner of all the mysteries, ancient Babylon.

Satan has had an unbroken chain of success in deceiving mankind. But even with all of his force, his intoxicating doctrines, his confusion, he sees that instead of defeating the purposes of God, the people on God's side continue to multiply. Through the

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resurrection of the Christ that Satan tried to avert has come a veritable shower of life, claiming many of Lucifer's followers.

The Roman Empire, aptly described by Daniel (chapters 2 and 7) in the most horrific of terms, has not scared off God's people after all. Quite the opposite, as there is unparalleled growth of the Kingdom of God.

Serious problem here. When you've given it your best shot and you're failing, what next? Shoot again. But with what? If the Empire cannot crush the fledgling church, what can? There is a sinister smile on Satan's face as he decides on a totally different tactic for the Christians: **acceptance**.

The higher the authority that accepts a human, the better that person feels about himself, and the more beholden he becomes. If Satan's bunch actually "accept" the church, will she yield to those pressures, when the threat of violence and death made no dent at all?

To help answer that question, I introduce now the next player in this drama, would-be Emperor Constantine.

Here again I need your undivided attention. Listen to this scheme of all schemes with the horror due it.

After more than 300 years of burning, torturing, demeaning Christians, there is a lull in history. Constantine allegedly sees a vision of a **cross**, and is told that he must now conquer in that sign. I say "allegedly" because I was not there, and the witnesses are not of the caliber of Spirit-inspired Bible-writers. I trust you will forgive my hesitancy to accept the standard story.

In fact historians have debated as to

- 1) whether he even saw a vision
- 2) exactly **what** he saw
- 3) who **gave** the supposed vision

It's an interesting question, the answer to which has absolutely nothing to do with what follows. What did the vision produce?

Facts agreed upon:

- 1) After the "vision," the soldiers of Constantine had an emblem that they took to stand for Christ placed on their shields, and with these shields facing their enemy (another would-be emperor) **they won**.
- 2) Constantine prayed to his sun-god, Mithras, before the battle.
- 3) He in fact prayed to that god until the day of his death, on which day he is alleged to have received "baptism".

So, Constantine, a Caesar, pro-Christ but not of-Christ, lifts the church from its obscure dungeons, and brings it to the light of day, at least the **Babylonian day** of Pagan Rome.

Freedom is sweet to the persecuted church. Had you and I been there, we would have done what that early church now does: honor the man who brings you out of suffering.

Honor and attention are what Constantine thrives on. Many of his subjects are Christians, and the vision is well-timed, whatever its origin. As Pharaoh of Egypt, he does the "smart" thing and averts a potential revolution of a growing people.

And Constantine's bondage of servitude is of a kinder, nobler sort. All he wants for rescuing the Christians from persecution, death, and the other things that the early church has come to accept as normal (after all, didn't Jesus promise all this?), all he wants, I say, is **complete control of the church**.

It is tempting to say nice things about Constantine. All the books do, you know. He

was a **great** man, after all. He did, like Lincoln, "free the slaves." Oh, our flesh loves him. I mean, can we imagine the great burden of stinking prisons, bloodshed, unequaled torture suddenly **removed**? Can we not weep with joy with the early believers, as their chains fall off, and say, "THANKS, Constantine"?

Consider, from our present vantage point, what has really happened. Constantine, you have unwittingly wedded your Babylon to the Bride of Christ, purified by hundreds of years of fire. The ultimate act of prostitution is here committed by the Pimp of the ages, Lucifer.

Oh, Satan! Kings and princes of all times you have deceived and lured into your bed, but the Virgin of Christ! How low can your adulterous mind bring you?

Through Constantine, the mother of harlots conceives and bears yet another loathsome offspring. The seed of Satan penetrates the womb of the young church yet again, in a far more harmful way than the false teachers who were, in the main, recognized and expelled. In Constantine, a benefactor, the church is caught unawares, and settles down to be raped.

The representative of Babylon places **himself** at the head of the church and calls for a council. His purpose is to end all the factions of Christianity. And as in our day, there are many variations on the theme "Christian."

The Roman way is the "Pax Romana," the enforced peace, visibly uniting all diversity, allowing for no dissident voices. What is good for the Empire will be good for the church. There are to be no factions. Period.

The subsequent meetings of the Council of Nicaea cannot be written off totally because of Constantine's usurpation. We can believe that the voice of the Holy Spirit was echoed in many true followers of Christ. But the false was there also. The true and the false are here forced into union, and have remained in the harlot religion from that day to this.

Halley, in his Bible Handbook, a Christian classic, mentions that certain false teachings, such as **Arianism**, are condemned at this Council, and that the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch are given full jurisdiction over their provinces, as Roman bishops over Rome. (No hint in this meeting that the various provinces are subject to the Roman Church.)

But what is a Roman Emperor doing at the head of this Council? And from whose urgings is the church made to "agree."?

March, 321 A.D., Constantine orders the "venerable day of the sun" (we call it Sunday, too), to be celebrated as a day of rest. The Christians comply since Christ has been raised on that day, and it seems the "right thing to do." Here, though, is one of those weddings of true and false.

Constantine then allows the construction of "church buildings." Reminiscent of the Jewish synagogues, and pagan temples, Christians begin to enjoy making these visible expressions of their inward faith. But whence the directions from God on this matter?

One wonders, as we digress a moment, just how far the church would have advanced throughout the world if more congregations had been visiting houses instead of building them, if more church leaders had been on the street instead of at the building site. What if all the dollars put into ornate "centers of worship" had been given to the preaching of the Gospel in unreached lands?

One just wonders, of course. But it does seem proper to suggest that the concept of a **temple of worship** where people go to **find God** is strictly Babylonian, supported by Pagan Rome and her descendants. The Jewish temple was built to picture the true, which true Christians recognize to be the people of God, and our own bodies, both houses of the

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Holy Presence of God. These are the only hallowed structures God honors. Why did we ever think otherwise? Part of the answer is found in studying this Constantine "thing."

The good Emperor begins to favor Christians in every way. Halley (p. 759) says he

"filled chief offices with them, exempted Christian ministers from taxes and military service...made Christianity the religion of the court..."

Sounds so wonderful! But what has become of the cross, the shame related to knowing and following Christ, the warning, "beware when all men speak well of you"?

Church of God, what are you doing?

Church of God, can you not see that Babylon is about to swallow you whole?

Constantine gives the Lateran Palace on the north of the Vatican Valley, to the church, as a headquarters (though we know that the Head of the Church has always resided in Heaven) which was used as such until the 1300's. The palace he **built** on the supposed site of the tomb of Peter is the present seat of authority, the Vatican Palace.

Bounded by the Hill of Mary and a hill honoring Janus, the Vatican State was once home to the Circus of Nero, thus the graveyard of many early Christians. Even farther back...

"There is a road that runs along this valley, the ancient **Via Cornelia**, a road lined with tombs and adjoined by a hill and wooded ranges where sacrifices were made to the Phrygian goddess Cybele, and where, in the earliest times, the Etruscan soothsayers or **vates** had their oracles. It was from them that the hill derived its name, the **Collis Vaticanus**, 'oracle hill'..."

So says Friedrich Gontard in his Chair of Peter.

It looks as though Babylon is about to be born all over again.

### **EIGHTEEN: THE CHURCH AS PERSECUTOR**

Constantine, favoring Christianity, but by no means clinging to Christ alone, becomes much opposed to the paganism of the Roman aristocrats and decides to move east and start a "new" Rome. Here are the beginnings of the "other leg" of Daniel's vision. (See Part I)

This new city is at various times in history known as Byzantium, Constantinople (after its founder), and, as today, Istanbul. You will find it in Turkey. It is interesting to note on a map of Europe how Italy and the Grecian peninsula (not far from Istanbul and forming a central bulwark of its power) form two "legs" that jut into the Mediterranean Sea.

Before the church's plunge into idolatry, witchcraft, and world domination, there is a relapse, and more persecution comes upon the people of God. A final purification, perhaps a final warning NOT to be a part of the Babylonian system that can enslave people at will, set them free when convenient, honor that which is false, condemn the true. The Emperor Julian, raised Christian, turns against the Christian faith, perhaps for the same reasons that moderns spurn her, namely, the lives of her "saints". When he comes to power he reverses the tide of blessing so recently showered on the church. Not outrightly murderous, still he takes away many privileges, and once again champions the cause of paganism, which has by no means died. How will God's people respond?

Unfortunately, the church has tasted power. Not the power that comes from the Throne of God, but man's power, called authority. She does not repent, at least the historical surface group we have come to know as "the church" does not repent. We must

assume that many of God's remnant got the message. As for the rest, when that authority is once more offered, the church once more takes it.

It is given to Emperor Theodosius to bring upon the church its "worst calamity," according to Halley. (p. 760 ff) He it was who

"made Christianity the (enforced) State Religion...and made church membership compulsory...undertook the forcible suppression of all other religions...under his decrees, heathen temples were torn down by mobs of Christians...there was much bloodshed."

Halley is eloquent here, and I can do no better than to continue quoting:

"Christ had designed to conquer by purely spiritual and moral means. Up to this time conversion was voluntary, a genuine change in heart and life.

But now, the military spirit of Imperial Rome had entered the church. The church had conquered the Roman Empire. But in reality the Roman Empire had conquered the church, by making the church over into the image of the Roman Empire.

The Church had changed its nature, had entered its great apostasy, had become a political organization in the spirit and pattern of Imperial Rome, and took the nose-dive into the millennium of Papal abominations.

The Imperial church of the 4th and 5th centuries had become an entirely different

ambition to institution from the persecuted church of the first 3 centuries. In its rule it lost and forgot the Spirit of Christ.

Worship, at first very simple, was developed into elaborate stately imposing ceremonies having all the outward splendor that had belonged to heathen temples...ministers became priests..."

To this agrees non-Christian H. G. Wells in Crux Ansata:

"Christianity early...entangled itself with archaic traditions of human sacrifices, with Mithraic blood-cleansing, with priestcraft as ancient as human society...The gory entrail-searching forefinger of the Etruscan pontifex maximus presently overshadowed the teachings of Jesus." (p. 12)

"Pontifex Maximus", you say?

Yes, sadly, that term is soon to be applied to Christ's ministers. Gibbon fills in some detail:

"Theodosius...assumed the merit of subduing the Arian heresy and of abolishing the worship of idols in the Roman world...he dictated a solemn edict...:' It is our pleasure that all the nations should steadfastly adhere to the religion which was taught by St. Peter to the Romans; which faithful tradition has preserved; and which is now professed by the **Pontiff Damasus**...We authorize the followers of this doctrine to assume the title of Catholic Christians; and, as we judge that all others are extravagant madmen, we brand them with the infamous name of Heretics; and declare that their conventicles shall no longer usurp the respectable appellation of churches. Besides the condemnation of Divine justice, they must expect to

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suffer the severe penalties which our authority, guided by heavenly wisdom, shall think proper to inflict upon them.' "

Did Church and State ever have a purer union?

But we were speaking of the "Pontifex Maximus" or Supreme Pontiff. In about 378 A.D. , prior to Theodosius, the Emperor Gratian, whose rule also co-existed with Pope Damasus, was offered, as all emperors, the office of supreme pontiff, the one who heads the pagan priesthood, offers its sacrifices, intercedes for the people. But, according to Gibbon, and the witness of all historians, he "sternly rejected those profane symbols." He was a Christian.

The Catholic Encyclopedia of 1967, p. 572 informs us that

"The office of the Pope is described in the annuario pontifico(official directory of the Holy See) by the following titles:

"Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Chief of the Apostles, **Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church**, patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the State of Vatican City.

"...the term pontifex, used in classical Latin of the members of the college of high priests, began to be used of bishops **late in the 4th century.**"

Indeed it did! To be specific, with one **Pope Damasus**, who **reigned**(yes, that's the proper word now) from 366-384. In the year **378**, in a petition to Emperor Gratian, who has **refused** the pontifical title on Christian grounds, Damasus applied the term to himself!

In that same year, the same Pope referred to his Roman diocese as the "apostolic see", that is , the head of the Christian religion. Catholic histories of this man praise him as having been the first to apply strongly the case for his own, and Rome's, supremacy, based on the "You are Peter" passage explained in Part I.(Matthew 16)

This is a Pope whose entry into office was contested by another, and whose men murdered 137 of the challenger's forces to ensure his place on the Papal throne. It was Damasus also who told men to leave their wives if they were to follow Christ perfectly. Accused year after year of murder, and even of adultery, somehow he maintained his position.

Such power. Such stamina. Such evil. Is this man now receiving help elsewhere? He is, after all ,the successor , the link to, the ancient Chaldean mysteries?

Or is he just an ordinary man, caught up in the struggles of the flesh, as we all are? After all, he did much good, didn't he? Assumptions aside for the moment, we know this much: A convictable murderer sits on a throne wearing the title of "chief priest" of the mysteries, a title well-known to every Roman school child of the day. And that seat of authority is said to be the throne of Christ. **No one else in his world wears this title**, not even a Roman Emperor. What else can we believe but the obvious?

This did not all happen overnight.

"Like many great historical changes, this one was gradual and entailed such changes of outlook that it was not really perceptible. The Christianization of the Empire and the corresponding Romanization of the church took several generations. " (Vamberto Morais, p. 83, A Short History of Anti-Semitism.)

Hislop poses this imaginative question:(p.218)

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"What would...the old Pagan priests say, who left the stage of time while the martyrs were still battling against their gods, and, rather than symbolise them, 'loved not their lives unto death,' if they were to see the present aspect of the so-called Church of European Christendom? What would Belshazzar himself say, if it were possible for him to ...enter St. Peter's at Rome, and see the Pope in his pontificals, in all his pomp and glory? Surely he would conclude that he had only entered one of his own well-known temples, and that all things continued as they were at Babylon..."

Gibbon(op cit., pp 902-903) follows with a similar query:

"If, in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian...had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle, which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open, they must have been offended by the smoke of the incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused, at noonday, a gaudy, superfluous, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting, for the most part, of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigil of the feast; and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism, and, perhaps, of wine. Their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice; and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their church, to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saints, which were usually concealed by a linen or silken veil from the eyes of the vulgar. The Christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs, in the hope of obtaining, from their powerful intercession, every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal, blessings. They implored the preservation of their health or the cure of their infirmities; the fruitfulness of their barren wives or the safety and happiness of their children. Whenever they undertook any distant or dangerous journey, they requested that the holy martyrs would be their guides and protectors on the road; and, if they returned without having experienced any misfortune, they again hastened to the tombs of the martyrs, to celebrate...The walls were hung round with symbols of the favours which they had received; eyes, and hands, and feet, of gold and silver; and edifying pictures, which could not long escape the abuse of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, represented the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelar saint...it must...be confessed that the ministers of the Catholic church imitated the profane model which they were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved, in less than a century, the final conquest of the Roman empire: but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals."

This same Gibbon in another place refers to the ruin of paganism as "a singular event in the history of mankind." He seems here overawed by the progress of Christianity,

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failing to take into account what he later confesses, that the Christians were themselves ruined.

A man may try to stop smoking (in the power of his own will), and start *eating* a lot instead. A person can try to control his angry outbursts at home, only to find that *at work* he is angrier than ever. Contractors can destroy a building, but the bricks are still present. Paganism, Satan's Kingdom, "disappears," but reappears inside the church.

The fact is, hordes of unregenerate unbelievers filled the church, with no desire to change. As Hislop points out (p.251),

"In exact proportion as Paganism has disappeared from *without* the church, in the very same proportion it appears *within* it. Pagan dresses for the priests, Pagan festivals for the people, Pagan doctrines and ideas of all sorts, are everywhere in vogue...Pope Damasus saw that, in a city pre-eminently given to idolatry...if, bearing the *title*, around which, for so many ages, all the hopes and affections of Paganism had clustered, he should give its votaries reason to believe that he was willing to act up to the original spirit of that title, he might count on popularity, aggrandisement and glory..."

With first one, then another, religion in power in the Empire,

"...both religions had been alternately disgraced by the seeming acquisition of worthless proselytes, of those votaries of the reigning purple who could pass, without a reason and without a blush, from the church to the temple, and from the altars of Jupiter to the sacred table of the Christians." (Gibbon, p.741)

So, what is conceived by Constantine now seems to be born and quickly maturing, more and more looking like its mother, Babylon, yet having characteristics of a Jerusalemite. What a sad child!

At first glance it seems that the church is as powerless to resist *fortune* as it has been to withstand hellish persecutions. But looking closer we must agree that it is by an act of the *will* that the Roman organization takes upon itself the trappings of power and royalty. Let none of us claim that royalty is *thrust* upon us.

In a pronouncement of Damasus's Roman Synod in the year 382, the primacy of Peter, hotly contested itself, turns into the primacy of *Rome*.

"The Holy Roman Church takes precedence over the other churches, not on the ground of any synodal decisions, but because it was given the primacy by the words of our Lord, 'Thou art Peter.' Peter and Paul dedicated the Holy Roman Church to the Lord Christ and gave it unique precedence over all other cities in the whole world by their presence and by their venerable triumph. The Roman church therefore is the first see of the apostle Peter, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

The growth of the myth. What first-grader in the things of God does not know of the prominence of *Jerusalem* in God's Word? If there is ever to be a city honored over the whole earth, and there *is*, surely it is the city of David, the city where Christ is crucified, the city where the Spirit falls for the first time. And it is of the *New Jerusalem* of which God speaks when He looks to the final situation of world politics.

Let me insert here a reminder that Constantine has vacated Rome, and his descendants are likewise ruling from the "New Rome." The power vacuum in the *old* city is filled by leaders of the "church."

In A.D. 431, the "keys" are mentioned by the ruling Pope, to give visible "proof" of

his authority. Now, the "keys" of Cybele and Janus, Roman gods, were long known by Pagan Romanists. But Papal Rome identifies these keys with Peter, and so strengthens itself in its claims.

Yes, Peter had been given some keys, that is, the means whereby the door of Heaven was opened to both Jews and Gentiles, messages from God which are in fact recorded in Acts chapters 2 and 10. The **key** to God's Kingdom is the preaching of Jesus, **not** an authority trip.

So, it is in Pagan Rome that the church first feels a flush of power, and in Rome will be the **Eternal City**, the **City of God**, which will rule in the name of God over the world. A vision shared by Augustine in his classic City of God. This little manual was used by ruling popes to verify their newborn dream.

Their prophetic notions are not without backing in God's Word. John, you will recall, also saw a city that reigns over the kings of the earth. He was not overly impressed with it, though.

### **NINETEEN: THE SLOW EMERGENCE OF THE PAPACY**

So, the location is to be Rome. The man is to be "Peter." Said Leo I, leader of the church in the middle of the 5th century:

"From the whole world, a single man, 'Peter', is chosen and appointed to rank before all Gentiles and all apostles, all Fathers of the church...it is expressly Peter who is to govern all whom Christ governs in the first place."  
(Gontard, p. 137)

Thus the headship of the new church is to be given to a man. How the church can ignore the plain teachings on the "body of Christ" given by the apostles, can only be explained in terms of Satan's slowly confusing, blinding ways.

Paul states it clearly in Ephesians 1:22...

"God put all things under Christ's feet and gave Christ to be head over all things to the Church, which is (Christ's) Body..."

Head in Heaven, body on earth. Head gives commands, through various workings of the Spirit, including shepherds (not lords), gifts, miracles. And the body responds.

The church which has a human, "visible" head is **not** the church of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And using the picture of priesthood, God's is made up of high-priest Jesus and all His believers. Satan's, a poor mimic, but strong enough to deceive millions, has an earthly high priest, is located in a human capital, boasts temples and cathedrals, but is doomed for destruction.

### **TWENTY: BABYLON BAPTIZED**

The place, Rome. The man, Peter. The worship, decidedly Babylonian. Even back in the 2nd century, Tertullian of Carthage had noted:

"How much more faithful are the heathen to their religion, who take special care to adopt no solemnity from the Christians." (Tertullian, De Idolatria, c.14, p.682)

Not so the "Christians." They begin to adapt quite nicely to their surroundings. Meeting pagans half way becomes the **in** thing. In fact, says Hislop:

"the paganism which Rome has baptized is in all its essential elements, the

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very paganism which prevailed in the ancient literal Babylon." (p.2)

As early as the Council of Nicaea the question of Mary, via certain Egyptian Christians, is being introduced. Her titles, her prerogatives, are suggested. But many of the questions remain unanswered at that early time, and yet today they are not totally dealt with. Babylonianism is in the church, unquestioned.

One of these Mary ideas is that, perhaps, the Holy Trinity ought to consist of the Father, the Messiah, and the Virgin Mary. How such blasphemy? There is a "logic" to it:

The Assyrian practice was to include the goddess of the air, or spirit, as a part of their trinity. This is carried over to the Christian world by considering Mary as that same object of reverence. The "air," the "spirit," the Spirit, Mary...all the same, you see. (Do you really?)

Please recall that I am here a reporter and do not believe this foolishness. Perhaps most Catholics do not either. But in the early church the question was asked. I am not certain that the possibility of such a doctrine was categorically denied.

No matter. The cult of Mary will survive on other, equally blasphemous, ideas. She will be called, like Semiramis, the "queen of heaven "; she will be praised as the "house consecrated by God "; men will say she is the "awful dwelling place, the mansion of God, the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit, the temple of the Trinity...in which men may safely come near to God become man, Mediatrix." Of the simple young lady named Mary they will say, "The Lord himself created her in the Holy Ghost and poured her out among all His works."

In art she will be portrayed with a circle of light above her head, as are goddesses of Babylonian origin. The blue-eyed golden-haired madonnas of Babylon will be transformed into one with mideastern complexion. Overnight.

Still following Hislop, and adding my "amen's," I quote:

"Away then with the deadly delusion that Rome is Christian! Every day the 'Grand Mystery' is revealing itself more and more in its true character. There is not, and there cannot be, any safety for the souls of men in Babylon. ' Come out of her my people! ' is the loud and express command of God. Those who disobey that command, do it at their peril."

### **TWENTY-ONE: DOCTRINAL ANATHEMAS**

The Babylonian system has been fond of making lists of anathemas, or curses. In keeping with its character, it has also killed ("delivered to the secular arm" is the precise wording) those who dared to defy her authority.

I thought it appropriate to list some anathemas also. Though none shall be threatened with death by me, it is proper to warn all that what John said about adding and subtracting from his Revelation is, I believe, equally true of any Word from God. Thus, doctrines which come after the apostolic foundations were laid (the Spirit-inspired writing and collecting of New Covenant books) are immediately suspect. Using a list of Jorain Boether in Roman Catholicism, pp.7-9, I would like to list a few of the teachings and practices that come from Rome, and the approximate date that they began to be taught officially:

(all dates are A.D.)  
prayers for the dead, 310  
the sign of the cross, 320  
veneration of angels and dead saints, 375  
the daily "Mass", 394

the worship of Mary, through the term "Mother of God", 431  
priests clothed differently from "laity", 500  
purgatory, 593  
Latin as standard language in church, 600  
kissing of the pope's feet, 709  
temporal power of popes, 750  
worship of cross, images, relics, 788  
holy water, 850  
veneration of St. Joseph, 890  
baptism of bells, 965  
canonization of dead saints, 995  
fasting on Fridays and during lent , 998  
celibacy of priesthood, 1079  
rosary, 1090  
inquisition of heretics, 1184  
sale of indulgences, 1190  
confession of sins to priest at least once a year, 1215  
adoration of the wafer, 1220  
Bible forbidden to laymen, 1229  
scapular, 1251  
cup forbidden to laity, 1414  
apocryphal books added (Trent), 1546  
immaculate conception of Mary, 1854  
papal infallibility, 1870  
assumption of Mary into heaven, 1950

[The word "veneration", by the way, is a clever Roman way to disguise the fact that worship of idols actually takes place in the Roman system. People are told, "We don't really *worship*, we *venerate*." Everyone's closest friend at times like these, Mr. Webster, shows that the word *venerate* is derived from the Latin *venerari*, the first meaning of which is "to worship." (Webster's New World Dictionary, 2nd college edition, c.1972)]

Such is a *short* list of the areas in which the church put on the ways of Babylon, and slowly became the lady spoken of by John. For a full listing, consult the ecumenical councils of the "church" down through history. It is a fascinating and very involved study. The changes I am suggesting came about *quite* slowly. Only the spiritually perceptive in each generation could have noticed. But for us, living in *this* day, comparing our New Testament with the monstrosity headquartered in Italy, can there be any serious doubt about who she is?

### **TWENTY-TWO: THE ANCESTRY OF THE ROMAN CHURCH**

The thread of false doctrine can be traced through modern Babylon's history. It is not my intention to refute each item, only to indicate that *the* refutation of all such add-on's is that they *are* add-on's, and not even hinted at in the foundational teachings of the New Testament. However, most *can* be found in ancient Babylon's worship.

Modern Babylon claims to have "descended" from ancient days in an unbroken chain of succession. With this we must agree. But we cannot trace this succession back to the Apostle Peter. It is obvious that the lineage links up with the Caesars in the 4th and 5th centuries, and from there back to the Tower of Babel, or even the Garden of Eden. The

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scarlet threads of domination, prostitution, and murder lead us all the way.

Malachi Martin in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Church has relevant comments:

"The Popes of Rome were the heirs and successors of the Caesars of Rome...the Popes have claimed all the authority the Caesars claimed, and more. The Papal palace, throughout the centuries, has been among the most luxurious in all the world. Popes have lived in pomp and splendor unsurpassed by earthly kings. In no place on earth is there more ostentatious pageantry and show of magnificence than at the coronation of a Pope...the city of Rome, first Pagan, then Papal, has been the dominating Power of the world for 1600 years!"

On the other hand, take the **true successors** of Peter, as described in his (Peter's) own words in the first letter that bears his name (towards the end of your New Testament). Read along as I point out these items. Successors of, followers of, believers of Peter are:

- 1) born again, full of the Holy Ghost
- 2) persecuted
- 3) holy
- 4) stones built into the wall (not foundation rocks)
- 5) members of a royal priesthood (not the Roman priesthood)
- 6) submitted to secular authority. they honor the king, not dominate or manipulate him.
- 7) able to recognize Jesus as the True Shepherd of the Flock
- 8) not lords over, but examples to, other believers
- 9) not serving the flock for dishonest gain
- 10) able to recognize (paganism of) Rome as **Babylon**

In his second letter, he mentions four additional earmarks of the true successors of Jesus:

- 11) they are centered on a heavenly kingdom, not an earthly one
- 12) they know that false prophets will exploit the church through covetousness
- 13) they are not afraid to speak against fleshliness, and they are equally able to be rebuked by fellow leaders (as Paul)
- 14) they believe in the fundamentals of the New Covenant teachings: heaven, hell, day of judgment, Jesus and His blood the only way of salvation, the imminent return of Jesus, the virgin birth etc.

It will be enlightening for you to keep this list in the back of your mind, and to compare it to the characteristics of men I will describe, with Halley and others, in the coming chapters. Then you decide who descended from Christ through the apostle Peter, and who came down from Satan through the Babylonian religious system.

### **TWENTY-THREE: THE JEWS REVISITED**

During this transition period, the Jews continue to be hated. As the "keys" are handed to "mother church," note well the anti-Semitic thread.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330-394) calls the Jews murderers of the Lord,

"companions of the Devil, accursed..."

Saint John Chrysostom(c. 394-407), so perfect in some of his teachings, accuses Jews of "behaving no better than hogs and goats in their lewd grossness and excesses of their gluttony."

Saint Ambrose(c.340-397) is quoted as saying, " I have set this synagogue in flames...there should be no place left in which Christ is denied."

The Catholic Church looks back and ascribes "sainthood" to certain of its members, as those quoted above. I have used their term, but I use it loosely. Only God knows who is and is not a saint.

Pitting Catholic against Jew is not meant by me to absolve individual Jews from guilt before God. All those who reject the Jewish Messiah are included under God's wrath. But judgment of this sort -condemnation- has not been committed to the Body of Christ. Christ said that He did not come to condemn, but to save. The church's mission is to hold out, to the end, the hope of salvation to **all men**.

And according to Scripture, it is to the Jew **first** that we throw out the life-line. How blind the church must have become to hate Jews in the name of the world's greatest Jew! How Jesus' heart must be crushed.

More, unfortunately, on this thread later.

#### **TWENTY-FOUR: THE DARKEST OF AGES BEGINS**

The greatest world powers, the most oppressive and bloodiest, have been those which gained total control of their subjects, body, soul, **and** spirit. Of such is the lineage of Babylon.

Of the Babylonian family, by far the worst and most oppressive of all is that one which has gained its ascendancy from Pagan Rome, united to the people of God. If the light that is in the world is darkness, how great is that darkness.

Thus the "Dark" Ages. The greatest light ever to shine on the planet, Christ, His Church, His Word, essentially turned into darkness. Yes, a remnant persists to the end, but most of Christendom returns to Satan's clutches.

#### **c. 500 A.D.**

We now trace the story of the leaders of Babylon from about 500 A.D. until the time when light was permitted to break upon us again. This is a story oft told by Protestants, and will seem quite familiar to many. I will not spend the time that its duration would normally demand, for that reason.

Let us tread through the mist and gloom. It will be most important that our own light is lit as we walk through the cavernous waste. It is a most depressing spectacle.

Halley leads (p. 726):

"Rome fell in A.D. 476. But in the name of Christ, by the aid of the church, Rome came to life again. Papal Rome ruled the world on a vaster extent, and for a longer time, and with a more despotic hand, than ever Pagan Rome had done, or any world power before it...the Papacy arose on the ruins of the Roman Empire, in the name of Christ, occupying the Throne of the Caesars...brought itself to power through the prestige of Rome, and the name of Christ, and by shrewd political alliances, and by deception, and by armed force..."

In 500 A.D., the term **Pope**, "father," was restricted to the bishops of Rome. Before, it had been used -even then un-Scripturally - of all the bishops.

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"The idea that the Bishop of Rome should have authority over the whole church was a slow growth, contested at every step, and never universally recognized." (Halley, p. 767)

But when it finally settled in, darkness reigned, and has tried to reign ever since. Following Halley and others we will briefly look at some of the remarkable depths to which the "church" was sunk in its millennium of horror.

### **TWENTY-FIVE: THE FIRST "REAL" POPES?**

Some claim that Leo I was the first pope (440-461).

"He claimed that he was, by Divine appointment, Primate of all Bishops...that resistance to His authority was a sure way to Hell...advocated the death penalty for heresy..." (Halley, p. 770)

Again it is necessary to stop. Early in this history we see men taking it upon themselves to judge sin. How was it in the first church? Was there ever a death penalty? Yes, in the case of Ananias and his wife. Both of them lied to the apostles, and to the Holy Spirit in the apostles. They were soundly cursed, but death came through the direct intervention of God. (Acts 5)

Later we see Paul delivering someone to Satan by the Word of the Lord. That is, the offending brother was disfellowshipped. Later it would seem he was restored. In any case, God was given His needed time to do the work in the man.

The mongrel child of Rome and Christianity shows both of its roots in its handling of discipline through these dark years. There is the attempt to restore, in many cases (Christ). But upon failure to restore, excommunication (sometimes Christ). Then the unrepentant one is delivered to the "secular" arm, the military, the executioner. (Satan)

Note here the division between the true and the almost true.

### **c. 600 A.D.**

Another candidate for first "real" pope is Gregory I (590-604). You will, I hope, forgive the ambiguity of the historians. The papacy slowly evolved. Snowballing through the history of the church, it picks up various elements on the way. Some see the finished product long before others, all know where it is heading.

Gregory does not claim jurisdiction over the growing Eastern "leg" of the church, centered in Constantinople. The leader of that church, though, called **Patriarch** (a fancier word which **also** means "father"), was calling himself the "universal bishop." Gregory was a bit perturbed at such arrogance, calling the title "vicious and haughty." **He** will not wear such a title himself, but he certainly behaves as though it were his!

Two things about this entry:

1) Gregory is a "good" man. Not as daring in his claims as future popes will be, and as pure and holy a man as ever sat on the chair. Be it known here that we do not decry the Papacy because of its later immorality alone, but because of its origin. That origin is the planning room of Satan, who began his world domination by building the original Babylon. The Papacy and its hierarchy are wrong because they were not given their commission by Jesus. It is necessary to understand this here, lest we are faced with the obvious argument about **Protestants** who have lapsed morally. Smear campaigns can be waged on either side. The fact remains that Jesus has initiated a fellowship, and Satan, a world power.

2) Concerning the Eastern Church. If Rome can be called the mother of all harlots, certainly her sister organization, now known as "orthodox," can be called the **aunt**. A study

of her history, which cannot be covered here, reveals that she is a close relative of Rome in more ways than one. Recall that for the first 500 years of the Papacy, the two, though in conflict, were united. Only in 1054 does the inevitable separation, purely political, take place. But they remain one in kind, riding the backs of world powers to security, transforming the lowly faith of Jesus into secular dominion. The "east" practices most of the same inventions of the original, adding even more in the way of idolatry. She helps make Russia and Eastern Europe so bad that *communism* is a decided improvement!

### **TWENTY-SIX: ISLAM'S RELATION TO BABYLON**

It is important that we stop again. Walk with me down this side trail a moment. As we are covering this story chronologically, it is necessary to examine the beginnings of another great religion, to see if there is any connection between her and Babylon.

It is hard to know exactly what to believe about the birth of the one we have come to know as Muhammad. We know it happened in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, 6th century. It is said that miracles attended his birth and growth. (The reader is directed to the works of Sir John Glubb, The Life and Times of Mohammed, and Martin Lings, Muhammad: His Life Based On the Earliest Sources )

There is fairly strong evidence that there was a specific link between Muhammad and the Roman Church of his day. Augustine's work of bringing Arabs to Christ had been effective, though not totally so by any measurement.

The tradition is that when Muhammad was 9, a Roman Catholic monk confirmed that he was to be a prophet. Later, more reliable sources add that one named Waraquah, his wife's Roman Catholic cousin, endorses and encourages Muhammad's "visions."

Thus it is intimated that, though Muhammad initially doubted the validity of his supernatural occurrences, various *Roman* influences in his life gave him assurance. So the religion which now claims 1 out of every 5 or 6 people on earth - Islam - may have had at its very inception some *nudges* from the *other* religion that claims **1 out of every 5 or 6 people on earth**.

I consider it worthy of thought that, had Muhammad not been encouraged by the growing apostasy of Rome, the faith we know of as Islam might never have happened. What if those "Christians" had brought Muhammad to Christ, rebuked teachings that were contrary to the apostles', and stopped him before he got started?

I will not belabor the point. Others advance theories about his connections to Rome that are not necessarily borne out by documentation. Let me stop here, as the main path beckons, and we must return.

### **TWENTY-SEVEN: THE POPES BECOME EARTHLY KINGS**

#### **c. 700 A.D.**

As we walk on, we see "papa" becoming an earthly monarch by securing the help of other kings to do his bidding. For example, at a simple request of Pepin, Roman emperor in the 700's, Pope Stephen is able to gain mastery over the Lombards, who rule central Italy. Their land is given to the Pope, so he can have a domain of his own. This is the beginning of the "Papal States" or "Temporal" dominion of the Popes. Only in 1870 will this land finally be lost by the church. More about it then.

#### **c. 800 A.D.**

Leo III, Pope, and the great Charlemagne, help each other's rise to power (see how this works?) in the 800's. Charlemagne agrees that the Papal States should remain Papal,

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and in turn Papa calls Charlemagne *Roman Emperor*. The beginnings of the *Holy Roman Empire*.

People have said that this union was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor a true Empire. On the last two counts I differ, agreeing only that it was far from holy.

But Roman it was, having the seal of the Man in Rome, who will always be pulling the strings. And an Empire, *yes*, though small for now.

I see a woman riding a beast.

### **TWENTY-EIGHT: THE PAPACY HELPED BY FRAUD**

How do the people of this era continue to buy such teachings of Papal supremacy? Can no one see through the mask and realize the glory has departed?

One thing that helps for about 700 years is a little-talked-about but now openly-admitted collection of forged documents known as the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. We call them in these days simply the *false* decretals.

The book appears first in 857, and is compiled by Isidore Mercator of France. According to Halley, p. 773, the book contains

"documents that purported to be letters and decrees of bishops and councils of the 2nd and 3rd centuries, all tending to exalt the power of the Pope. They were deliberate forgeries and corruptions of ancient historical documents, but their spurious character was not discovered till some centuries later."

The Catholic Encyclopedia gives further details:

"...apocryphal papal letters contained in a collection of canon laws about the middle of the 9th century by an author who used a pseudonym, Isidore Mercator."

The collection included a list of 60 apocryphal letters attributed to popes from Clement (88-97 A.D) to Melchiodes (311-314 A.D.). 58 of the 60 are known forgeries of Isidore. A further group of papal letters begins in 314 and goes all the way to 715, Pope Gregory. Of these 33 letters, 30 are fake.

Of this genre was "The Donation of Constantine," circulated for centuries, which said that Constantine gave to the Pope all the provinces of the western Empire (since Constantine had moved east).

Nicholas I is the Pope who first uses the decretals. Does he know they are forgeries? He states that they have been in the archives of the Roman Church " from ancient times."

Whatever he knows or doesn't know, they are false, but they stamp

"the claims of the Medieval Priesthood with the authority of antiquity. The Papacy, which was the growth of several centuries, was made to appear as something complete and unchangeable from the very beginning. The object was to antedate by five centuries the Pope's temporal power. It was the most colossal literary fraud in history. Yet, it strengthened the Papacy more than any one agency, and forms to large extent the *basis of the canon law of the Roman church.*" (emphasis mine, quotes from Halley)

These documents are considered genuine until the Reformation light breaks upon the world (specifically 1558), and the church is suddenly subject to investigation. May I suggest that had there been no reformation, there would have been no investigation, and

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we would still be asked to believe these Decretals! May I further suggest that countries in our own day that are totally dominated by Rome are likewise without the protection of investigation, and are being deceived?

But again we are ahead of things: back to the 9th century.

### **TWENTY-NINE: AGAIN, THE JEWISH THREAD**

How fares the Jew in this day? I give you one quote that reflects the official attitude of the church:

"They are accursed in the city and in the country, at the beginning and ending of their lives, their flocks, their meat, their granaries...are accursed."

Thus says a bishop of the period. Morais, who quotes him in his book, A Short History of Anti-Semitism, says:

"Here[in Deuteronomy and the prophets] was the Bible itself proclaiming the Jews as a faithless, contemptible, stiff-necked, wicked people...the Jews had brought upon themselves all the curses of killing Christ. Given these premises, the conclusion was unavoidable: it was not only right that accursed people should suffer, but it was positively a **Christian duty to make them suffer...**" (emphasis mine)

Now, I believe the Bible to be true, word for word. God's dealings with Israel are God's business. The true church must part company with Babylon when it plays God and chastises on God's behalf. Let us who are of the day love the Jew, for whom the Jew Jesus died. Let us obey the Jewish Scriptures given by the Jewish apostles who record Y'shua's final command:

"Go into **all** the world, and preach the Gospel to **every** creature."

To the **Jew** first and to the **Gentile** last. That's God's program. The persecution campaign stems from Babylon, and the one in Isaiah 14 called Babylon's King, Lucifer.

When "the church" persecutes the Jews, well, pardon me, but their threads are showing.

### **THIRTY: MIDNIGHT**

Ready for more walking? Light another candle, it gets even darker ahead.

The Midnight of the Dark Ages is said to have been from about 870 to 1050 A.D. Here we will see bribery, corruption, immorality, bloodshed...in the name of Jesus.

Following Halley and another witness named Pigott, we proceed. First, Pigott in Freedom's Foe-The Vatican, p. 93:

"Pope Formosa (891), who had been excommunicated by Pope John VIII, had the latter murdered and made a deal with the ambitious Arnulf to run the Empire together. All subjects had to swear the sacred oath: ' I swear by these Holy Mysteries that, saving my honor, my law, and the fidelity I owe to my lord, the Pope Formosus, I both am and will be faithful all my life to the Emperor Arnulf ' (Annales Bertiniani, A.D. 895; Muratori, RIS, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 574) "

Pigott's carefully documented work goes on:

"A Roman prostitute, Theodora, demanded the embraces of Bishop John of Ravenna, whom she made bishop of Rome (Pope John X, 914). When the

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pope quarreled with his concubine's daughter, Marozia, they strangled him. Pope Sergius lived with the 'whore' Marozia, who made their illegitimate son Pope John XI (Liber Pontificalis, vol. 2, p. 243) The Venerable Italian Cardinal Baronius (d 1607) writes in his Church Annals under A.D. 931: 'They elected to pope the very son of Marozia, named John, whom the same whore bore to Pope Sergius.' (Baronius, vol. 15, p. 639).

"Cardinal Baronius calls this era of the papacy 'the reign of the whores.' But the popes were no worse than their predecessors. Under the year 901 Baronius describes the popes of A.D. 752 to 901: 'This century is unfortunate, as for nearly 150 years the popes have fallen from all virtues of their predecessors, and have

become apostates rather than apostles.' Thus he explodes the fable that there were just a 'few bad popes'. He describes these popes: 'What a shame, what a pity. What monsters, horrible to behold...What evils did they not perpetrate, what tragedies did they not cause? With what impurities was this See...then stained; with what rottenness infected; with what filth defiled; and by these things blackened with perpetual infamy' (Baronius 15, 501). 'And what sort of Cardinals, Deacons, and Priests were chosen by these monsters?' asked Cardinal Baronius. The Catholic Encyclopedia answers that question: 'The episcopal Sees...were treated as property which descended by hereditary right from father to son...not only priests but bishops openly took wives and begot children to whom they transmitted their benefices' (C.E. 3, 485).

"What the greatest Catholic scholar, Monsignor Duchesne, says of these popes has never been said of the era of Al Capone or the Mafia: 'The Lateran became a resort of persons of ill fame, and no virtuous woman could remain in safety at Rome.' (Duchesne, Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, 1908 ed., p.224)

"In order not to be accused of 'smearing' the papacy, we will refrain from quoting Catholic scholars, and quote directly from the Vatican archives. Pope John XII (d. 964) 'spent his entire life in adultery' (Liber Pontificalis, vol. 2, p. 246). The people of Rome cried out: 'The Lateran Palace, which once was the meeting place of the saints, is now a public whore house' (Migne, P.L. 136, 900). The Roman Council (963) found the pope guilty of adultery 'with the widow of Reynard, and with Stephanie, his father's concubine, and with the widow Anna, and with his own grand-daughter, and he turned the Holy Palace into a brothel and whore house' (Mansi, Conc., vol. 17A, p. 466). 'Pope John...while he was enjoying himself with the wife of another man, was struck dead by the Devil' (Migne, P.L. 136, 908)."

Halley says of this John XII:

"A grandson of Marozia...guilty of almost every crime; violated virgins and widows, high and low; lived with his father's mistress; was killed while in the act of adultery by the woman's enraged husband."

Boniface VII continues this spectacle by murdering Pope John XIV, the previous pope, and

"maintained himself on the blood-stained Papal throne by a lavish distribution of stolen money. The Bishop of Orleans, referring to John XII,

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Leo VIII, and Boniface VII, called them 'monsters of guilt, reeking in blood and filth. Antichrist sitting in the temple of God.' " (p. 774)

But we said no smear tactics. We allow that Protestants have failings. But the subject of our study is the self-proclaimed leader of all Christendom, if not the whole world, the one who is the professed representative of Jesus Christ on this planet, the only authoritative voice of the Living God. This one who calls himself 'Innocent' and 'Pius', but who lives like the Devil.

And consistently, year after year, predecessor after predecessor, behaving in this way. Cannot the church at some point say, "We know who you are by the fruit hanging from your branches"?

Trees that have apples hanging from them are apple trees. A world power that has prostitution, confusion, murder, deception, and perversions hanging from it must be the product of the father of lies sleeping with the mother of abominations.

But! It is only the close of the first millennium. The institution has yet nearly one *thousand* years to change its ways. Let's see if that indeed happens.

### **THIRTY-ONE: THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE ROMAN BABYLON BEGINS c. 1000 A.D.**

As the new millennium dawns over Europe and the world, Rome tightens its grip. It seems every Pope is trying to outdo the last in wickedness and power plays.

Benedict VIII buys the office of Pope in 1012, as does his successor in 1024. The latter Pope passes through all the necessary clerical degrees in one day, according to Halley. (p. 774 ff)

"Benedict IX committed murders and adulteries in broad daylight; robbed pilgrims on the graves of martyrs; a hideous criminal, the people drove him out of Rome. Some call him the worst..."

Finally, cries for change are heard, and Hildebrand, a monk, is elevated to the Papacy. Elevation it was! Gregory VII, as he calls himself now, is the first Roman bishop who claims the dual title of Pope *and* Supreme Pontiff, the nomenclature of Pagan Rome.

He needs the extra authority, it would seem, to deal with one Henry the Fourth. Now, Henry has picked up a bad habit from the church: buying and selling church positions. He doesn't care much for Hildebrand, who turns out to be a reformer, of sorts. Hildebrand -Gregory - tries to do away with the practice, and other of the most odious of the papacy's immoralities.

So the king and the pope are at odds. The king deposes the pope. Then the pope excommunicates the king. Then repentance, by the king at least, and for 3 days and 3 nights Henry, in bitter cold, climbs a castle wall, viewed with joy by the gloating pontiff at the top, to beg the pope's pardon.

He gets his pardon, but war breaks out. Later, Gregory is put out of Rome and dies in exile, but not before he has planted the "seed" of papal dominion in the hearts of the empire's leaders. To them, later popes will be considered *overlord of kings and princes*. Definitely not to be messed with.

Some other "seeds":

"The Pope alone offers his foot to be kissed by princes."

"The Pope alone has the right to depose emperors and kings."

"The Pope can be judged by no one."

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How sad. I think of the trial of Jesus, and the Roman courtrooms that witnessed Paul's pleas, the dungeons that housed *the first pope*.<sup>1</sup> A trail of humility not followed by the papacy.

It is in this 11th century, in 1054, that the "church" divides, or more properly, officializes the division begun in 869. Halley explains:

"Up to 869 all Ecumenical Councils had been held in or near Constantinople, and in the Greek language. But now at last the Pope's insistent claim of being Lord of Christendom had become unbearable, and the East definitely separated itself..."

If there has been any doubt about the political nature of the church, the constant power struggle, the constant opposition of others claiming their own supremacy over the church, let it end here.

### **THIRTY-TWO: THE CRUSADES AND "INNOCENT" III c. 1100 A.D.**

"Babylon" greatly desires to control the Middle East. Her attempts to go back to her supposed origins will continue to the end. It is a way of deceiving the world into thinking that this is the institution which began in Jerusalem.

Her original attempts are staged from 1095-1272, during the summit of papal power. In fact, this stress on foreign conquests is part of the strengthening of the papacy, as U.S. Presidents in our day can become viewed with awe by their away-from-home exploits, even when domestically they may not be in the best shape. (I said "can.")

The Crusades are an effort to regain the "Holy Land" from the now-controlling Muslims. They are named after that same sign which Constantine is alleged to have seen and attached to his shield: the cross (*crux, crucis* in Latin).

The Crusades, though mostly aimed at the ancient homeland of the Jews, are a time of horrendous insult to that people group, showing once more the Satanic nature of the organization under scrutiny:

The Crusaders "turned against Jews in their home countries...synagogues were burned down, homes were plundered; Jews were massacred at will..." (Weinberg, Because They Were Jews, p.66)

Strange, don't you think? My eyes blurred with tears as I first wrote these things, remembering well the expressions of love I have heard from sons of Israel about their land. To a real Jew, nothing is more pleasant than to consider *eretz Israel*, the land given him by the hand of Almighty God. To that same Jew, nothing could be more humiliating than to be treated so savagely by people who are on their way to the **JEW'S** own possession!

The Hebrews (since the thread is showing again), fare no better in the years to come. Four possible solutions are finally delineated for this "problem" called Judaism. The church, which is the *real* problem, decides that Jews must either:

1) "convert" and be "baptized"

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<sup>1</sup>Certainly my readers know that I do not consider the great apostle to be in any way related to the Papacy of Rome. I merely enter Catholic thinking for a moment.

- 2) be expelled
- 3) be segregated
- or 4) be exterminated

In the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, Jews are forced to wear distinctive badges. Adolf only borrowed that idea.

In 1237, the **Holy** Roman Empire adopts the doctrine of "servitus Judeorum," according to which Jews are serfs as punishment for their allegedly anti-Christian acts and beliefs. (per Weinberg, op. cit., p.85) Pope Gregory IX is of course the one **defining** their activity as anti-Christian.

1242. Under papal encouragement, copies of the Talmud and other sacred volumes are burned in Paris and elsewhere. 1288. Jews are tried by the church, found guilty, and burned at the stake. (Weinberg, pp. 85 ff.) And so on and on...

But I was showing that Israel does not prosper from the conquest of Israel's land. The papacy in fact desires this land for itself, for supposedly religious purposes, and is ready to absolve any sin, free penitents from fasting and all other "penances," do anything for anyone who will be a part of his campaign.

**Many** respond. Many fight and die. But they fail. There are some things over which are written "do not disturb." The papacy's politics fall short when God's purposes regarding Israel are at stake.

In introducing one of the popes of the Crusades, I quote Romano Guardini, who is also quoted by Gontard, op. cit.

"Christ lives on in the church, but He lives as crucified. One almost ventures to use a parable and to say that the imperfections of the church are the cross of Christ. What would become of us if human nature vanished from the church?"

Thus reasons a Catholic mind of another generation. Paraphrased, he says, "Sure, we have our problems, but we're only human. And if we weren't human, we wouldn't be the church." Sounds like the ungodly **humanism** of our own generation.

But, based on Guardini's flawed logic, the actions of one named "Innocent" III seem almost **justified** and **necessary**. This man was **very** human. ( Paul uses the word **carнал**, though)

This third pope named Innocent was least innocent of all. Halley, calling him the most powerful of the popes, also makes these observations: (p. 776)

"He claimed to be the Vicar of Christ, Vicar of God, supreme sovereign over the church and the world." That he had the right to depose kings and princes and that "all things on earth and in heaven and in hell are subject to the vicar of Christ. He brought the church into supreme control of the state. The kings of Germany, France, England, and practically all the monarchs of Europe obeyed his will...**never in history has any one man exerted more power...**

He decreed transubstantiation...declared that Peter's successor 'can never in any way depart from the Catholic faith '...Condemned the Magna Carta. Forbade the reading of the Bible in the vernacular. Ordered the extermination of heretics. Instituted the Inquisition. Ordered the massacre of the Albigenses. More blood was shed under his direction than in any other period of church history until the reformation."

"Innocent," you say? *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...who made himself of no reputation...and humbled himself...and became obedient to death on the cross...*(Paul)

"Innocent"? *My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight...*(Jesus)

"Innocent" indeed! *The servant of the Lord must not strive...do not lord it over God's inheritance...love is gentle...*(Peter, Paul)

If your heart does not grieve with me by now, I know not what comparison of light with darkness will suffice. But we have yet a long road ahead...

### **THIRTY-THREE: THE INQUISITION**

Let us now turn our attention to the idea of the "church" as an agent of massacre. Peruse this excerpt from the "Protestant Magazine" of February, 1913:

"A recent convert to the Roman Catholic Church, with evident sincerity, but with a zeal which was not according to knowledge, wrote to the editor...'the church is ever intolerant of error, and zealous, as she should be, for the truth; but persecution finds no place in her doctrine...' "

In contrast with her statement, the editor points out the following quotations from Roman Catholic authors:

" ' The church has persecuted. Only a tyro in church history will deny that...Protestants were persecuted in France and Spain with the full approval of the church authorities. We have always defended the persecution of the Huguenots, and the Spanish Inquisition. ' The Western Watchman, Dec. 24, 1908.

" ' During the middle ages the church guarded the purity and genuineness of her apostolic doctrine through the institution of the ecclesiastical (and state) Inquisition, which, with many excellent qualities, had unfortunately also its drawbacks. ' The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XIV, p. 766.

" In the bull Ad Exstirpanda (1252) Innocent IV says: 'When those adjudged guilty of heresy have been given up to the civil power by the bishop or his representative, or the Inquisition, the podesta, or chief magistrate, of the city shall take them at once, and shall, within five days at the most, execute the laws made against them.' ...Nor could any doubt remain as to what civil regulations were meant, for the passages which ordered the burning of the impenitent heretics were inserted in the papal decretals from the imperial constitutions Commis nobis and Inconsutibilem tunicam. The aforesaid bull Ad exstirpanda remained thenceforth a fundamental document of the Inquisition, renewed or reenforced by several popes: Alexander IV (1254-61), Clement IV (1265-68), Nicholas IV (1288-92), Boniface VIII (1294-1303), and others. The civil authorities, therefore, were enjoined by the popes, under pain of excommunication, to execute the legal sentences that condemned impenitent heretics to the stake. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p.34.

"The Catholic Encyclopedia, the fifteenth and closing volume of which has just been completed [1913], is a recognized authority among Roman Catholics. I hardly think, therefore, that you will longer maintain that the Roman Catholic Church does not believe in persecution and never has been

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the cause of the death of heretics.

"I might add that in the Decretum of Gratian, which was for centuries the recognized standard of canon law, in the second part, case 23, question 5, chapter 47, occurs the following:

" ' Those are not to be counted homicides who, fired with zeal for mother church, may have killed excommunicated persons. ' "

For another witness to Catholic approval of slaughter, I offer Paul Blanshard who in 1951 gave us Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power. From pages 106-109 I quote:

"For exhibition purposes the Papacy preserved the rule that 'The Church abhors the shedding of blood, ' but in practice the rule simply exempted priests from duty as executioners; it did not prevent the Church from turning over heretics to the civil arm of the government, which employed non-priests to light the faggots.

"...By 1197 Peter of Aragon was ordering the stake for heretics, and a little later Pope Innocent III was proclaiming the bloody crusade against the Albigenses. Soon afterwards the Papacy organized a continent-wide system for suppressing heresy.

"...it was common practice for Catholic authorities to burn books they considered heretical long before the Inquisition. Under Innocent IV in 1248 twenty wagon-loads of the Talmud and other Jewish books were publicly burned in Paris.

" The Inquisition flowered in Southern Europe, especially in Spain, France, and Bohemia, and spread to countries like the Netherlands, and even Mexico, where priests and conquistadores united in 'Christianizing' the Indians with sword and cross.

"The assumption behind the Inquisition was that the Pope, as the highest representative of truth on earth, had a special assignment to search out and punish disbelief. The disbelief might be quite trivial; any deviation from orthodoxy which in the eyes of the clerics seemed important was enough for retributive slaughter. The Waldensians were massacred in a body in Piedmont for advocating Christianity in its pristine form and for opposing such purely clerical contrivances as indulgences, purgatory, and prayers for the dead...

"The popes, beginning with Gregory IX, went about the process of searching out unbelievers with great zeal, and they seemed to have no doubt that they were authorized by Providence to punish all heresy. They frequently used traveling monks as doctrinal spies. They appointed special and permanent judges to sit in the Inquisition courts, and too often these judges were Dominican friars who lacked every ingredient of the judicial temperament. Frequently the friars kept the money of the heretics they condemned...

"The techniques of prosecution were far worse than those of a modern Communist court. Usually an inquisitor chosen by the Pope would go into a medieval town and start an investigation of suspected heresy by asking the local inhabitants to spy on each other. The Inquisitor would frequently direct the parish priest to send in the witnesses with their complaints. Naturally, the complaints poured in. They were primitive mixtures of malice, fanaticism, and distorted truth, representing fact, fancy, and hearsay. The

prosecutions were entirely secret.

"The persons complained of never had a chance to confront witnesses, and witnesses for the defense almost never appeared because they were afraid to testify. Every defendant was presumed guilty until he established his innocence. There were no juries and usually no lawyers for the defense. Innocent III forbade lawyers to appear for heretics, and later popes allowed lawyers to appear only if they were of 'undoubted' loyalty. Nobody was ever acquitted; the most that a victim could hope for was to have his case filed for further inquiry.

"To make sure that guilty heretics did not escape, each victim was threatened with the stake if he did not confess. Then, if he still held out, he was imprisoned for a time and half-starved. Then he was visited by a persistent inquisitor who was experienced in worming admissions out of broken men. Finally, if no other method produced a confession, the prisoner was submitted to torture. Torture was officially introduced by Pope Clement IV, and Clement V drew up a whole set of regulations for personal torture.

" Theoretically, it was permissible to torture each heretic only once in order to secure a confession, but the rule was easily evaded by describing the second session as a ' continuation' of the first session. Soon, witnesses as well as defendants were submitted to preliminary torture to loosen their tongues and to impress upon them the importance of supplying effective evidence against the accused.

" Savonarola, the stormy evangelist of Florence, underwent a slight variation in treatment. He was subjected to a form of torture known as the **strappado** for at least three days before he was finally burned. This device, in the words of H.C. Lea in his famous History of the Middle Ages ' consisted in tying the prisoner's hands behind his back, then hoisting him by a rope fastened to his wrists, letting him drop from a height and arresting him with a jerk before his feet reached the floor. Sometimes heavy weights were attached to the feet to render the operation more severe.' Some victims actually died from torture before they could be sentenced and killed. Sometimes a fanatical judge would order a whole company of alleged heretics burned alive - one Dominican monk, acting as a judge of the Inquisition in 1239, sent 180 victims to the flames at one time. The Spanish Inquisition capped all the other national varieties for sadism, and nominally it lasted for more than three hundred years, until 1820. To this day, the name of Torquemada, the chief Grand Inquisitor of Spain, is synonymous in history with cruelty.

" It is true that some of the excesses of the Inquisition can be charged to civil governments rather than the Church. The Church usually turned over its victims to civil authorities for execution after they had been pronounced guilty. But the moral, and sometimes the official, responsibility for the punishment rested with the church. The courts that convicted the heretics were entirely ecclesiastical. The Catholic Encyclopedia says that 'the predominant ecclesiastical nature of the institution (the Spanish Inquisition) can hardly be doubted. The Holy See sustained the institution...'

"

In the mouth of these two witnesses let this foul scene be established. But let their

descriptions bring, not hatred, but compassion on anyone in our era still bound to Babylon.

### **THIRTY-FOUR: PINNACLE TO PIT c. 1300 A.D.**

We have again moved ahead of the story. Back to the "golden age."

Our hearts revolt at the scene unfolding. Essentially godless men ruling over the church of God. Vile unholy perverted dictators lording it over the holy church. Warring criminals reigning in the name of the Prince of Peace. Among the most guilty and the most unrighteous of all calling themselves *Innocent* and *Pius*. Men reprobate and outside the saving grace of God claiming that it is "altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

So says Boniface VIII in his bull Unam Sanctam, in the year 1302. It will be difficult for moderns to believe that the man is essentially an atheist.

Boniface is brought to trial. Even the darkness of his day perceives his yet greater darkness. Pigott, (op cit., p 95) says:

"dozens of clerics and monks testified under oath that the pope had murdered his predecessor and many of his priests, that he denied the existence of life after death, that he held that the 'three religions (Judaism, Islam, Christianity )...are human inventions, ' that Christ was a 'hypocrite, ' and ' a man like us '...."

"He was so corrupt that Dante, who visited him, called the Vatican a 'sewer of corruption, ' and assigned him...to the lowest part of hell. "

But Unam Sanctam stands. This bull states that Boniface is both Pope and Emperor, that the temporal is subject to the spiritual.

Jesus, in referring to Satan in Judas, called His enemy "the ruler of this world." Satan has dominion over the kingdoms of earth for the present. Any church which claims to be united to the temporal powers is thus telling on itself. The Roman Church never renounced its earthly militant status, until compelled to do so by force of arms in 1870. Given the chance, Rome will rise to political as well as spiritual dominion over the earth.

I mean, it's the nature of the beast. And the nature of the whore on its back.

### **THIRTY-FIVE: THE PAPACY DECLINES**

Eventually the earthly kingdom which is Papal Rome suffers setbacks. Setbacks are not to be confused with defeat or extinction. Please understand again that no other power has ruled the world since the Roman Emperors mounted the Pagan throne. Many have tried, all have failed. Papal Rome's kingdom remains intact. If in fact Rome succumbs to a world power before the final antichrist is in place, God's Word to Daniel about the "leg" kingdom which will last until the "10-toe" kingdom is not true. The true church knows the likelihood of *that* being the case!

The reversals of domain include:

1) 70 years in which the entire Roman system is transferred to Avignon, *France*. This is the so-called "Babylonian Captivity" (of *Babylon*).

2) 40 years immediately following the 70, in which there are TWO reigning Popes, one in France, one in Rome. The Vatican today recognizes only the Roman "line." As, for example, John XXIII, "called by some the most depraved criminal who ever sat on the Papal Throne. Guilty of almost every crime, as cardinal in Bologna. 200 maidens,

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nuns, and married women fell victim to his amours. As Pope he violated virgins and nuns, lived in adultery with his brother's wife; was guilty of sodomy and other nameless vices, bought the Papal office, openly denied the future life..." (Halley, p. 779)

No wonder his very name, like a retired jersey of a retired athlete, is eliminated from the ranks, not to be used again until in 1958 one named Roncalli becomes Pope John XXIII.

So the Papacy has hit on some hard times. Things get even worse.

### **THIRTY-SIX: THE PRESENCE OF LIGHT**

Nowhere in this study is it claimed, or meant to be intimated, that all Roman Catholics of all time are bound for Hell. It would be just as foolish to claim that all persons living in Communist lands are enemies of the free world. It is systems and institutions which are here being exposed, the mother of all such abominations being Babylon, currently doing business out of a seven-hilled city on the banks of the Tiber River.

As in Elijah's day there were many who had not bowed the knee to Baal, so in our day, and even in "Innocent's" day, and in the days of John the 23rd, first **or** second, there are those who have formed relationship with God, based on the little light they are permitted to see. Even popes may be included in this roster of the faithful. We must be **extremely** cautious about condemning to hell those whom God may have already received to himself. God only has the right to judge!

On the other hand, by their fruits you **shall** know them!

Now, in all ages, by all religions and all kingdoms, multitudes of "good works" are done, for a myriad of motivations. For a listing of these kinds of things, read a history of the Vatican from a Vatican perspective. Or a history of **any** institution from its own vantage point. Satan, in the wisdom that has been allotted to him, has allowed "good" things to come out of Babylon. How else can he deceive if not by the face of the **lamb?**

But Babylon has, in every generation, also pushed people as far as possible, to the point of being "thrown off" altogether. One day, antichrist -led men **will** throw her off. But in her place will be something even worse.

So, in reading of all the losing men and ideas of Babylon, it is important to remember that she is not **constantly** so odious. She is what she is only as long as men will stand the stench.

***This concludes part 2 of Scarlet Threads. Part 3, "When People Protest," covers the Protestant Reformation, and the reactions within Rome. Babylon's involvement in the young Americas will also be considered, including a look at Lincoln's assassination.***