

## CHAPTER 3

# ROME — IMPLACABLE ENEMY OF GOD'S TRUTH — REASON FOR REFORMERS CRIES

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### PAGAN ROME

Rome, from its earliest history, has always been the implacable enemy of God's truth, from its decree to crucify Jesus Christ, to sending early Christians to their deaths in the coliseum arena of ravenous lions. It was that same 'Sun' worship system of religion, that had been originally concocted in Babylon. Anciently, it had come to Rome in fragments and was known historically as Pagan Rome. But later, as the Imperial Roman Empire collapsed and Papal Rome took its place, Babylonian Sun Worship manifested itself in an almost pure and radical form. And even though today it has lost the power to have one executed for not conforming to its doctrines, it is still the same, and is called the 'Roman' Catholic (universal) Church.

The religion of the Romans was always emphatically a state religion, and every Roman god had something to do, some useful office to perform with distinct rituals and sacrifices related to national life. The calendar was an official almanac of religion, which paralleled the seasonal changes of the year distributing their appropriate ceremonies. Each stage of the year, the progress of agricultural development, the family meal, all contributed to the ongoing pulsation and energetic cycle of ceremonies. About one day in four was set apart for the worship of particular gods, celebrated by their feasts, games, sacrifices,

and ceremonies. Religion had ceremonies for every event in life, from birth, to infancy, puberty, marriage, to death, and a place in every vocation and in every public work. So strongly had these ceremonies and calendar dates become a part of the lives of the people that its influence is even felt in modern society today.

Another area of the Roman religion that was most important for the constant surveillance of the well-being of the land and its people, was a group of men called Augurs and Haruspices, whose technical expertise was to 'divine' the future. Augurs were a religious college of diviners, and their function was to determine, reveal, and interpret the will of the gods toward men, and was practiced in accordance with superstitious occurrences and observations of certain signs or omens. These included thunder and lightning, the flight and cries of particular birds, feeding of the sacred chickens, the actions of certain serpents, or accidents, such as spilling salt or the stumbling of a horse. It is interesting to note that in ancient Rome there was a territory called Ager Vaticanus from which site arose the Vatican of today. The word Vatican is a two part word, "vatic", meaning to divine, and "can" or canny, an attribute of the serpent. In other words, Vatican means the divining serpent. Haruspices, had distinctly another 'science' to foretell the future. After certain animals had been sacrificed, their entrails and liver were examined to discover the will of the gods. Nothing in regards to state action was ever undertaken without the advice of these diviners.<sup>6</sup>

Jupiter was the supreme deity of the Romans, with the god of Mars and Saturn following. But as Rome ever enlarged her empire, deities of conquered nations were added to her pantheon. For example, there was Mithra, the Persian Sun god, Isis and Osiris, divinities of Egyptian Sun worship, Venus, the Semitic goddess of love and beauty, and Janus, the Asia Minor god of doors and hinges, called the opener and shutter, who along with the goddess Cybele, each having a spiritual 'key', are just a few that became a panorama of pagan gods and goddess devoutly and rigidly worshipped in Rome.

In the minds of worshippers, the 'heavenly' or spiritual was always represented or acted out by an 'earthly'. As the Sun in the heavens was the great object of worship, so 'fire' was worshipped as its earthly representative. In Egypt, one of the

commonest symbols of the sun or Sun god, was a disc with a serpent around it. The original reason of that identification was, as the sun was the great enlightener of the physical world, so the serpent was held to have been the great enlightener of the 'spiritual' by giving mankind the "knowledge of good and evil". In Pagan Rome, this fire-worship and serpent-worship both occupied a pre-eminent place in Roman esteem. The 'fire of Vesta', the virgin goddess of the blazing hearth, was regarded as one of the grand safeguards of the empire by whose duty it was kept with the most jealous care by the Vestal virgins — small girls chosen and having to serve chastely for thirty years. The serpent, being universally acknowledged as a symbol of fire-worship, so the "Great Fiery Serpent" or 'Red Dragon' then became, next to the Eagle, the principal Imperial standard of the Roman legions as an emblem of that system of fire-worship on which the safety of the empire was believed so vitally to hinge.

The worship of the Sun, the Great Fire-god, who was intimately identified with the Serpent, was actually the central object of worship from which every other god and ritual revolved. As the sun made its daily appearance and disappearance in the heavens, creating daylight and darkness, and as the earth made its annual trip around the sun producing summer-time and winter's death, a time to plant and a time to harvest, it was obvious that all life depended on the sun, for its light and warmth, for its very existence. Plainly then man's anticipations of good and anxieties of bad, his parade of lesser gods, and his calendar that kept him informed, were all subject to the moods of the Sun.

But the Sun had also a human representative. Over this massive and complex system, where every minute detail of worship was controlled and regulated, there presided the Sovereign Pontiff or Pontifex Maximus, who was worshipped as the Great King of the Sun, or the Sun-god incarnate. Under him, was the hierarchy of his college of Pontiffs or Cardinals. Like a fine tuned and well oiled machine, these priests kept this religious system running smoothly. However, it was only when Julius Caesar, who had been previously elected Pontifex Maximus, and then became as Emperor, the supreme civil ruler of the Romans, as he combined in himself, both as head of the

Roman state and head of the Roman religion, that all powers and functions of the 'true legitimate Babylonian Pontiff' were supremely vested in him.<sup>7</sup> It was from this god-king mentality, who had demanded worship from his subjects, and to whom Christians had refused to bow, that caused them to be brutally put to death. With all the religion that saturated the Roman soul, it failed utterly to soften the severity of their character, or weaken their passion for war and bloody sports. Their hard and rigid wills were rarely moved by the cries of agony or the shrieks of the dying.

The Word of God, when properly understood, is a most incredible gift. Who can fathom such a Sovereign God having the awesome ability to foresee the future, and then with unselfish love, reveal it to His people so that they may not walk in darkness, but rather light. Scripture had predicted centuries before the event, that Rome as a world empire would collapse, and out of her ruins and fragments, arise a religio-political power that would labor to bind up her broken pieces. The ruling society, benefiting from Rome's successes in conquest, had become extremely rich and prosperous, giving way to excessive licentiousness and debauchery. Over half of the Roman population were slaves, and it was from the miseries of these wretched peoples, that the aristocrats relished their fondest pleasures and recreation. The moral decay and depravity of the Roman mind and government is vividly illustrated in its lawfulness of the gory gladiator contests that excited hundreds of thousands in its amphitheaters. This organization of murder, which became such a popular past time and sport, and yet being the most monstrous and disgusting outrage upon human dignity, only serves to demonstrate again, Rome the "Beast". And Rome, not over night, but as her moral cancer worked incessantly through the centuries, from within and without, finally crumbled. The Roman Empire staggers, sprawls, is thrust off the stage, and as if by magic, 'reappears' — it is the Church of Rome which plays the part of the magician and keeps this corpse alive.

## CATHOLIC ROME — OCCULT SEAT OF SUN WORSHIP

Anyone with eyes to see, and who is not blinded by 'religion', certainly must recognize Papal Rome as the disguised off-spring of Pagan Rome, or Paganism 'baptized' with the name Christianity. In light of Scriptural teaching, sincere men like John Wycliffe, Savonarola, Martin Luther, and thousands of others, were willing to give their lives for God's truth, and most did. The Church of Rome makes pure mockery of everything that is sacred, pure, and the truth. Claiming to be Christian, it has in clinging tenaciously to its possession of the title 'Pontifex Maximus' who sits at the Vatican, and its preoccupation with the revival of Roman ascendancy on earth as the Kingdom of Heaven, has become just a continuation of Roman Paganism, with even greater atrocities, using the faith and needs of simple men to forward its schemes. Let's review just a few of the core items carried over from Paganism to the Church of Rome, that Protestants fearlessly gave their lives to oppose.

'Syncretism' is a word meaning, the mingling into one religious system, elements that have been drawn from different other religious systems. As a smokescreen, this is exactly what the Church of Rome has done in calling herself Christian. Most will ask, is it really that important? What difference does it honestly make? The reader must be reminded, that God calls this 'mixing' of false religion with His truth as something He hates, an abomination. (Deuteronomy 12:28-32 & 18:9-12) It is startling to learn of God's stern denunciation and warnings against this 'mixing', but even more amazing, is the attitude of those who claim to be teachers of God's Word, who shrug these poisons off as perfectly harmless.

### THE MASS

True Christianity teaches that when the Messiah, Jesus Christ, had come and fulfilled His mission in giving Himself as the "final sacrifice" to ransom the world from sin, that by His death, but much more important, by His resurrection, which certified His sinless life; this supernatural event proved that Christ's ministry was fully approved by God the Father. Thus the whole Hebrew system of priests and sacrifices, which God had originally given to them to be a 'type' and figure of the

coming Messiah's death, was to be abolished at his death. But the underlying and basic teaching of the Church of Rome, is its hierarchy of supreme pontiff or pope, its various orders of priests and nuns, and the endless sacrificial ceremony of Christ, called the Mass. God says the priests and sacrificial system ended at the death of Christ. Rome says no, and sets them up. Through the Mass, and the capture of superstitious minds, and only in the name of religion, Catholics are taught to believe that a wafer and wine is turned into the 'literal' body and blood of Christ. But carrying this absurdity a bit further, it is then required for the believers to participate in an act of cannibalism after the wafer has been turned to flesh, to eat that flesh, so to speak, as the flesh of the 'victim of sacrifice', whose flesh it is believed to be Christ's. Remove these two Romish 'false' doctrines, the priesthood and the sacrificial Mass, and there is no Roman Church. But that is only the beginning.

### THE SUN WHEEL

The Vatican, and its supreme pontiff of the Sun, titled Pontifex Maximus, has been previously mentioned. To see another "Sun" symbol of the Occult at the Vatican, one only needs an aerial view of Saint Peter's court yard, and in the pavement you will notice what is known as a 'double cross', or the largest "Sun Wheel" in the world. Anciently, it was taught that the Supreme Sun god drives a chariot drawn by four steeds that traversed each day in the spaces of the firmament and sank at dusk, extinguishing its fires in the ocean. The nation of Israel was caught up in this Sun worship, and during a period of 'reform', it is recorded how they put down those "that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven, and took away the houses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire". (2 Kings 23:5 & 11)

Chariots, and especially the 'wheels' of the chariots, were representative of the Sun. The wheel and its spokes actually became a cross within a circle, which is one of the most ancient symbols of the Sun. The circle and the cross within the circle represents the four extreme points of the sun in relation to the earth in its yearly travel around the sun. Those four points are: the 'two solstices' occurring at 21 June, making the longest day

during the year and 21 December, making the shortest day of the year — and the 'two equinoxes', occurring in the spring, 21 March, and autumn, 21 September, making night and day of equal length all over the earth. Hitler's regime was deep into the Occult, and his Swastika is nothing more than a Sun symbol of a cross, with the segments of the circle broken and with right angles made at the ends of the cross. The Hindu religion, a thousand years before Christ, had the swastika symbol of the Sun.

### THE PHALLIC OBELISK AND DOME

From your aerial vantage point over the Vatican courtyard, you will also see rising from the center or hub of this Sun Wheel, in its erect position, a symbol of the Occult and Sun worship that is highly regarded for its sacred importance. This particular Sun symbol was literally uprooted from Egypt and transplanted in Rome, as others were taken to the cities of London, Paris, Constantinople, and Central Park, New York. Its numerous 'look alike' are popularly used as monuments and memorials for great men, or actually any man that wants to be remembered. A casual walk through any graveyard will vividly show you this. But just what is the significance of this Sun symbol, this stone monument or 'obelisk' as it is called, especially in certain places where it stands erect before a Dome?

First, it must be noted that even though the obelisk has been publicly displayed in the most obvious and conspicuous places to be seen, yet in any dictionary or regular encyclopedia, the subject 'obelisk' and its full meaning is just never explained. Only in specialized books and literature do you find its true symbolic significance and what it meant to those who worshiped the Sun. In other words, the obelisk symbol has been purposely displayed for public awareness, but at the same time, its real meaning has been kept from us, or at the least, kept out of those reference books where most would normally look.<sup>8</sup>

However, the *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1964 edition, showing how the obelisk was related to Sun worship, explains it like this — "a monument representing the sun in ancient Egyptian religion. The Egyptians were sun worshippers, regarding the great luminary as the creator of the universe, the maker of all gods above and below, and even the author of

himself...The two most striking characteristic monuments which represented him on earth were the obelisk and the pyramid...The obelisk is the technical figure of one ray or pencil of light emanating from the sun." The word o-'bel'-isk actually means the 'shaft of Bel'; Bel being another way of writing Baal, the Babylonian and Egyptian Sun god, that all nations followed after.

It is an interesting fact about the chief temples of Egypt and Babylonia, that they were "oriented" — that is to say, that the temples were built so that the shrine and entrance always faced in the same direction. On one morning in the year, and one morning alone, in a temple oriented to the rising place of the sun at Mid-Summer Day, the sun's first rays would smite down through the gloom of the temple and down the long alley of the temple pillars to brilliantly illuminate the altar. Thus it was believed that by that pencil of light or "shaft" of the Sun's presence upon the altar, it became impregnated. This solemn event gave assurance of fertility in the land and another fruitful year.<sup>9</sup>

But as further evidence that gives proof that Roman Catholicism is nothing more than disguised Sun Worship, that actually arose from the ruins of Roman paganism, consider the fact that the Vatican of today and St. Peter's Basilica is literally built right over the very grounds of the ancient Vatican Circus. It was here, that they held their chariot races to the "Sun". And as then, so today, St. Peter's is oriented toward the east. That is, "so that at the vernal equinox the great doors can be thrown open at sunrise and the sunrays passing through the nave will illuminate the high altar."<sup>10</sup>

By pagan tradition, an altar symbolized the female body, which in turn symbolized 'Mother' Earth. It does not take any great imagination to understand the symbolism of an obelisk standing before a Dome — which represents a pregnant woman's belly. Ask yourself with deep soul searching, what does any of this have to do with "true" Christianity??

Today's world wide participation in observing calendar dates that have come down to us from ancient Babylonian Sun worship, tells only too well the influence this system has had upon mankind. Most people today observe these dates as



Christian holy days and festivities, when in reality, the dates themselves have nothing whatever to do with Christianity. Christmas and Easter both are good examples of how these Sun dates have been twisted and perverted to be recognized as something that is Christian. Yet, any good encyclopedia will quickly inform you of their true origin.

## **BABYLON MYSTERY RELIGION**

The date, 25th December, because the days began to lengthen after the death of the winter solstice, was believed by the pagans to be the 'birth' date of Sol, their Sun god. But to better understand the origins of this heathenistic custom that we know today as Christmas, we should go all the way back to the city and nation of Babylon. Babel, which later became Babylon, was originally founded by a man named Nimrod, "the mighty hunter". (Genesis 10: 8-10) Babylon was the seat of the first great apostasy against God after the flood. It was here that the "Babylonian Cult" was instituted by Nimrod and his queen, Semiramis. Semiramis was also Nimrod's mother and his wife in an incestuous relationship. From this Babylonian Cult is derived all types and forms of false worship, carried over today into the various pagan religions, including also the Christ-Mass and Easter.

Nimrod lived approximately two hundred and fifty years after the flood. It was during those days of Nimrod, Semiramis, and his father Cush, when they gained a following and a deep hold over the then whole human race; for at that time there was only one language and all were one homogenous people. The Bible tells us that Nimrod gained the title "Mighty Hunter" and "The Apostate" because of his innovative building of walled cities to free men from the ravages of wild beasts, which were then multiplying against mankind, and because of his leading men away from the idea of a God who was capable of interceding with wrath into the affairs of men. History records that he led people astray to such an extent that they drifted from the faith of their fathers in the true God.

Ancient history teaches, that it was the Babylonians who first became involved in the worship of the heavens, and developed a system of numerology, the horoscope, astrology, and the zodiac, claiming the highest wisdom and ability to

'divine' the future. It was characterized by the word "mystery" because their practices were hidden from non-members. Once admitted into the Babylonian mystery religion, men were no longer Babylonians, Assyrians, or Egyptians, but became members of a mystical brotherhood over which ruled the Pontifex Maximus, or high priest, whose word was final in all matters within the lives of the brotherhood — regardless of the country in which they lived, becoming a supranational organization.

This Babylonian system, from its very inception right till today, has been a blueprint and planned method to effectively circumvent the truth of God. From Babylon it spread to the ends of the earth and to where, Scripture records, Abraham was chosen of God to flee those idolatrous nations, and thus preserve His truth through a called out people. This explains how so many different nations of the world, whether Egypt, India, Aztec, Maya, Inca, or Sioux Indian, all worshiped the Sun in some manner, and are found to have common religious traditions interwoven into their cultures. Egypt, almost surpassed Babylon in its worship with pyramid and obelisk monuments dedicated to the Sun. Joseph, when sold into Egypt by his brothers, (Genesis 41:45) later married the daughter of the priest of 'On', or the priest of the Sun.

Babylon continued to be the seat of worldwide 'mystery religion' activity until it was conquered by the Medes and Persians and the Babylonian priesthood (or Chaldeans) were forced to move to Pergamos, which then became their headquarters. Over the years this cult gained such power to where the Roman Caesars absorbed the bulk of the principles and structure of the Babylonian religion into their own pagan religion. Julius Caesar was made Pontifex Maximus of the Etruscan Order in 74 B.C. Thereafter, Rome's religion became that of Babylon.

As believers in this Sun worship system, calendar dates were set up to celebrate the winter solstice, (24-25th December, the shortest day of the year) and the summer solstice, (24th June, the longest day of the year). Easter was the pagan festival that occurred at the spring equinox, when all nature was in 'resurrection' after the death of winter. Any student of the Scriptures well knows the word Easter, in its 'original' meaning,

is not a Christian expression, but comes from the goddess of spring Astart or Ishtar, which is just another name for the Queen of Heaven, Semiramis, who celebrated that festival with the sun rising in the 'east' — even as the word "East-er" implies. (Ezekiel 8:16) When Nimrod's life was abruptly ended, it was Semiramis who called for a period of mourning, who instructed her subjects that Nimrod had returned to the Sun, declaring that his deified name was now Tammuz. Looking towards the east, the rising place of the Sun, was the natural place to look for the return of their savior.

Rituals and festivals, which harmonized with the Sun worship calendar dates, were also applied to the death and resurrection of Tammuz. Forty days of 'sacred' Lenten abstinence were given to weeping for his death, now claimed to be the Sun god incarnated. The forty days also seemed to be an indispensable preliminary to sharpen their zeal for the degrading activities or unbridled lust in the Easter or Bacchus festivities that were to follow. As the death of Winter became representative of the death of Nimrod, so the resurrection of Spring became also representative of Nimrod's resurrection, but with his new deified name Tammuz, and were celebrated both by alternately weeping and then rejoicing. (Ezekiel 8:14) Even today, Bacchus, which means "The Lamented One", lives on as the 'patron saint' of such disgusting public homosexual orgies as are evident during the New Orleans Mardi Gras. But even more obvious, it lives on in the annual Lenten rituals of the Roman Catholic Church.

When you take a good look at the doctrines and rituals practiced by the Roman Catholic Church, then try in a search of the Scriptures to support them, shockingly, you will find they are just not there. The truth is, with heart-felt sadness, that the pope grows rich in the measure that the poor are duped. The doctrine of purgatory is a striking example of such an abuse; and has no justification, whether in Scripture or in logic. Its real basis is Rome's wanton greed. For there is not one word spoken of it in all Holy Scripture, and also if the Pope with all his pardons may for money deliver one soul from torment, he may deliver as well without money; and if he may deliver one, he may deliver a thousand, he may deliver them all, and so destroy purgatory. And so then he is a cruel and unmerciful tyrant,

without a trace of compassion, if he keeps them there in prison, writhing in pain, till men will give him money. Doesn't this make reasonable sense, dear Catholic reader?

During the reformation in the sixteenth century, when Martin Luther was redirecting the world's attention (and conscience) to God's Holy Word, these falsehoods and corruptions were identified and repudiated as having no part in the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ — as taught in the Scriptures. Doctrines such as purgatory, and paid for Masses to get loved ones out of purgatory, an existing burning hell, worship of the cross, images, relics, and of Mary, and Sunday as a holy day, can't be found in Scripture. The celibacy of the priesthood, confessing sins to a priest, kissing the pope's feet, rosary prayer beads, holy water, sale of indulgences, adoration of the wafer, or host, and the list goes on and on, of abominable human inventions to burden and enslave superstitious minds. To keep the people in total darkness, the Bible was labeled a forbidden book and placed in the index of forbidden books by the Council of Toledo in 1229 AD. By contrast, our Lord and the apostles commanded that the Scriptures should be read by all. (John 5:39, 2 Timothy 2:15 & 3:15-17)