***The Babylonian Mystery Religions  
  
RV12-01***

We are studying the letter to Pergamum in Revelation 2:12-17. This, of course, is the third letter written by the Lord Jesus Christ and recorded here in the book of the Revelation to the Christian community in the city of Pergamum, which was in Asia Minor, a Roman province in John's Day. The Lord Jesus Christ has indicated to this group of believers that he is fully aware of the kind of city in which they are living. It is a city which the Lord identifies as Satan's headquarters – the place where Satan's throne or Satan's authority is. He is referring to the false counterfeit religious system which Satan has invented in order to undermine true knowledge of God.

Satan's seat of religious authority originally was based in Babylon until that empire fell to the Medo-Persian power. Satan's Babylonian religious system then moved its headquarters to Pergamum, where it was in John's day, though it had reached out like an octopus with its tentacles to cover the whole known earth. The church at Pergamum began to find accommodation with Satan's Babylonian paganism to be an easy thing. They found that instead of standing apart from paganism, they could live with it. They could play ball with it. So they could find that the pressure was taken off of them.

However, Pergamum represents an era in church history when the Roman government made Christianity the state religion. This began, as we have found, when Constantine became emperor of Rome in the year 312 A.D. Then, gradually, over a period of centuries until about 600 A.D., the marriage of the Babylonian mystery religion and Christianity was brought about, and finally completed. The Roman Catholic Church, as we know it today, simply absorbed ancient pagan beliefs and practices and clothed them with Christian meanings. But the resulting mutant was under divine wrath and completely rejected by God who loathes the whole system. God hates what Satan invented in Babylon. God loathes it. Anything that is contaminated by that system, you may be sure that God also hates and that God loathes equally.

**The Roman Catholic System**

This is a hybrid system, and this is a system which God rejects. It's a system which clearly I think we will find, later in the book of the Revelation, eventuates as the world religious system of the tribulation period, based and structured upon all the Babylonian system which is now incorporated in the Roman Catholic system. God is going to destroy it. There is no question what He's going to do with it. It's a shameful travesty that we do not have evangelical leaders who warn the people who are in that system that they must flee from it, or they will destroy themselves and lose their souls for all eternity. The resulting mutant, known as the Roman Catholic Church, is under divine wrath. The tribulation will see this hybrid monstrosity, in its final form, destroyed by God.

We pointed out that basic knowledge about God was obviously available to mankind. After the flood, they knew a great deal about God. They knew a great deal of doctrine, even though they did not have recorded Scriptures at the time. They had a great deal of information about God. The true worship was in the form of theistic creationism. But in a sense, this was again contaminated by evolutionary humanism. Satan again had been able to proceed to oppose the kingdom and the authority of God on earth with the establishment of the kingdom of man. So Satan created a false religion which reached its epitome in the Tower of Babel in Babylon under its original creator, Nimrod. Satan's modus operandi was to create a religious system which incorporated what man already knew about God, but to convert it into a perverted form. So because man knew that God was a Trinity, Satan came up with a religious system that also had a trinity, but a perverted trinity. Whatever mankind knew about God, Satan incorporated into his evolutionary humanism system of religion, and then he perverted it.

**Satan's Religious System**

Satan also provided a religious system which ran parallel to what God had indicated that He was going to do in history. One of the things that God had made very clear, in Genesis 3:15, was that He was going to send a person who would be born of a human woman who would become the deliverer of all mankind from the consequences of sin and from Satan's destructive grasp. Everybody knew that. So Satan created a religious system that ran a parallel pattern of a deliverer who was to come through the seed of the woman, but again, in a perverted form.

Now what he was doing was awaiting the day when Christianity could simply be absorbed into his system. If that was to be done, he had to have a system which point-for-point ran parallel to what God was doing. Well, that day came in the era when Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire under Constantine, and which is represented by this church in Pergamum, and the letter that was written to it. The Pergamum church lived under the specific kinds of conditions which prefigured the gradual amalgamation of biblical Christianity with the Babylonian mystery religion.

This religion centered upon the deification of a child. The ancient world, of course, knew very well the promise of Genesis 3:15, that the deliverer who would come would come in such a way that He would bruise the serpent's head a lethal fatal blow, but that the serpent, in turn, would bruise His heel. This Savior was referred to in Babylon by the title Zero-ashta. We have already indicated to you that "zero" means "seed" and "ashta" means woman, so that you have the "seed of the woman." This was symbolized by a circle in the Babylonian mystery cult, because that stood for the seed, on the one hand, but it also stood for the supreme god of the Babylonian system, which was the sun up in the sky. That sun was represented as the source of all life-giving substance. It smiled benignly upon mankind, and everything was sustained by this very gracious object in the sky. It was represented by the circle, which also represented the seed, which was equal to the savior, which had been promised in Genesis 3:15.

Satan knew all of this, and he brought all this together. This was all tied together in the worship of the sun-god. The ancient world understood that the bruising of the heel, that Genesis 3:15 speaks of, meant death to this seed. They understood that it would also mean a mortal wound to the serpent which represented the god of evil. The basic biblical revelation about the bruising of Satan's head, interestingly enough, is found in all the mythologies of the world. Wherever the archaeologists and the sociologists have gone and studied the remains of ancient cultures, they have found again and again and again the story about a deliverer coming into the world who would bruise the head of the serpent, but who in turn himself would be bruised, and the consequence would be death. This serpent-destroying God would suffer, and that suffering would end in His death.

**Achilles**

All of you have heard, in your Greek and Roman mythology, the story about Achilles, and you know about the Achilles heel. Achilles was the only son of a goddess, and Achilles was invulnerable at all points except one, and that was his heel. The story of Achilles reflects in mythology the truth of Genesis 3:15, which Satan had worked into his religious system, but had perverted now into something totally different. But the same idea is there. The wounding of Achilles' heel, which is where he was wounded, was going to cause his death.

In time, the system of Nimrod became so loathsome; so degraded; and, so obscene that the forces of righteousness rose up (ancient writers record for us), and they killed Nimrod. They tried him; they passed judgment upon him; and, they executed him. The seriousness of what he had done was stressed by the fact that they cut him up in pieces and sent a piece of him to major cities. That was the custom in ancient days for dealing with an evil person, and for publicly proclaiming that his evil would not be condoned and would not be tolerated in others.

The death of Nimrod, the apostate, was seen as the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 by his wife, Semiramis. Semiramis had enjoyed a very popular position because of the honor given to her husband Nimrod. When he was killed, she was going to lose it all, or she had to take charge and rearrange things, and see what she could salvage out of it. And that's exactly what she did. So the idea was promoted that Nimrod's death was not a judgment, but was voluntary, and that it was done as per the promise that everybody knew that somebody was going to die to deliver the world from sin, and that's why he did it. The death of Nimrod was probably engineered by Noah's son, Shem, who mounted a revival toward God.

Shem lived 500-some years after the flood, and he was alive at the time that Nimrod was running high, wide, and handsome, developing his counter religion. It's probable that Shem was the one who engineered this. But the Babylonian religious system, after the death of Nimrod, was now under public disfavor. Consequently, it had to go underground, and thus it became a secret society, and thus the word "mystery." And that's why the Bible speaks of a mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots – harlots in terms of a false religious system. Spiritual adultery in the Scripture is portrayed as being a perversion of true doctrine.

So this system went underground, and it incorporated magic, rituals, and ceremony. The purpose of this, of course, was to excite the senses, and to captivate the emotions of the devotees in the feeling that they were in the presence of a miracle – they were experiencing a miracle. This is the very same kind of thing that motivates the charismatics today – the obsession with the miraculous to give them the confidence that they're in touch with God. This is an old device. Semiramis, Nimrod's widow, simply proceeded to set up a system that incorporated this kind of miraculous contact. Because it was a mystery cult, its beliefs and its practices were revealed only to insiders – those who were going to become a part of it.

At some point in their initiation, they had a way of causing an image of Nimrod to appear, which would stir the emotions that somehow, after all, Nimrod was not dead, and wherever he was out there, he was speaking to them and giving them direction. This is exactly, of course, what the séance people and the spirits do today to get information from out there beyond where we are today.

This, again I tell you, is real. The mystery religion of Babylon had great power. It had great fantastic powers delivered to it by Satan through various demonic creatures. So the illusion of miracles here, of one kind and another within the cult, made it a very powerful system. Because the priest conveyed the impression that they still had contact with Nimrod, who was out there directing them, it gave the priests a very tremendous hold over the people. All the abominable practices of the Babylonian religious system was given authority, therefore, by this voice from beyond the grave of the deity of Nimrod, because that's what he had now become.

**Reincarnation**

Semiramis, in time, proclaimed that she had a supernatural pregnancy which was in fact a reincarnation of her husband, Nimrod, who now was not her husband, but her son reincarnated. Again, I want to point out to you that the idea of reincarnation had its origin in Babylon in the mystery religion. Reincarnation means that a person dies and then he comes back to life in another form: in another human form; or, he may come back in an animal form. He comes back to fulfill what is called his karma; that is, his judgments, his deserts, or what he has coming to him. If he has been a good person, his next life will be a step up. If he has been an evil person, his next life will be a step down.

**Edgar Cayce**

This was the first clue to me when I read the life of Edgar Cayce and his actions and the things that he was doing. People were asking this man who was helping people in their physical ills, "Was he from God, or was he of evil?" The clue to me, first of all, was when he began asking the spirits about religious matters, and one of the things they propounded to him was the doctrine of reincarnation. When I saw that, I knew exactly who was talking. I knew exactly where the system came from. I knew that there was no doubt at all about it that while Edgar Cayce was standing up and teaching a Sunday school class every Sunday morning, he was Satan's man. And, that though he was producing good in helping people to get over some tremendous, terrible illnesses, he was performing an act of human good, and thus he was an evil man in what he was doing. Edgar Cayce very clearly revealed, and forever settled the question as to where his powers were coming from, by the doctrine of reincarnation. This was an invention of Semiramis and her religious system.

So thus was founded the mystery religious cult out of Babylon, and the center of this worship was the mother and her child, supernaturally born to her as a virgin woman. And this child and mother were then enshrined – not so much the mother, but the child was primarily the important thing. He was the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. The mother was more like a pedestal simply to hold and to display the child originally. It's not likely that, at first, Semiramis was presenting herself as a goddess, but simply the woman who had been marvelously chosen above all women to bear the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 to deliver the human race.

The ancient writers tell us that when she was portrayed in art and in sculpture, the artisans spent a great deal of time trying to convey that this was a monumentally handsome woman – just a beautiful woman. She represents the original pagan conception of the goddess of female beauty. Among the Greeks, she was called Aphrodite. Among the Romans, she was called Venus. But the names meant nothing. It was all going back to Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod, who now had reincarnated him in the form of a son.

So in time, the mother who bore the son became more adored than her son. She, in turn became an object of worship. The reason she became so adored was because her beauty represented all the expression of licentiousness within the human heart, and her system also did what her husband had done before her. It encouraged people to do just what comes naturally, and not to feel guilty at all about doing it. Nothing is sin unless you think it's sin. Consequently, the mother was very quickly not only an object of worship, but was raised to deity along with her son. She was looked upon as being sharer in the redemption which was to be provided by the bruising of the serpent's head. As a matter of fact, it even perverted the scriptural statement (which the Roman Catholic Church, incidentally, absorbed), that, "*She* shall bruise his head and he will bruise *her* heel. They had no compunction about even changing the gender. This was where the feminist movement had been born. For the first time, it presented the notion that God was a woman.

**The Virgin Mother**

The Tower of Babel, ancient writers tell us, had up at the top the display of the images of the three major gods of Babylon. One of these was a woman grasping a serpent's head. Diana, among the Greeks, represented this same Babylonian goddess. Diana is often pictured with a headless serpent in her hand, indicating again this same connection that this goddess mother was to be part of the redemption process. In time, the birth of Semiramis's son was declared to be miraculous. She didn't claim that originally, but in time the story was extended, and the consequence was that her son was declared to have been born miraculously. The reason for that was because she was a virgin woman. Thus, in Babylon, she subsequently came to be known as Alma Mater, which means Virgin Mother.

School songs are often called my alma mater, and most people don't realize what they're talking about is what they got right back there from Babylon, and what it actually means is my virgin mother. This is an expression of the kind of thing that was permeating through the religious life in the city of Pergamum, and which was going to gradually be absorbed into Christianity.

So she was called Virgin Mother. The emphasis was upon Alma. Alma is the Hebrew word for "virgin." The emphasis was upon that part of her position. The birth of the true Savior, again, was, of course, well-known and well-predicted. A book like Isaiah tells it in so many words – that this Savior who was going to fulfill Genesis 3:15 was going to be born supernaturally of a virgin woman. All over the ancient world, interestingly enough, where there were no Scriptures possessed, and where there was no information concerning Jesus Christ, they found people worshiping the alma mater – the virgin mother. I mean they didn't have a scrap of the Bible in some out-of-the-way culture. They didn't know a thing about Jesus Christ and the claims of His virgin birth and so on. And the ancient writers record for us how they would come upon these people and discover that they had a mother and child cult. Where does it come from? It came from his majesty the devil. He had transported it throughout the cultures of the world.

This Babylonian alma mater was also called the Queen of Heaven. We've already alluded to Jeremiah 44:17-25, where the people of Israel are making offerings to the queen of heaven, and Jeremiah is calling them to task for that and saying, "Don't do that. That's a terrible thing that you do. You're back in Babylon worshiping Satan's chief goddess. When you do that, you are worshiping Satan." But they wouldn't listen. Jeremiah cried out, and he lamented, and they ignored him. They would not pay any attention to him, even though he said, "If you keep this up, God is going to tear the nation to destruction." But they would not stop. This is the queen of heaven that the Bible is talking about.

There is an inscription on an Egyptian tomb that is very interesting concerning this virgin mother. That inscription says, "I am all that has been, or that is, or that shall be. No mortal has removed my veil. The fruit which I have brought forth is the SUN." When it says, "No mortal has removed my veil," it means that she is virgin. "The fruit (the child) which I have brought forth is the SUN. It's right there on an inscription on an Egyptian tomb. What is it referring to? It is referring to alma mater, the mother goddess, the original of which was Semiramis herself.

The name among the Romans for this mother goddess was Vesta, which means "dwelling place of deity," from which they also had the practice of the vestal virgins. The virgin mother goddess was represented on occasion by a dove with an olive branch in her mouth. This is an interesting representation, because in Scripture the dove represents the Holy Spirit, and the branch represents Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So here again, Satan took what people knew of the Scriptures, and he converted it into a perverted expression. So here is the dove representing the Holy Spirit, and here's the branch (which he holds) representing Jesus Christ. The result was that there was conveyed in the Babylonian system, on the basis of something that was really true from Scripture, that this virgin mother goddess was the Holy Spirit. And the branch was the son which she bore.

So the mother of God assured her worshipers of salvation while giving them full reign to all of their evil passions. She became immensely popular in the ancient world. The nations of the world literally were drunk on the wine of her fornication, which is what the book of the Revelation means when it refers to them in just that way – that the mother of harlots has made the nations drunk on the wine of her fornication. That means that the nations of the world had been put at ease relative to their sin, so that the majority of American women today can say that they do not believe that sex outside of marriage is sinful. They now have a personal release (a personal ease) to be able to pervert that gift of God.

The visual portrayals of this mother goddess was, of course, always with the mother holding the child. And one thing that's interesting about this is that when you come to the Bible, this mother, Mary, was Jewish. Therefore, in all likelihood, she was dark-haired and brown-eyed. But there was an interesting thing about the ancient productions of this mother, even down through the Middle Ages, until a certain point where (I think Raphael was one) they began deviating from this. This mother of god (now called Mary as the mother of Jesus) was in art, regularly portrayed as being blue-eyed and blond-haired. When you look back into ancient portrayals of the goddess mother of the Babylonian cult, that's exactly the way she was described. She was yellow-haired and blue-eyed. Instead of portraying an Italian looking woman with dark hair and brown eyes, or a Jewish looking woman with olive-colored skin and brown eyes, the mother of Jesus was reflecting the Roman Catholic origin of its paganism concerning the mother of Jesus as the virgin goddess – as the virgin to be venerated.

The gods and goddesses of the Babylonian mystery religion were also identified as being sacred by the fact that they would have a circle – a place around the head. This was a common portrayal. Everywhere that you look in the ancient world, in pictures of the gods and goddesses, here is this circle. Obviously, you can see immediately that this circle represents the sun. The sun was their chief god. If they were devotees of the Babylonian mystery religion, then the sun would be the god that they were chiefly worshiping. This sun-god had been reincarnated in this child of the virgin mother goddess, and their devotion to him would be shown by the circle around the images of the people that they considered saints, and priests, and so on. In the Middle Ages, under the Roman Catholic influence, this circle (or nimbus) was simply taken and put on the pictures of Christ and the saints of the Bible. The god Apollo was presented as a child of the sun, and he is often represented in pagan portrayals with this same circle around his head. Circe, the daughter of the sun, was so portrayed by the Romans in pictures that we have from them.

Well, after 313 A.D., the emperor Constantine gradually changed the worship of the virgin mother from what it meant to Babylon to meaning something that was appropriate to Christianity, which was Mary and Jesus. This did not happen overnight. It happened as gradually it became more and more evident that it was popular now to be a Christian, and that even those who did not want to give up their old ways and their own beliefs had to gradually come into Christianity, or they could not stand in favor with the government.

**The False Trinity**

In 325 A.D., a council was held at Nicaea called the Nicaean Council. At the Council of Nicaea, the decision was made that Jesus Christ was true God. That was one of the first of the great Christological controversies, where over a period of some centuries, doctrine was hacked out on exactly the nature of the person of Christ and other great doctrines. So at the Nicaean declaration, it was determined that Jesus Christ was indeed true God. There were a group of Egyptian priests (Roman Catholic priests) at the council, and they proposed a concept of the Trinity, which was another thing that was still to be worked out. They proposed that the Trinity consisted of the Father, the Son, and the Virgin Mother.

**Mary**

Now, with just the little background that you have on the role that Semiramis placed upon herself, and that was later placed by her devotees, of her as being the Holy Spirit represented as a dove with the son and the branch in her hand, you can tell exactly where these Egyptian priests got this idea that the Holy Spirit was female, and that He was actually a woman. So the deity of the son was made to stand and fall on the deity of the mother. That's, in effect, what they were saying: "If this mother is not God, then Jesus is not God. We have just finished the council here, and we have made a major declaration (which has stood since that day) that Jesus Christ is true deity. They said that, since that is true, that His mother must also be God, and thus was introduced into the Roman Catholic theology the concept that the mother virgin goddess was the queen of heaven. That's what the Roman Catholics call Mary. She is the queen of heaven. The names, the qualities, and the attributes given to Mary by Roman Catholics are all found in the Babylonian mystery cults, but they are not found in the Bible. What Mary is credited with by Roman Catholics is not found in Scripture, but it is found basically in the Babylonian mystery religion. So the false trinity of Babylon found its way into Roman Catholic theology.

So from Pergamum there has flowed into Christianity this satanic religion in Babylon, resulting in the hybrid which we know as the Roman Catholic Church today. The queen which the Roman Catholics venerate, in other words, is Semiramis of Babylon. The son whom the Roman Catholics worship is the husband of Semiramis, Nimrod, reincarnated as her son. The Zero-ashta, the seed of the woman of Babylon, is not the Jesus of God, no matter how the names are shuffled around.

This mother and child were the supreme objects of worship. They were represented everywhere in the ancient world. From Babylon, this worship spread through the known world. Babylon was the heart of the system. It was a common practice after the flood for mankind to turn more and more away from God to this system which was flowing from Babylon. So Babylon, under Satan's system through Nimrod, became the cradle of all the moral and religious ideas of mankind, which we have to this very day. They're based on the worship of this mother and child cult. All heathen mythologies are derived from the Babylonian origins. Ancient historians have pointed out to us that Egypt, Greece, Phoenicia, and Rome all have their religion from Babylon. That was the primary center, and in John's Day, Pergamum was the headquarters.

As we said, this child had different names. In Egypt, it was Isis and Osiris. In India, it was ... Ishvara. In Asia, it was Sybil ... In Roman, it was Fortuna and Jupiter, the boy. In Greece, it was Ceres the great mother with the babe at her breast, or Irene ... On one occasion, Jesuit missionaries visiting China, interestingly enough, were amazed to find a Madonna and child identical to what they were used to seeing back in Rome, indicating that this had come from a common source.

**Madonna**

The origin of the Roman Catholic term "Madonna" is interesting. They refer to the virgin Mary as the Madonna. The male child of the Babylonian deity was Belus. The chief female goddess was Beltis. This was the name used in Ninevah, and it was applied to the one who was called "the mother of gods." The name Belus has come to us in the scriptural term "Baal" that we're all acquainted with, and it means "the lord." The female form "Beltis" was "Baalti," which in English means "my lady." ... In Italian, it's "Madonna" (my lady). But without going through a lot of linguistics here, what we're saying is that this term, Madonna, which Roman Catholics use relative to Mary, is directly the title used of the goddess in Babylon.

**Christmas**

We could run this down. There are many, many examples of this kind of application. But I want to begin to take up the practices that are in religion today, and to show you how they've come from this original source. I just want to take one up here: Christmas. Christmas is a great and tremendous holiday in the United States. Part of the Babylonian mystery cult was a special holy day for the pagans on December 25th, which was in honor of Saturn. Therefore, it was called the Saturnalia. Saturn was another name for Nimrod. This date of December the 25th was related by the Roman Catholic Church to Jesus.

As you know, there is nothing in the Bible to indicate to us the day on which Jesus Christ was born. As a matter of fact, we don't have anything in the Bible to even help us to indicate the day on which He was born. We have a clue, like the fact that shepherds were feeding their flocks in open fields at night when Jesus was born. But if that was December 25th, that was impossible, because Palestine is too cold for sheep to be shepherded in open fields at night. Keeping sheep in open fields is not done past October. The taxing census by the Roman government would have been a great hardship had they done it in December rather than at a more suitable time of the year. Matthew 24:20 cautions the people in the tribulation to look to God and to pray that they will not have to flee from the antichrist in the wintertime (in the December time) in Palestine, because it will compound their agonies considerably.

There was no such thing as Christmas Day observance in the church, of course, for many centuries – not until the fourth century. Then the Roman Catholic Church said that December 25th was the day that Jesus Christ was born. And once more, Babylonian religion was amalgamated with Christianity. This Babylonian festival was observed long before Christianity came on the scene. It was celebrated as the birth of Tammuz, which was the Assyrian name for Semiramis's child as the queen of heaven. Tammuz's birth was celebrated on December 25th.

So Christmas Day was originally a major pagan holiday of the mysteries. You have perhaps been acquainted with the word "yuletide." We often see that on Christmas cards. This word "yuletide" is a Babylonian word. It means "infant" or "little child." Therefore, yuletide is celebration time of the infant child. We use this term today to describe the celebrating of the birth of Jesus Christ: "the yuletide season." It's a word directly out of Babylonian mystery religion relative to its god, Tammuz.

The sun was a chief object of worship in Babylon. The sun was viewed as God incarnate, and therefore the celebration of the birth of Tammuz was a celebration of the rebirth of the sun, because I need not tell you what happens to the sun come the winter solstice, the day upon which there is maximum night and minimum day. The winter solstice is a time when the sun seems to be almost gone for good. That's why the pagans, at this time of the year, would celebrate the coming of the revival of the sun-god by burning fires called "bonfires." "Bon" means good – the good fires. They were to help the sun to illuminate where it was losing its light.

But come the winter solstice, about December 25th, everything changed. The days started getting longer, and the nights started getting shorter. So it was a celebration of the revival of their god. So when December 25th comes along, whatever you are doing with the day in celebrating, in the back of your mind, you have to have the uncomfortable feeling that you have inherited a pagan day of celebrating the revival of the sun-god who, of course, represented Satan himself.

It was a day of drunken revelry among the pagans. You've heard of the wassailing bowl in England. We call it the office party in the United States. It is simply a big booze bowl. The wassailing bowl is a great thing of Christmas celebration in England. Candles are lit on the altars of Tammuz on December 25th to do him honor. Then these candles continue to burn.

**The Christmas Tree**

The Christmas tree custom, of course, came from Babylon. The mother of the sun-god was said to have been changed into a tree, and it was in that state, in one of the myths, that she is said to have brought forth her son. The mother thus is the tree, and her son is the branch. Today, we have the custom of the yule log; that is, taking a log and putting it into the fireplace and burning it at Christmas time. The yule log was again the custom celebrating the fact that Nimrod had been killed. That was portrayed as a stump that had been cut down. We have many ancient pictures of this. Then in some illustrations, we have a serpent circling around the stump, and right next to it is a new tree sprouting up. Many times this illustration (this picture) was found in ancient records. What it was saying was that the death of the apostate Nimrod was represented by a tree cut down and stripped of all of its branches. Then a serpent, which had wound itself around it, represents the Aesculapius. We have already referred to the Aesculapius as the god of healing, the God which is represented on the caduceus of the doctors today – representing the healing sign of doctors. The Aesculapius (this God represented by the snake) wrapped himself around the stump and gave birth next to the stump to a new tree – a new life.

**The Yule Log**

So what they pagans used to do was that on Christmas Eve (we would say), they would bring a log, and they would put it in the fire. That was the yule log. That represented to them their god Tammuz dead. The next morning, they would bring in a tree. In Rome, it was fir and pine. In Egypt, it was palm trees (suitable to the area). They would bring a tree in, and they would decorate it, representing now that he had come to life. So all of this, again (customs brought down to Christianity from pagan origins), symbolize the pagan concepts that were permeating the thinking of people in Pergamum.

What I'm trying to do is to give you the kinds of things that were in the pagan mind – the kinds of things that were normative attributes in Pergamum, and why the Bible says that was Satan's throne (his headquarters).

**Mistletoe**

I'll give you one other thing. All of you know about going through doorways at Christmas time, from which hang some mistletoe. If you meet a certain person here, you're supposed to kiss that person there under the mistletoe. This is a very important custom, and some of you rather enjoy that, but I'm going to have to tell you that this piece of mistletoe here is regarded as the branch again. This is regarded as Nimrod; Tammuz; or, whatever name you want to put him under. He is viewed as the one who has come from heaven in order to join heaven and earth together. That is, a kiss represents peace. A kiss represents coming together after having combat and being separated. The ancients said that heaven is up here, and earth is here. They were once one, but they have been separated by evil. So the god Tammuz has come down, and he becomes the focal point to join the two together. That's pure satanic substitution, but it comes right out of the Bible, because the devil reads the Bible better than Christians do.

Let me just read Psalm 85:10-11 which tell us exactly where Satan got this concept: "Mercy and truth are met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven." They have the exact picture of righteousness looking down from heaven and truth coming up from the earth, represented by the mistletoe, which represented the branch – the divine God fulfilling Genesis 3:15. The two are being brought together with a kiss of reconciliation.

**The Boar's Head**

Well, there are several others customs at Christmas time. One is the boar's head. Tammuz is described as having died as a result of being gored by the tusks of this wild pig. The Babylonians devised the custom of offering a boar's head on December 25th as sacrifice to the sun-god, which represented their way of trying to propitiate his goddess mother for the loss of her son. The Feast of Saturn on December 25th featured a boar's head at the meal. There are certain cultural groups in our day that feature boars' head as a specialty of Christmas food.

**The Goose**

The goose was prominent at Christmas time. The goose was served with wafer-thin cakes. They were essential in the worship of Babylon – the worship of their messiah on December 25th. The goose was sacred in Egypt, so it's seen on the headdress of the leaders. Why? Because the goose was connected with worship of the sun-god. The geese roamed freely in the temple of Jupiter because they were sacred.

**Round Wafers**

The Roman Catholic Church has incorporated this business of the wafer-thin cakes. It has incorporated it in the form of a round wafer which is used in the mass, and which is placed upon the tongue of the communicant. The Roman Catholic Church insists that it must be round. Can you tell me why they insist on it being round? Where did Roman Catholicism get that from the Bible? Jesus Christ took a piece of bread at the Lord's Supper, and He broke it up in pieces and handed it out. Did He munch them up into little round beetle balls because they had to be round? Well, I think you know what the answer is. The pagans said that they had to be round because the sun was round.

There are three letters that are imprinted on this wafer. This is a fantastic tie right back to Babylon. And every Catholic opens his mouth, and gets this wafer with these three letters thrown on it. Do you know what they are? Do you know what they mean? Come back for the next session, and I'll tell you.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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