***Roman Catholicism and Paganism

RV188-02***

We are studying "The Fall of the Babylon Systems." This is segment number six in Revelation 14:8.

**The Amalgamation of Christianity and Paganism**

From the time of Emperor Constantine in 325 A.D. to 600 A.D., Christianity ceased to be persecuted, and it began dominating world society. Gradually, Christianity, under human viewpoint leaders, incorporated pagan doctrines and practices which had actually originated back in Babylon in the days of the Tower of Babel. The amalgamation of biblical Christianity and paganism resulted in what we know of today as the great Roman Catholic Church. That church, because of this confusion with paganism, lost all trace of the divine grace plan of salvation. Since then, millions have entered the lake of fire through the works salvation system of Catholicism, just as millions in ancient days passed into the lake of fire because of the teachings of Nimrod.

**Roman Catholicism**

The practices of the ancient Babylonian religious system after the flood formed the doctrines that are so strange in Catholicism today, which no reasonable Christian who knows anything about the Bible can find any connection whatsoever with the Word of God. This worship of Babylon centered on a mother and a child who was a god. This mother was, in time, viewed as the channel of mercy, because the god, her son, was a harsh retributive god. Regeneration was taught by a system of external works. If you do this and this and this, then God's religious organization will take you into heaven.

If you don't understand this, you won't grasp why the Mafia can do the most brutal; the most obscene; and, the most sinful kinds of things, and yet, they will have a high Mass pronounced over them when the hoods kill each other. That seems insane. However, by the religious system of Catholicism, it is not. According to Catholicism, it does not matter what you do, as long as you jump through the monkey hoops, and the church approves you, the church is going to take you into heaven. That system, of course, is very appealing to the nature of man, because that means that you don't have to worry about doing right. You can do whatever your sin nature would like to do.

**Pontifex Maximus**

The chief god of the Babylonian system was the sun up in the sky. The child of the mother goddess was viewed as the incarnation of the god up in the sky. He was, in fact, the incarnation of Satan himself. In Rome, the emperor became head, as the antichrist will, not only of the political realm, but of the religious realm as well. He became the chief priest of the religious system, and he assumed the title of Pontifex Maximus. This title is now carried by the Roman Catholic Pope. In the Vatican, you will find "P.M." (Pontifex Maximus) inscribed all over the Vatican grounds: in the marble under your feet; and, on the walls. It is very clear that this pope, head of this church, has taken over what once belonged to the chief priest of paganism.

**The Circle**

The circle that in art around the heads of saints is in honor of the sun-god in the sky. The mother herself has been exalted to the position of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. That was the role she played in the pagan Babylonian system with a father, and a son, and the mother Holy Spirit. This is precisely the claim of the founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy.

The mother, in time, became the co-Mediatrix with Christ. Roman Catholic Bibles translated Genesis 3:16 not as "*He* shall bruise the serpent's head," but as "*She* shall bruise the serpent's head," so as to attribute that to Mary's intercession. As we saw in the previous session, the very practice of Christmas honors the sun-god as incarnated in the various practices of the ancient Saturnalia.

**Roman Catholicism and Paganism**

In this session, we're going to briefly look at a variety of other practices which are now in Roman Catholicism, all of which can be traced back to the Babylonian system, which worshiped Satan, and which had as its fundamental precept: man is a god.

1. **The Sign of the Cross**

One of the most obvious things that all of us know, in our acquaintance with Roman Catholicism, is to see them make the sign of the cross. This is a well-known act, and it is viewed by Roman Catholics as the supreme charm to ward off evil. It's like having a magic wand in your hand. When Catholics are faced with something that they consider evil, they immediately go to the sign-of-the-cross ritual. The cross itself is an object of extreme veneration, if not outright worship, among the Roman Catholics. Well, where did that come from?

Well, the sign of the cross originally came from the Babylonian system. It was in Babylon that the "T," which is the first letter in the name of "Tammuz" in the Assyrian name for the sun-god, and which is used by Roman Catholics today. This "T" was inscribed on the person's forehead, because water baptism under Babylon was the means by which one was washed of his sins and received regeneration. In order to identify this sign of the cross as being indeed associated with Tammuz, they took the first letter of his name, and then they also added the circle of the sun on top of it. It is also in this form where it is a circle with a "T" inscribed within. Both those signs are found repeatedly in carvings, and in the ancient world.

If you've ever seen pictures of Egyptian priests, you notice that they're holding this. This is called the symbol of life. It is Tammuz, the sun-god, and it is found everywhere. Roman Catholic nuns wear these signs around their necks. They're woven into their garments. They are carried by them as signs of divine authority. The vestal virgins of the Roman temples wore these as necklaces. The cross is found everywhere in paganism as the sign of Tammuz, the incarnation of the sun, who represents Satan.

It is not a sign representing the cross upon which Christ died. That was an adaptation which the Catholic Church made, so as to accommodate what the pagans were already doing to a religious system. If you wanted to have a sign (a symbol) for Jesus Christ in the same way as they had the "T" for Tammuz' name, then the most likely thing would be to use this "X," which in the Greek language is the "chi," which is the first letter of the name of Jesus Christ – "Christos." That would certainly be a more appropriate sign. In any case, the practice in Catholicism is directly from ancient paganism.

1. **Priests, Monks, and Nuns**

There is another area of pagan practice in Catholicism, and which will be incorporated in one way or another into the antichrist religion. That is the role that priests and monks and nuns play. There is a vivid contrast, obviously, to all of you today what a biblical pastor-teacher does in a local church, and what a Roman Catholic priest does as he stands before his altar. Somebody is right, and somebody is wrong. The contrast is very clear. The biblical pastor-teacher has one job, and that is to feed his flock the Word of God. However, the Roman Catholic priest feeds his congregation the words of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and their human viewpoint authority. In fact, that Roman Catholic priest discourages Bible study, because it will lead you astray, because you'll read it literally and believe it. The church has to interpret it for you. The pastor-teacher ministers to a congregation on the basis of the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God, which has covered the sins of all mankind, whereas the Roman Catholic priest ministers on the basis of sacrificing Christ again and again in the ceremony of the Mass.

1. **The Mass**

The Babylonian mystery cult is the place where the Mass began. In that system, there was this non-bloody sacrifice – not the sacrifice of an animal, but the sacrifice of a bread as being the means by which one's sins were covered. This was absorbed into Roman Catholicism. Martin Luther, after he became a Christian, looked back with horror upon his ordination as a Roman Catholic priest and the times when he performed the Mass, that he was suggesting that he, as a human being, had magical powers by which a person could come into a relationship with God that would escape the lake of fire. He recoiled from that horror, because he realized that everybody under his ministry who had died while he was performing Masses, he had sent directly into hell.

The Babylonian priesthood offered this non-bloody sacrifice of the mass to the queen of heaven. It was the goddess mother that was being worshiped in the Mass. I notice that throughout Eastern Europe, as we would visit Roman Catholic Churches, the altar was always up there, but inevitably it was the picture of Mary that was above the altar. She was the supreme personage. Why? Because the Mass which is being performed is in honor of her. She is the one who is being esteemed and venerated, and, in fact, worshiped.

1. **The Celibacy of Priests**

Semiramis was herself a woman of very loose morals. Yet on the pretense of sanctity, in the Babylonian system, the rule was made that the priest must not marry. This would be conducive to a life of exceptional holiness and devotion to God. The Roman Catholic Church has obviously absorbed the same concept of celibacy for its clergy. However, the apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 4:1-3 that in the end times, great apostasy will come upon the Christian community, and one of the signs of that apostasy will be that they forbid religious leaders to marry. They will tell people that to be celibate is a more holy life than to be married.

Roman Catholicism has absorbed this system. Unfortunately, history has demonstrated time and again that celibacy of the priesthood results in extreme sexual immorality, both externally and mentally. In the Middle Ages, Pope Paul V, when Roman Catholicism was now established as the dominant force in the society, following the fall of the Roman Empire, Pope Paul V wanted to close down the houses of prostitution in Rome, but the Roman Senate petitioned him not to do that on the grounds that it was the only thing that was keeping the priests of the Roman Catholic Church from seducing their wives and their daughters. So, the pope relented, and left the prostitution houses open.

1. **The Shaved Circle on the Head**

The distinguishing mark of the Babylonian priest was the fact that he saved a circle on the top of his head. In the middle of the head, they would leave the hair around it, but they would shave this circle. Do I need to explain to you why they did that, and in whose honor they were doing that? This was a distinguishing mark of the Babylonian priests. This was not a hole in the head, though, symbolically, it would've been more appropriate. This was just a little round circle that they shaved. This practice spread everywhere. I don't care what religious system you went through, whether it was in Egypt, Rome, India, or China – all the priests did the same thing. And they didn't have the Bible, and they didn't get this from the Bible. But the priests all followed this same practice of shaving a circle on top of the head.

Gautama Buddha, 500 years before Christ, claimed that he had a divine vision and a command from God to shave a circle on the top of his head, so it was done there. Did he get a revelation? Did he get a command? He probably did, but it was from the person who had originated this circle on the top of the head, and that was Satan. That's the one that Gautama Buddha received the message from.

For this reason, Leviticus 21:5 strictly forbids the priests of Israel from ever shaving their heads. That's the significance. It seems like a pointless remark until you understand the practice of shaving the round circle to represent the god that they worshiped – the sun up in the sky. When a Roman Catholic priest today is ordained to the ministry of the priesthood of the Catholic Church, his had to say in this manner in order to demonstrate his subjection to his leader, the Pope. The shape of the sun, as a circle, was used repeatedly by the priests as an emblem of their incarnate God, and it was used to represent Tammuz' coming to life again; that is, Nimrod. Tammuz and Nimrod are the same name and the same person. Bacchus, who is the God of revelry and wine in Rome, wore this on the top of his head as a sign of who is God really was.

1. **Lent**

In pagan lands, this was done when they would mourn the death of Tammuz for that 40 days, which has come down to us now, in Roman Catholicism, as the period of Lent preceding the Easter celebration. They would shave their heads. Eventually, they did it regularly as funerals. The Pope in Rome today shaves his head in this way. He has a round circle like this. I think the present pope is kind of bald, so it's a little hard to see it. You have to really get up close and look down on him hard to see where he has clipped those hairs. But he wears this circle because it is a mark of his relationship, he says, to Christ. Wrong! It is a mark of his relationship to his true master, which is Satan.

1. **The Religious Orders**

The religious orders also originated in Nimrod's Babylon. The Roman Catholic Church today is served by an army of monks and nuns in addition to the priests. Nimrod's Babylon system had the same thing. Yet we go throughout the pagan world, and we find from ancient times that groups, wherever they were, and wherever people had spread out from the Tower of Babel, they all had the system of monks and nuns. In Scandinavia, the priestesses of Freya were perpetual virgins to watch the sacred fires. In Athens, the religious virgins were maintained at public expense. In Rome, the vestal virgins reigned in the service to their god. In Peru, the virtues of the sun live in convents watching over their sacred fires. These orders are regularly found in all pagan religions, and the practices in the process of their worship of their God is extremely gross.

Roman Catholicism has drunk from the cup of abomination, which is held in the hand of this harlot religious system, as the Bible calls her: "the harlot of Babylon." In Jeremiah 51:7, we read, "Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord, intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine. Therefore, the nations are going mad." How true, how true! Why are the people of this world and their governments going mad? Because they have drunk the wine of the abomination of the falsehood of Babylon.

In Revelation 17:4-5, John's reference is to this same thing: "And the woman (that is, the woman representing the full system of religion from Babylon) was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations." And what I'm describing to you now are what God calls "abominations." These are religious practices that are loathsome to Him because of their ultimate worship of his enemies, Satan: "A golden cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality. And upon her forehead a name was written a mystery (a secret): 'Babylon, the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth.'"

Now, that sentence (that verse) is completely meaningless and senseless, unless you know something about the background of what originated at the Tower of Babel. Then it comes together. So, any Christian who is in the know, and who is sensitive to the Word of God, very naturally recoils from the Roman Catholic Pope. He naturally recoils from Roman Catholic priests and monks and nuns. And you don't have to apologize for the fact that you are very cool toward those people because they are agents of the devil. That is very hard to do when they are winsome and with human good works.

It's like women from charismatic churches. I'm very uncomfortable with women like that. They give me spiritual hives. Anytime I'm around them, they don't even have to open their mouths. I can almost see it on their faces. I saw one this afternoon, and I could spot it at a distance. They are devious; they're aggressive; they're subtle; they're devoid of doctrinal understanding; and, they're tiresome. Why? Because they have been tricked by Satan into serious false doctrines, and people join in by the carloads. The worst that can happen to a human being is not to know the gospel of the grace of God. And the second worst thing to happen to a human being, once he is saved, is not to understand the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In the first case, you will end up in the lake of fire if you don't know the gospel. In the second place, you will end up wasting your life on an emotional orgy while Satan rubs his hands in glee, because you don't know enough about the Word of God to know better.

We should recoil from agents of the devil: sweet; kind; smiling; and, nice as they are. Look into those eyes. Look into the windows of the soul and realize that you have to deal with people like that. You have to move along in this world. Like the apostle Paul said: "If we're going to separate ourselves from all those evils, then we're going to have to get out of the world." Paul says, "We deal with those people as we must. We're not part of them." You should recognize whom they are representing. These are the people who are going to be screaming and shouting as they stand before the Lord, and He says, "Depart from me. I never knew you." These are the people who are going to be shouting, "But we performed miracles in Your name. What do You mean that You never knew us? We prophesied in Your name. We even kept demons out in Your name." And Jesus will say, "Yes, you did that. But you didn't do it by My power. You did it by Satan's power. I don't know you. You're not part of Me." That is going to be a horrible revelation to these people.

1. **The Sacrifice of the Mass**

Another one of the practices that you're all well acquainted with, that came from Babylon, is the sacrifice of the Mass. The Babylonian mystery religion worshiped its goddess Semiramis with its bloodless sacrifice. The reason that the Mass was performed to approach Mary was because her son Jesus was viewed as a stern, relentless, unmerciful God. I cannot tell you how many times I've heard Roman Catholics tell me that the reason they pray to Mary, and the reason they go to Mary, is because a mother can get her son to do things where other people cannot. So, what are they telling you? "You should be on your way to the lake of fire for your lifestyle and for your rejection of God's salvation. But if Mary intercedes for you, she'll talk her Son into giving you a break." Mary is always portrayed as the gentle, merciful one who abhors blood, and who's ready to help all sinners escape judgment.

1. **The Mother**

So, when a mafia Don goes to his well-deserved place in the lake of fire, his relatives pay the price to have Masses said to Mary so that she may intercede for his soul, and try to convince her son Jesus to let this man into his presence in heaven. So, the mother in this way becomes the co-Mediatrix with Christ. She is the one who is assisting people.

We have a report on the InterVarsity Fellowship meeting in Urbana, Illinois about the seminar which was conducted by the Roman Catholic priest. The person who wrote this article couldn't take it after a while, as this man was talking about praying to Mary so that she may assist us in our approach to God, and in our pursuit of our eternal life. She finally stood up in the meeting and quoted Paul's statement, "There is one mediator between God and man: the man Christ Jesus." The response was that they told him that he was very bad-mannered to do that, and that they were not discussing that Bible passage.

So, the mother in the Babylonian system was far more important than her god-son. And the mystery religious cult of Babylon taught that the mother diverts the wrath of her son against evil by showing him her breasts upon which she nurtured him. In Luke 11:27-28, the women are shouting to Him, "Blessed be the womb that bore you, and the breasts that nurtured you," because that was their background. You appeased your god, the mother, by showing the breasts.

If you ever visit the Vatican, as you walk down the halls, you will see a statue of Diana, and all of the front of her body is covered with female breasts. You might say, "That's a crazy looking statue." No, it's a demonstration of the power that she has to appease the wrath of the gods. She has all these multiple breasts to deal with. These things are connected. People don't just make these up. The artist didn't come up with this out of the blue. They have the historical connection. They know from ancient times about these teachings.

The Roman Catholic Church, in the 4th century, brought in the abominable practice of the Babylonian Mass into Roman Catholicism. And this increased the worship of the virgin Mary. The pagan origin of the Mass is quite evident in the Babylonian system by the fact that today the Roman Catholic Mass is conducted with a little round wafer. I grew up in a religious system that was not Roman Catholicism, but because of its previous association with Roman Catholicism, it inherited the thing. When you walked up to that altar to receive the bread, it was this little round wafer. Do I have to explain to you why it was round? Again, it was the symbol of their god up in the sky: the sun. And where in the Word of God would you find the requirement that the bread be in the form of a circle? If there's anything that took place at that Passover meal, as they passed the bread around, it was they were breaking pieces off. If there anything true about it, it was not in a circle. It was in a bunch of little pieces of erratic shapes.

1. **Fasting before Mass**

The Babylonian religion required the eating of this bloodless worship following fasting. In the Catholic system, if you're going to go to the Mass the next day, you start fasting at midnight. I've heard men say, "Boy, I have to stop drinking. It's almost midnight. I'm going to mass in the morning." Up to that time, you can do any vile thing, but starting at midnight, you have to fast. Before midnight, you can eat; drink; throw up; and, carry on. But after midnight, you've got to start behaving yourself, because you're going to go to mass the next day. This is purely pagan practice from Babylon. We know where the Lord's Supper was first instituted. It was instituted after the Passover meal – not after they fasted. It was after they'd eaten a full meal.

Here is the enormous arrogance of the Roman Catholic system that would impose things like this upon people, and the doltishness of the mind of the average Roman Catholic who just goes along with it, and never stops to ask, "Where is the authority for what you are saying?"

1. **IHS**

If you were to look closely at the wafer that you receive in the Roman Catholic mass, you would see the letters "IHS." I would sit in church as a child, and I would look up at the pulpit, and there was always a drape hanging on the pulpit, and there were the letters "IHS." I always had a hard time pronouncing this word. I never did figure out what it meant. But there was: "IHS." Well, I have since found out that came from ancient Babylon, because on their round little wafers they had this standing for: "ISIS," the Egyptian goddess; for "Horus;" and, for "Seb" – the three primary gods of the Egyptian trinity.

Now, this is going to be a problem for the Roman Catholic Church to absorb this. Back in Babylonian times, the letters probably meant something else, but it was the names of their gods. So, the Roman Catholic Church didn't want to change the letters, since the pagans were used to that. So, what they did was changed it to Latin words. They changed it to "Iesus Hominum Salvator" (Jesus, Savior of Men). When that goes into your mouth as a Roman Catholic, you're eating an ancient bit of worship devoted to the pagan trinity from ancient Babylon. The dominant church of the Middle Ages, under Constantine, was to adapt to the pagan system of worship and rituals, so that the pagans would feel comfortable.

1. **Saints**

Pagans were used to worshiping many gods. Well, they couldn't come up with many gods, but they could come up with many saints, and that's what they did. Step-by-step, they substituted, and gave it Christian implications.

1. **Extreme Unction**

Another practice of Roman Catholicism brought from ancient Babylon was called extreme unction. This is the last rites performed by a Roman Catholic priest to a person who is about to die or shortly after that person has died. He anoints a dying person in the name of Jesus Christ. He hears the person's confession, and gives him absolution to prepare him for his journey into eternity. This is the final washing way of the sins for which he himself has not paid by his penance. Christ lays the ground with his death upon the cross for you to be saved, but you must provide your own salvation through your own personal works of penance for your temporal evil that you are guilty of. You confess it; the Pope tells you how many "Hail Marys" and "Our Fathers" to say, or how much money to give, or how many Masses to have spoken in your behalf, to cover you. This is administered only when the hope of recovery of the person is gone, and death is certain.

Now, if I were a Roman Catholic, and the Catholic priest came into my room in the hospital to give me extreme unction, that would make me a little uneasy. That is like a preacher friend of mine who I heard one time. He was a great expositor of the Word, and he had demands upon his time and upon his physical capacity that were out of this world. He said, "I don't visit people. I don't go around to homes. I prepare so that when they visit the services, it's well-worth their time. The only time I go visiting is when a person is dying. Then I go visit him." I thought, "Oh, you shouldn't have said that. How are people going to feel when they see you walking in visiting them? They're going to think that the angel of death has arrived." That's a terrible thing to think, but that's what the priest causes you to think. When he walks in, and he has his little container of oil that he's going to anoint your forward with, boy, you know that it's "Goodbye, Charlie" time. That's why he's there.

1. **The Olive Branch**

The Babylonian system called its god the Lord of Heaven or the Lord of Oil. The olive branch was the symbol of the sun-god as the provider of peace. The Greeks would seek to placate the wrath of their gods by bringing an olive branch to them to appeal to their mission of peace that they were supposed to bring. Supplicants to these god's were anointed with olive oil in the name of the god to secure peace with that god. And sometimes the oil contain hallucinogenics. So, when it was put upon the person, as it permeated the skin, they would hallucinate, and they would feel that they were getting a message from God. Here's where the olive branch comes to us as a symbol of peace. This anointing was called an unction. And in Roman Catholicism, it is called the extreme unction because it's the last service before you die that the Roman Church will perform for you.

1. **Merit Salvation**

Well, the Roman Catholic Church incorporated this as a sacrament. How many sacraments are there in the Roman Catholic Church as the stair steps to heaven? There are seven steps, and here is one of the main ones – extreme unction, to prepare you to meet a holy God. The purpose of this, of course, was to allay the natural fears which face a person who is about to die, and he has no peace about the basis upon which he's going to meet God. As a Catholic, he's been taught that he must perform certain rituals and works to merit the merit of Christ. So, you have to prove that you deserve what Christ did on the cross before it will be applied to you. It's the same thing that Mormons teach – to prove yourself worthy before you get the benefits.

However, how do you know that you've done it? How do you know that you've done enough works, and that you've done the right works? So, here is something that is totally foreign to Scriptures. The extreme unction was a way of putting a person at ease to prepare them for the next world. This is very sad.

I remember standing in the presence of a relative once. A Catholic priest came in, and he knelt down and performed the extreme unction. This woman was dying of cancer. Then when the priest left, the husband came up with his daughter and said, "We're going to say five 'Hail Marys' and four 'Our Fathers' for you." Then they knelt before this dying woman and proceeded with their rituals. What I wondered was: "Was five 'Hail Marys' and four 'Our Fathers' enough?" I felt that this woman needed a lot more than that. How many? Who knows? You see, this system has to give some kind of peace to people who have no possible basis for peace.

1. **Purgatory**

Well, extreme unction was not enough to carry you through. Therefore, Nimrod and his system invented another thing, which in time was absorbed into the Catholic Church. It was called purgatory. Extreme unction would not allow your fears of facing a holy God as a sinner. So, the Roman Catholic priests needed to have something that they could offer a soul as a second chance. All pagan religions inherited the Babylonian practice of prayers for the dead. They had prayers for the dead, and the doctrine of purgatory.

1. **Prayers for the Dead**

We have an article that speaks about praying to Mary. That's the same system. That's the same principle as praying in behalf of other people who are dead. For what? Pagan systems have left open the possibility that those who may prove unfit even by their extreme unction to make it into heaven will have a chance to make it by prayers which are said in their behalf. The solution of purgatory was a transition stage from earth to heaven. There you will finish off your penance. There, if masses are run in your behalf by your relatives, upon paying the church, your time in purgatory will be reduced. That's what the indulgences were being sold for. Remember that a Catholic Pope can still give you an indulgence. He can still sell you time out of purgatory because of your gifts to the church.

**The Protestant Reformation**

This is what triggered finally the Protestant Reformation. That was the last straw with Martin Luther when he saw Tetzel coming through Germany, selling those indulgences to get people out of purgatory by paying the church so that St. Peter's Basilica could be built in Rome – that Vatican that you now go into which is so impressive. Luther knew that this was a horrendous lie, and that nobody will ever have their sins forgiven by somebody paying for prayers in their behalf. Nor is there a place like purgatory. Where did this idea come from? Plato knew it. In Plato's writings, you will read about purgatory. He picked it up from Nimrod and the ancient Babylonians. The Romans believed in this kind of a stage after death. And naturally, prayers for the dead go hand in hand with purgatory. You need the agency of a priest to pray. You can't do it yourself. And no priestly service can be provided by the Roman Church except by a provision of your payment. It's a gold mine.

1. **The Apocrypha**

This is why rich Roman Catholics make provision by paying the church for prayers which are to be made in their behalf, to shorten their time in purgatory. This is a travesty not to be found anywhere in the Word of God. One closest place that you can find about purgatory is in the apocryphal books – the Old Testament books. I think it's 10 or 11 Old Testament books which were completely rejected by the early church as being non-inspired, and which the Reformers totally rejected. All one has to do is read the apocryphal books that are in the Catholic Bible, and you can immediately sense the flavor and the difference and the contradictions that are in there with other Scripture. Well, there you have a passage that that is the basis of purgatory, and the church, naturally, must hang onto those books.

1. **Worship of Relics**

Another thing they did in ancient Babylon was worship relics. Some material object related to a saint is believed to have magical powers. It is a source of divine merits and of material blessings. So, they like to find bones and objects of saints, and places that are holy places. Great stories are told about miracle-working powers of these relics, and places of burial of the saints. Miracles have to be associated with a person in the Catholic Church if he is to be canonized as a saint. Roman Catholics, like the charismatics, are playing upon the demonic role of claiming to perform miracles.

So, someplace in South Texas, somebody looked at a tree, and saw the face of the Virgin Mary, and everybody came flocking by droves to see this tree that has developed the face of the virgin Mary. Or they see a picture, and the picture begins to have a tear that drops out, or blood appears in the hands of a picture of a crucified Christ or a statue. It probably does happen. This is easily the work of Satan. But the Roman Catholic Church promotes relics. This is a heathen practice well recorded in ancient history – the superstitious powers from relics of their deified heroes. And they have a conspicuous part in ancient religions.

The religion of Buddha had the relics from Buddha to aid in its seeking of blessings. They claim to possess the teeth of Buddha. In fact, one Roman Catholic Church gave Franz Joseph of Austria a tooth that he said belonged to Peter. He probably stole it from some dentist's office, and made it look old, and said, "Here's a tooth from Peter." Wouldn't you like to have a tooth from Peter that you could touch? You know how that is in us. People say, "Here is something that you see. It is an ancient thing that some famous person had. George Washington slept in this bed." What do you want to do? You want to reach out and touch it? Nobody's looking, and you sit down on it. And it inspires you to be in contact with such a magnificent, significant item. Well, when you turn it into a religious thing, it can become horrendous.

Since the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, they couldn't have any parts of Him. When I was a kid, I had a crucifix. I had a rosary that had a crucifix on it, and the back door would open, and in the back door there was some red dirt. And there was a little label printed that said, "This was gathered from the foot of the cross of Jesus." I had it. I'm sorry that I don't have it to this day, because all of you would want to come up and see it and touch it. And there's the red dirt of the dripped blood of Jesus. And I alone, a junior-aged kid in the city of Chicago, had one of these. I bet there was a mountain of red dirt all over the world wherever these little crucifixes with the container in the back were floating around with that printed label. And people were actually believing it, and looking at it in awe.

These are relics. This is ancient pagan practice. It's a custom of relic worship that goes all the way back to Babylonian religion. Nimrod was executed by the forces of righteousness, and his body was cut up and dispersed as a warning to other apostates. When the apostates came back into power, they gathered up the remains of Nimrod as relics, and they venerated them as having magical powers. The place where the remains of Nimrod had been buried were made into shrines where miracles were experienced. These shrines made the very ground on which they stood as being holy. Therefore, people wanted to be buried there.

1. **Consecrated Burial Grounds**

This is where this custom came from – from ancient Babylon. They had consecrated ground, and you wanted to be buried in consecrated ground because you were in association with a god. And if you are a person who was under disfavor of the religious system, you were not permitted to be buried in consecrated ground. The Roman Catholic Church has consecrated ground. If you are a suicide, or some other terrible things, you cannot be buried in consecrated ground.

When Jews die, they have consecrated ground that they believe will give them a first-in-line place in the resurrection. It's in the Kidron Valley, just below the Mount of Olives. If you've ever been there, you see these masses of tombstones that are piled up where the Jews want to be buried. The recent leader of Israel who had died, Menachem Begin – that's where he was buried, in the Kidron Valley. I knew exactly when I read that why he was doing that. This is a leg-up, first-in-line of the resurrection. It is considered consecrated special ground.

1. **Pilgrimages**

One of the favorite ways of washing away your sins in the Middle Ages was, of course, to make a pilgrimage to the burial site of a saint, or to the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem. Pilgrimages to holy places are part of the Roman Catholic system today. Yet I ask you: where in the Bible do you find the slightest reference that visiting the tomb of some saint, or a martyr, or a prophet, or an apostle will give you an America with God? But the Jews were very inclined to follow these practices. This is probably why the body of Moses was buried by God so that nobody could get it. Could you imagine what a field day they would have had with that? They would have been selling his teeth one-by-one, and whatever else. Ancient pilgrimages were very popular because they were a kind of a party, and they were associated with a great deal of revelry. The Roman Catholic Church, instead of pointing people to faith in Jesus Christ, have followed Babylon's lead, and they point them to these relics and holy places.

1. **Idol Processions**

Another practice inherited from Babylon was the idol processions. If any of you have ever visited Latin American countries during religious seasons, you know exactly what I'm talking about. You see it all the time. The Roman Catholics form a veneration. They worship by carrying religious images in a procession. This is done with a great deal of dramatics of sound and sight. It awes the followers of Romanism – these long processions where they're bearing the image of Christ with the image of Mary on a platform on the shoulders of a group of men who are walking in a prescribed pattern of steps. The emotion of the devotees are moved by this kind of a spectacle, and it creates a great deal of devotion to the Roman Catholic Church.

Some years ago, Mrs. Danish and I visited Guatemala, and there, at the Santa Tomas church, we watched on the steps of this church the witch doctors performing their rituals: lighting the candles; saying their chants; and, doing all the ritual. And then, when they were finished there, they walked inside the church itself. There was no problem between the fact that they were pagan witch doctors perform pagan practices on the steps of the Roman Catholic Church, and in going inside and performing the religious rituals there. And as I'd walk through this darkened cathedral, looking at these men, they were there praying; bowing before their candles; and, saying their prayers, trying to make it with God. A short time later, trumpets were sounding, and the music was playing, and we see this procession coming down the street. And here are the same witch doctors. And on their shoulders is this platform on which is the image of Mary. And they're carrying this through the streets with rhythmic steps. What were they doing? They were seeking to gain access to God by honoring the mother of God, by carrying her through the streets to bring blessings upon them in the town.

One of their favorite devices, if you've ever seen it, is to have a casket that has a glass on the top, and in which they have an image of Christ. They really go bananas over that one.

This was begun by Pope Gregory the Great, one of the all-time great popes, in 590 A.D., when there was a great plague in Rome. In order to dissipate (to divert) the plague, he ordered that an image of virgin Mary be carried through the streets in the pattern of the ancient Babylonian custom, and that is done in Latin American countries to this day. They don't do it too much in the United States, because the United States is a country which was enlightened by its biblical heritage. So, it doesn't go over too big. But you cannot be south of the border very often before you will see one of these processions.

1. **Self-Mutilation**

There is the practice of self-mutilation very often with these processions. You see this in Judaism today, and you it in Catholicism. You may have seen in the news recently the celebration in the Philippians of Easter. They have a group of men who literally have themselves nailed to a cross. One man has had that done to him a dozen times. They nail him to the cross. They stick him up, and one minute later or so, they bring him down. They don't stay up there very long. It is excruciating being on the cross, and you're very prone to die of suffocation unless they have something under your feet so you can keep pushing yourself up. There's no way for you to breathe when your hands are out at the 60 degree angle. And what are they doing? They go around, and their hands are bandaged, and their feet are bandaged. Those guys would die like flies if it wasn't for the oil that they have available to carry them through those horrible times to preclude their infection. One of them did pass out on them, and that scared them silly, as they were rushing through the crowd there on the news report, trying to get into a doctor. Who would do such an insane thing? It's from Babylon, folks. It's the old custom of the processional, and of doing something that is not found in Scripture in order to punish yourself.

1. **Rosary Beads**

Another favorite of the Romans system that came from Babylon is the rosary – a set of beads. There are so many prayers for bead. Actually, the Roman Catholic Church got it from the Muhammadans. During the Crusades, they would find this on the body of the Muslims, and they realized that the Muslims had inherited this back from Babylon, where they would count their beads and say their prayers. So, the Catholic Church picked it up. It's a system where you mechanically say prayers. You don't have to think about it. It's very similar to a prayer wheel.

1. **Prayer Wheels**

When I was in China during World War II, I would go through temples of the priests and the Lama temples, and there were these big wheels with pieces of paper on them. People had written prayers and put them on it, and you walked by and gave the wheel a turn. Every time the wheel turns, one of your prayers is gone up to your God. This is crazy, but they do it. And the rosary is that again. This violates the doctrine of principle that people think that God says, "Don't think I'm going to listen to you by your much speaking." That's why I'm very uncomfortable with people who come and say, "I'm going to pray for an hour." You ask them, "What are you going to pray for?" They way, "Well, I have these three things." How long is it going to take you to present those three things to God? An hour? So, I know what you're going to be doing in that hour. You're going to be doing just like the Bible says that the priests and the Pharisees thought that they could be heard by God because of: "Their much babbling and speaking."

1. **The Sacred Heart**

The Roman Catholic Church took the rosary system directly from paganism. Along with it comes the Sacred Heart. In the ancient world, the heart of the deity was considered sacred. In the images of Catholicism of the mother and child, the child is often holding a heart, and the heart is the place of love, so the child holding the heart came to be viewed as the God of love, and was given the name Cupid. And since Cupid is really a reincarnation of Nimrod, and Nimrod was a great hunter, Cupid is also given bows and arrows in those pictures. That's why you see Cupid today with his bows and arrows. And when he shoots the bows and the arrows, the poets say that he's shooting of an arrow of love into you. Now, you know where all that is celebrated.

1. **Cupid**

That's the pagan practice of Saint Valentine's Day in our culture today. It came right out of Babylon – shooting Cupid's arrows into your heart, so that you will fall in love with some kind of a person that you wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole. But the heart was venerated by the pagans as a symbol of their sun-god. And because it was a sun-god, it was also attached with a flame.

1. **The Flame**

When Mr. Danish and I visited in Paris the last time we went to the great cathedral high up on the mount, Sacré-Cour, the Church of the Sacred Heart. And when you walked in, there was this huge picture of Christ in Mosaic, and it glowed and glittered. And there was this sacred heart, and it was just glowing and moving. Now, for a pagan, that's awesome stuff. There was this glowing flame. The Catholic sitting there didn't understand it. They didn't know that they were in part of a Babylonian system, and that the heart of their God was a sacred object, which would bring them merit and blessing. And because the sun was their god, this heart was glowing with the light and the flame of the sun. But we knew what it meant. And as you walked around and looked at it from different angles, there was this Christ looking down on you with His glowing heart. Don't miss a visit to Sacré-Cour the next time you're in Paris.

The Sacred Heart is everywhere in Catholic homes. You'll see this picture of Jesus, and there's His heart infringed upon His breast. The heart of Nimrod, the ancient writings tell us, was saved when he was cut up, and it was cut up and passed around, and considered one of the most powerful objects of faith and of special power that could come to them. The Roman Catholic Church today venerates the same flaming sacred heart that Nimrod originated. It is devoted to the sacred heart of Jesus. This is gross paganism, and it is to be found no place in the Word of God.

So, when we read in the book of the Revelation that Babylon is going to be crushed and destroyed by the wrath of God, you better believe that's exactly what's going to happen. Why? I hope that now you have a little better picture of why God is so angry, and why God calls the Babylon religious system that will be in place in the tribulation (as it is in place in Catholicism today) a harlot religion. It is spiritual adultery. It is a vileness inconceivable to a holy God, and all springing off from His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The sinless God-man who has done so much for mankind is degraded by the Babylonian system that people have been willing to accept because they don't know the Word of God.

The most tiresome people in the world are those who don't know the Word of God. And the most tiresome Christians in the world are those who don't attend church regularly, because they don't know the Word of God. They think they do. They don't make connections. They can't even take the doctrines they know and make connections in their lives so that they're going in the right direction. It is the encouragement; it is the reinforcement; and, it is the gathering, as the book of Hebrews says: "That you are not to neglect these public instruction times. Here is where your batteries get charged, and your mentality gets oriented to the real world. May God help us have a new appreciation for the fact that, but for the grace of God, you and I could be believing all of this nonsense. Don't think it's because there's something special about us. There isn't. He just looked down at that mass of lost humanity, and He led a bunch of them go right off into Mohammedanism (into Islam); a bunch of them off into Catholicism; off into the religions of the east; and, off into the New Age. But all of a sudden, He said, "You – I want you out of that system of Satan. I want you to come and be in My family.

I've also learned that within the Christian community, there are some people who become like Peter, James, and John. Only three men were in the inner circle with the Lord Jesus Christ. The rest of them, except for the traitor, were all godly men, and they all had an impact upon the world, but they never really walked close to the Lord. I know why people don't attend church regularly. I know why people go about their lives, and the things of God are very secondary unless they have something to gain by pretending to be religious. It is because they're not in the inner circle. So, they're in; they're out; they're up; and, they're down. When they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, those are the tears that are going to be coming down those cheeks as they realize how stupid they were.

You've been preserved from the grossest of the paganism of Nimrod's world, but do not squander that now by wasting your life, and by not keeping yourself charged with the knowledge of the Word of God, by your association with the things of God, and by putting Him first in your life and in your service. That's where it's at. You will never regret that for all eternity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1992

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