

Historical Overview of Dan 11:29-35

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Introduction

The object of this paper is to apply Dan 11:29-35 to history in a responsible and detailed manner. Any application of these verses, regardless what school of thought it represents, must have a timeframe and answer questions as to the relative sequence of events within the passage. The way in which I propose facing these seemingly external challenges is by turning inward to the text of the passage. I submit that when we take what the angel is saying to Daniel in this section together with what he has said before, considering the form as well as the content of the narrative, that an application will emerge naturally from our study.

The question of which era in history provides the timeframe for vss. 29-35 is best answered in light of vss. 16-28. If we place the cross at the center of the middle third of the chapter and allow events on either side of vs. 22 to place the historical fact of the crucifixion in its proper context, then at vs. 29 we are ready to move on to a later era, i.e., an era later than that of the crucifixion. I have argued elsewhere that the three major sections of Dan 11 follow each other in time.¹ After a passing allusion to Persia (vs. 2), roughly one third of the chapter is devoted to events during the Hellenistic period (vss. 3-15), one third to events under Rome (vss. 16-28), and one third to events during and after the breakup of the Roman Empire (vss. 29-45). Thus, what the angel said would happen has in fact actually happened--not in some distant or obscure way but in a manner that can be documented without aid of sectarian bias from the shelves of any library which has historical resources adequate to the task.²

Once it is agreed that vss. 29-35 describe real historical events after the cross, i.e., during the last 2000 years, there are still important questions to be answered as regards mapping the passage onto time. Again, the answer must be allowed to emerge naturally from the structure of the passage. There are three blocs of verses within vss. 29-35. I suggest that these blocs--and not the individual verses or clauses within them--represent the unit of temporal progression. It is imperative that this concept be understood if we wish to make any substantial headway in applying Dan 11 to history. Each bloc follows the one before it historically, but verses within blocs may not. At each point, then, the question must be, What is a unit of text? A unit of text is a unit of time. The one follows from the other and in this way the application grows out of the passage. But we must understand what a unit of text is, whether we are dealing with sections, subsections, blocs, or whatever. Nor is this some sort of academic exercise reserved for scholars. It is a tool that lay Bible students can also learn to use and appreciate.

In terms of the historical application I propose below, the three main blocs of verses within Dan 11:29-35 correspond respectively to (1) the period of the Roman Empire's disintegration and the church's struggle to assert itself, (2) the period of the Roman church's ecclesiastical authority that characterizes the thousand years of the middle ages from roughly A.D. 500 to 1500, and (3) the Protestant Reformation.

I am not unaware that models for Dan 11 abound which take Antiochus Epiphanes as their starting point.³ There are two reasons for the ongoing popularity of Antiochus. One is exegetical in nature. If a preponderance of attention is focused on Antiochus, the claim for a predictive element in the prophecy does not arise and can be ignored. This is a major point but it is not the only one. The second is on a more subjective level. Any interpretation that confines itself to the distant past (the preterist approach), or which divides the application between the distant past and the near future (the futurist approach), has the effect of excluding from the discussion any reference to the Christian church. But what would God be expected to have any greater interest in than His believing people on earth during this time? Any interpretation that omits God's own focus of special attention as a precondition for understanding His vision of the future is fundamentally and irreparably flawed. The net effect in either case is to interpret the prophecy without facing the natural implications of what the prophecy says. In it God has some good things to say. He also has some bad things to say. But good or bad, whatever it is, we must allow Him to speak or risk standing in opposition to His will.

If we bring Dan 11:29-35 and 36-39 together with such other passages as Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:3-4; Rev 2:20-23; 17:3-6, and if we acknowledge that what Paul predicted would happen in 2 Thess 2:3-4 is true and can now be verified as history, we are raising more than historical issues. Antiochus has no modern constituency; the church that dominated western European affairs for a thousand years of the present era does. Delicacy cries out for the past to remain cloaked in silence. But the prophecy cries out for it to be carefully examined and understood. The two goals are at odds with each other and cannot be entirely reconciled. There is a point beyond which one cannot have it both ways. Below I attempt to draw connections between the text of Dan 11:29-35 and the known data of historical evidence. It is not my purpose to be inflammatory. And yet, on the other hand, I do not endeavor to keep the prophecy from saying what it obviously says.

Outlining the Passage

As a first approximation we could divide the present passage as vss. 29-30, 31-32, and 33-35. A problem with this arrangement, however, is that one part of vs. 30 completes a previous thought and the last part begins another. The division of verses does not correspond exactly to the flow of thought. The most natural outline would be vss. 29-30b, 30c-32, and 33-35.

Structure of the passage

Daniel 11:29-35 outlines very cleanly. As we attempt to understand the sequence of events across blocs this fact will be of invaluable assistance. See text exhibit 1.

Text Exhibit 1
Text of The Passage

Prologue

"At the appointed time" (vs. 29a)

Bloc 1: Nonchiastic

- A "he will invade the South again," (vs. 29b)
- B "but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before." (vs. 29c)
- A' "Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him," (vs. 30a)
- B' "and he will lose heart." (vs. 30b)

Bloc 2: Chiastic

- A "Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant." (vs. 30c)
- B "He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant." (vs. 30d)
- C "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice." (vs. 31a)
- C' "Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation." (vs. 31b)
- B' "With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the holy covenant," (vs. 32a)
- A' "but the people who know their God will firmly resist him." (vs. 32b)

Bloc 3: Chiastic

- A "Those who are wise will instruct many," (vs. 33a)
- B "though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered." (vs. 33b)
- B' "When they fall, they will receive a little help," (vs. 34a)
- A' "and many who are not sincere will join them." (vs. 34b)

Epilogue

"Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time." (vs. 35)

The entire passage has been quoted. We now summarize its essential features. Notice that there is a prologue (vs. 29a) and an epilogue (vs. 35), both of which deal with time. See table 1.

Table 1
Essential Features of the Passage

Clause	Topic	Text
Prologue Relating to Time		
Bloc 1: Earlier Events		
Self		
A	Aggression	"he will invade" (<i>ûbā' bannégeb</i>)
B	Results	"different from . . . before"
Other		
A'	Aggression	"[they] will oppose him" (<i>ûbā'û</i>)
B'	Results	"he will lose heart"
Bloc 2: Middle Events		
A	Covenant (+)	"holy covenant"
B	Covenant (-)	"those who forsake the covenant"
C	Temple	"temple fortress"
C'	Temple	"abomination of desolation"
B'	Covenant (-)	"those who have violated the covenant"
A'	Covenant (+)	"the people who know their God"
Bloc 3: Later Events		
Self		
A	Resistance	"[the wise] will instruct many"
B	Results	"they will fall by the sword"
Other		
B'	Results	"they will receive a little help"
A'	Resistance	"many . . . will join them"
Epilogue Relating to Time		

Next consider the inner-most bloc of verses (vss. 30c-32). Both "the holy covenant" (i.e., those people who keep the covenant) (a, vs. 30c) and "the people who know their God" (a', vs. 32a) represent a positive orientation to the covenant. Both "those who forsake the holy covenant" (b, vs. 30d) and "those who have violated the covenant" (b', vs. 32a) represent a negative orientation to the covenant. And the facts that "he will desecrate the temple fortress" (c, vs. 31a) and that "he will set up the abomination that causes desolation" (c', vs. 31b) represent facts about the temple as the focus of covenant-based worship.

A minor point, but one which confirms the proposed outline, is that the b clauses (b, b') have a singular subject ("he"), while the c clauses (c, c') have a plural subject ("they"). Thus, "He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant" (vs. 30c) and "With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant" (vs. 32a). But "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice" (vs. 31a) and "Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation (vs. 31b).

I should emphasize here that what makes the first clause ("Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant" [vs. 30b]) positive is the nature of its reference to "the holy covenant." Venting fury (clause a) is not the same as showing favor (clause b). And in the same way, whatever "the holy covenant" means in clause a, it contrasts with "those who forsake the holy covenant" in clause b. Thus, the one group does (b), and the other does not (a), forsake the covenant. Not forsaking the covenant is a positive thing. This is why I say that

the a clauses (a, a') are positive, while the b and c clauses (b, b'; c, c') are negative. See table 2 (below).

Table 2
Overview of Bloc 2: Dan 11:30c-32

Clause	Topic	Orientation	Text
A	Covenant	Positive	"holy covenant"
B	Covenant	Negative	"those who forsake the covenant"
C	Temple	Negative	"temple fortress"
C'	Temple	Negative	"abomination of desolation"
B'	Covenant	Negative	"those who have violated the covenant"
A'	Covenant	Positive	"the people who know their God"

I have suggested that Dan 11:29-35 has three main blocs of text--introduced with a prologue and followed by an epilogue, both of which have to do with time--and that the longer middle bloc (as shown in table 2) is surrounded by two shorter ones, i.e., the outer blocs form an inclusio around the inner bloc. Notice also that the number of clauses within blocs (four, then six, then four) is chiasmic and supports the above argument. There can be no question as to the literary form of the passage before us. It is entirely straightforward and clear. See table 3.

Table 3
Structural Summary of Dan 11:29-35

Clause	Verses	Function	Form	Other
A	29a	Prologue	Nonchiasmic	Deals with time
B	29b-30b	Bloc 1	Nonchiasmic	Four clauses
C	30c-32	Bloc 2	Chiasmic	Six clauses
B'	33-34	Bloc 3	Chiasmic	Four clauses
A'	35	Epilogue	Nonchiasmic	Deals with time

Literary form must influence
historical application

Knowing what an author is saying goes far beyond knowing what each of his words or sentences means in isolation. The form of the argument is just as much a part of what one says as the elements he uses when putting it forward. In the present case, granting that there are three main blocs of text (B [vss. 29-30b], C [vss. 30c-32], B' [vss. 33-34]), I submit that bloc B occurs earlier than C and bloc C occurs earlier than B'. But within blocs the order of statements is determined by literary rather than historical considerations, as described above.

Time flows between blocs. In both the prologue (vs. 29a) and the epilogue (vs. 35) there are expressions relating to time. In fact both passages use identically the same expression "'at the appointed time'" (*lanmô'ed*). In addition the epilogue contains a reference to "'the time of the end'" (*'ad-ēt qēš*, lit. "until [the] time of [the] end")--an expression that is repeated in vs. 40 (*ûb'ēt qēš*, lit. "and in [the] time of [the] end"). Thus, the passage both begins and ends at a time that God has determined in advance, and certain events occur between these two points which span

the distance between them. There is a definite starting point, a flow of events, and a definite ending point, bringing us up to the "time of the end."⁴

The potential hostility of the king of the North becomes apparent only gradually and so does the challenge to it from "Those who are wise" (*maskilê ʿām* "the wise of the people" or Maskilim) in vs. 33a. First the king rises to power and then he is opposed by those who refuse to accept his authority. But what he does cannot be challenged until he has done it. The sequence between bloc 3 and blocs 1 and 2 must be preserved. See fig. 1.

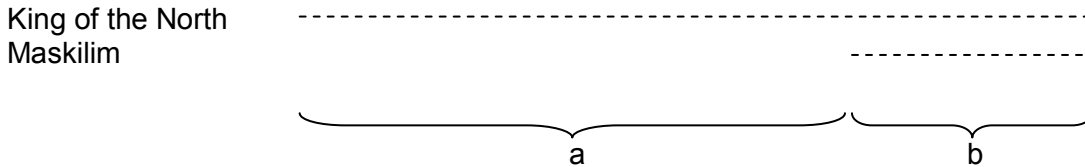


Fig. 1. The "abomination of desolation" is in force throughout (ab). Toward the end of this period the king of the North is opposed by the Maskilim (b).

But the struggle in the chapter is not primarily between the king of the North and the Maskilim. It is between the king of the North and the king of the South. The king of the North struggles first against the king of the South (a). After that he rules unopposed (b). It is not until later that he is challenged by the Maskilim or "wise" (c). My point is that these events occur at different times and in a set order. See fig. 2.

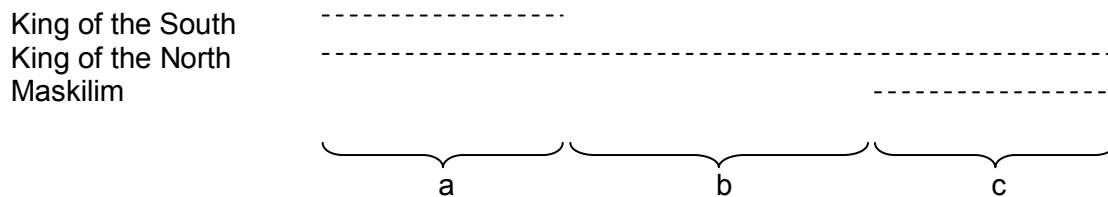


Fig. 2. The "abomination of desolation" is in force throughout (ac). Opposition to the king of the North is concentrated toward the beginning (a) and toward the end (c) of the period.

The king of the North remains in power throughout the period in question. The Maskilim cannot displace him and therefore remain in a defensive posture. But their challenge is real. Here, as so often before, we have North vs. South with God's people also in view.⁵ The cast changes but the roles do not.

Time does not flow within blocs. While there is a clear flow of time from bloc to bloc, within blocs it is futile to look for such relationships. In bloc 2, for example, the order of clauses is very clearly determined by literary rather than historical facts. See table 4.

Table 4
Overview Of Bloc 2: Dan 11:30c-32
(Restatement)

Clause	Topic	Orientation
First Half of Bloc		
A	Covenant (1)	Positive (+)
B	Covenant (1)	Negative (-)
C	Temple (2)	Negative (-)
Second Half of Bloc		
C'	Temple (2)	Negative (-)
B'	Covenant (1)	Negative (-)
A'	Covenant (1)	Positive (+)

The activity reported in this section's middle bloc (vss. 30c-32) did happen historically but did not happen first with reference to the covenant in a positive sense and then with reference to the covenant in a negative sense--with similar events occurring in reverse order as the period draws to a close. Nor is it the case that the temple remains unaffected until the middle of the period, such that the covenant is affected first and the temple separately at a later time. The covenant is preserved and implemented in the temple (Heb 8:1). Anything that affects the one must also affect the other. So in fact things that affect both the covenant and the temple are happening simultaneously right from the start. Literary sequence and historical sequence are closely related between blocs but largely independent of each other within blocs.

Along these same lines, the "abomination that causes desolation" is not mentioned until vs. 31b. The act of setting up or initiating the abomination, however, is a starting point of some sort. We must not take its place toward the center of the chiasm as a basis for arguing that the corresponding events do not occur until the middle of the period historically. It is set up at the outset. More than this, the act of setting it up is evidence that the period in question has begun. Thus, it goes hand in hand with the king's "fury against the holy covenant" (vs. 30c) and his "favor to those who forsake the holy covenant" (vs. 30d). Within the bloc clauses have literary reasons for being arranged as they are and these neither follow from nor are they consistent with a sequence based on historical information. The two types of sequence must be carefully distinguished. Each has its role to play in the chapter, but they are different roles. This same principle, illustrated here with examples from vss. 30c-32, applies with equal force to the outer blocs of that section and to other sections. Within Dan 11 it has general applicability.

The Fall of the Empire in the West

"At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. (30) Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart." (Dan 11:29-30b)

The predicate "will invade" in vs. 29b is translated from the same Hebrew elements that underlie the words "will oppose" in vs. 30a. In the one case the Hebrew reads *yāšûb ûbā' bannégeb* (lit. "he will return and he will come to the South"); in the other case it reads *ûbâ'û bô* (lit. "and they [the ships of Kittim] will come to him"). The essential comparison is between "he

will come to (or against)" (vs. 29a) and "they will come to (or against)" (vs. 30a). The grammatical subjects of these two clauses are of course different, but the actions they perform are the same. Thus, if the king of the South "opposed" the king of the North, we could say that the king of the North also "opposed" the king of the South. If the king of the North "invaded" the territory of the king of the South, we could also say that the king of the South "invaded" the territory of the king of the North. The text does not allow us to infer who the aggressor might have been but merely asserts that North and South are once more in conflict.

There is another point to notice. In vs. 29, where the king of the North "will invade the South [*ûbā? bannégeb*] again," the implication is that during at least some of the years that lead up to and prepare the way for vs. 29 the king of the North will not invade the South. No conflict arises between these two powers because the king of the North is in complete and absolute control of the situation. His authority is beyond challenge. The renewal of mutual conflict between North and South in vs. 29, therefore, signals an important change in the relative status of the king of the North. It is a point that deserves emphasis. At the beginning of this section the king is no longer so strong as he once was. His former invincibility has left him.

The application must fall within
the centuries after Christ

No devious logic is required to apply the above verses to history. The king of the North at the time of Christ's birth and death was pagan Rome, corresponding to the legs of iron in the vision of Dan 2. For centuries afterward Rome enjoyed a position of international supremacy that was without equal.

After defeating Antony at Actium in 31 B.C. Octavian was the undisputed master of the Mediterranean world. As regards his land forces, "After Actium Augustus seems to have picked twenty-eight legions out of the fifty-odd at his disposal, disbanding the rest."⁶ And as regards his navy, "After Actium he had 400 vessels of his own to which he now could add roughly 300 of Antony's ships. Ten of these, including Antony's flagship, were dedicated to Actian Apollo; others were burned or scrapped as surplus; the remainder were sent to Forum Iulii on the south coast of Gaul, which had been used as a naval base against Sextus Pompey."⁷

In peacetime the galleys patrolled their rivers to ensure that barbarians came across to trade only at designated points; to keep the manpower busy sailors also made bricks for forts and in Britain worked in iron mines and on Hadrian's Wall.⁸

There was a civil war after the death of Nero (A.D. 68), from which Vespasian emerged as emperor. "Thereafter the Empire passed through decades of internal peace until the end of the second century, when civil war was again to erupt."⁹ Many different men would rule Rome over the years that followed and sometimes their personal fortunes changed rapidly.¹⁰ But Rome itself was entirely secure. For the Roman king of the North to be forced into activity against a new king of the South signals a dramatic change of circumstances.

We need be in no doubt as to what the change was. In the fourth and especially in the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era Rome began crumbling under the pressure of barbarian attacks.

For the most part the barbarian tribes which harassed Rome during the early Christian centuries came from the lands beyond the Danube, which lie north and east from Italy. The

prophecy does not mention these places at all but rather speaks about a challenge from the South, which in order to be south from Italy would have to come by sea.¹¹

"Ships of Kittim will oppose him"

When the king "invade[s] the South again" (vs. 29a) what he confronts there are "Ships of Kittim" (vs. 30a, margin). NIV proposes "Ships of the western coastlands," but this rendering is too free to have lasting value. The Hebrew says *šiyyîm kittîm* (lit. "ships of Kittim"). Thus, the marginal reading is preferable as a translation but leaves open the question of who or what Kittim might represent. Historically Kittim was

One of the sons of Javan (Gn. 10:4 = 1 Ch. 1:7; Heb. *kittîm*) whose descendants settled on the island of Cyprus where their name was given to the town of Kition, modern Larnaka, which is referred to in the Phoenician inscriptions as *kt* or *kty*. They engaged in sea trade (Nu.24:24), and the name seems to have come to apply then in a more general way to the coastlands and islands of the E Mediterranean (*šiyyê kittiyîm*: Je. 2:10; Ezek. 27:6). The ostraca of c. 600 BC from Arad refer to *ktym*, probably mercenaries, principally perhaps Greeks, from the islands and coastlands.¹²

So starting with a single person (a son of Javan),¹³ we next have a group of his descendants, then a city associated with but not limited to that group, then the island where the city was located, and finally the coastlands and islands of the whole eastern Mediterranean.¹⁴ The pattern here is one of increasing generality. That is the point to notice. It would be consistent with this fact to apply the Hebrew phrase *šiyyîm kittîm* "ships of Kittim" in a general sense to people coming from distant places. What identifies the group in question is not the reference to Kittim but the reference to ships.

It is during the course of a southern offensive that the king confronts these ships. The king's southern campaign and his confrontation with the ships of Kittim are one and the same thing. It is not that he comes from North to South, and that the ships come from West to South, in such a way that the two meet in territory alien to both parties. On the contrary, what we are dealing with is a classic example of North-South conflict, which characterizes the entire chapter. The king's southern campaign and the ships' northern campaign are one and the same thing. The king of the North is here being challenged by a king of the South who does his fighting primarily on the sea. When we apply this passage to history, our application will have to take this fact into account.

"And he will lose heart"

If a Roman king of the North is in view here, not only is Rome vulnerable once more to external attack at this time in its history but, under one interpretation, it suffers defeat. That there could be more than one opinion on whether or not it was defeated is itself most interesting.¹⁵

Barbarians attack the Empire. Under Constantine the military grand strategy of the Roman Empire began to undergo a far-reaching transformation. Previously the army had been thinly deployed at an extended series of permanent border outposts; now it started being concentrated in a few urban centers. It had been stationary before, but now the emphasis was on mobility. More emphasis on mobility meant less emphasis on infantry, which had always

been the central component of the Roman military but moved slowly; and as the foot soldier declined in importance a correspondingly greater amount of attention was given to mounted troops. Earlier emperors had attempted to achieve "preclusive security"; later ones would base their planning on the concept of a strong "central reserve."¹⁶ These are not insignificant changes and some suggest that the military disasters which would eventually cause the downfall of the Empire can be directly attributed to them.¹⁷

With the borders of the Empire less firmly defended, barbarians found them easier to cross and began doing so in larger numbers and with greater frequency than before. Having entered Roman territory against the emperor's wishes they were routinely welcomed into his army.¹⁸ If this policy seems odd, there were a number of reasons for it. First, residents of the empire had always been subject to military service. When invaders became residents it was only natural that they should incur this same liability. Second, barbarians left idle would find unpredictable ways to occupy themselves. Taking them into the army in large numbers was an effective means of control. And third, any ruler, given a preference, would rather expose foreigners to the dangers of war than native sons. So there were always sizable groups of allies (Latin *allia*, Greek *alloi*, "others") in any Roman army,¹⁹ as there were also in the barbarian armies they were required to fight against.²⁰

During the *Völkerwanderung* or Migration Period, groups that entered and fought against Rome include the Alamanni, Alans, Angles, Avars, Burgundians, Franks, Goths (both Visigoths and Ostrogoths), Heruls, Huns, Jutes, Lombards, Saxons, Sueves, and Vandals--for example. Of the above peoples all but the Alans, Avars, and Huns were Germanic and came ultimately from an area north and east of the Rhine.²¹

The Alans were of Iranian origin²² and are best remembered as allies of the Vandals.²³ Earlier they, like the Vandals and the Goths, had been allies of the Huns in the area above the Black Sea.²⁴ The Huns, arguably, are to be identified with the Hsiung-nu people of Mongolia, who had enjoyed one of the longer lasting steppe empires in the region before migrating west. The Avars came from Mongolia also and settled in Hungary. Before leaving Mongolia the Avars had been known as the Juan-juan (Jwen-Jwen) people.²⁵

Thus, the Alans, Avars, and Huns are exceptions to an otherwise useful rule that the barbarian groups which first overran and then possessed themselves of the Roman Empire during the fifth and sixth centuries after Christ were of Germanic origin. Earlier we witnessed the Celticization of Europe;²⁶ now we have the sequel. The fall of the Empire can be identified roughly with the establishment of Germanic kingdoms throughout Europe.²⁷

The Vandals, Alans, Heruls, Visigoths, and Ostrogoths entered the Empire by crossing the Danube. The Alamanni, Burgundians, Franks, Lombards, Sueves, and others entered the Empire by crossing the Rhine. The Saxons, accompanied by Angles and Jutes,²⁸ entered the Empire by crossing the English Channel.²⁹ The Empire invaded by the above groups did not merely collapse under its own weight. It was crushed militarily.³⁰ But a question remains as to what all of this has to do with ships and with the South.

Arius attacks the deity of Christ. During the late third and early fourth centuries a man named Arius lived and taught in the city of Alexandria in Egypt. This is earlier than the period under review but his thought had a profound influence on later events, as we shall see.

Arius taught that Christ, as the Son of God, was inferior to the Father and therefore did not coexist with the Father through all eternity.³¹ Identifying which factors most heavily influenced Arius' thinking as he developed his Christological theory has been extensively debated by scholars.³²

Professor Stead observes correctly that one would be mobilizing pure abstractions were one to pretend to decide between Plato and Aristotle as masters of Arius' thought. At the time of Arius, "the choice lay between Platonists who accepted and Platonists who denounced the contribution of Aristotle or of the Stoics; between the tradition of Aristotle and that of Atticus." Arius was therefore in any case influenced by Alexandrian Platonism of the third and fourth centuries A.D.³³

Also fundamental to informed Christian debate in Alexandria was the work of Philo the Jew (lived c. 30 B.C.-A.D. 40). And a number of Christian masters of the Alexandrian catetical school were noted theologians whose teaching brought renown to that institution. Their number includes, but is not limited to, Pantaenus (c. 180-89), Clement (189-202), Origen (202-32), Heraclas (232-48), and Dionysius (248-65).³⁴ Over and above all such influences there is a component of genuine originality in Arius' work.³⁵ But the one man who appears to have had the greatest impact on Arius was the Platonic philosopher Plotinus.³⁶

Whatever may have been the situation of the variations at the heart of Christian Platonism of Alexandria, Arius thus appears placed in a line of theologians who interpreted Old Testament monotheism according to the example of Philo, preoccupied above all with transposing into the language of Plato the biblical dogma *par excellence*, that of a unique God who is author of all things.³⁷

At issue was the philosophical concept of singularity or oneness. Here was common ground on which the theoretical foundation laid by Plato could be borrowed and applied so to resolve problems arising from Christian theology. In retrospect it is safe to say that the Christology of Arius was more a product of Greek thought than of Hebrew thought. Its categories are not those of prophets but of philosophers. Thus, we read of "the rigorous logic and precise terminology of Arius"³⁸ and that his theory was "intensely technical and appropriate to the level of systematic thought."³⁹ His system was not a biblical theology but a philosophical theology with which he hoped to resolve certain problems of biblical interpretation.

After we have given Arius all the respect that his intellectual accomplishments deserve, it must still be realized that the effects of his work were entirely harmful. His powerful mind was used to undermine the truth of Christ's deity, which is solidly biblical and needs no undermining. This truth is the jugular vein of the Christian religion. Arius lived at the time of Diocletian's persecution (A.D. 303-13) and so it is not my purpose to question his sincerity.⁴⁰ But within his teaching are the seeds of an attack on the deity of Christ that has proved much more effective than any Diocletian was able to devise. It is one that he plants within our own minds. "Before He was begotten He was not" (*kai ouk ēn prin genētai*).⁴¹ The logic is completely clear--and completely wrong.

The barbarians accept Arian Christianity. Before long the logic and human reasoning that gave Arius' ideas their force were augmented by support of a more tangible variety. During the reign of Valens (364-78) a body of Goths led by Fritigern solicited the emperor's help and in return agreed to accept his religion.⁴² As it happens Valens was an Arian.⁴³ From this starting point of imperial support Arianism spread to most of the other barbarian tribes that would

eventually confront the Empire. This combination of heresy and arms had its impact in both a military and a religious context and both need to be appreciated.

I should clarify that the barbarians who brought about the downfall of the western Roman Empire did not generally persecute their Catholic subjects. Their invasions cannot be thought of as religious crusades against the Catholic Romans. But if, over the centuries, they had retained both their Arianism and their control, in a manner similar to that of the Muslims who would later invade Syria and Egypt, not to mention North Africa--all of which had been strongly Christian before--the history of medieval Europe might read far differently from what it does. In the actual event each tribe that had espoused Arianism before either fell from power or was converted to Catholicism.

Thus, before the sixth century was over the pagan Heruls, some of whom had supported Odovacar in Italy, ceased to have any national existence.⁴⁴ The Arian Vandals and the Arian Ostrogoths achieved a more dramatic exit, being expelled forcibly from Libya and Italy respectively. The Heruls never became Christians and the Vandals and Ostrogoths never became Catholic Christians, but after the sixth century all three groups vanished from history.

Elsewhere the barbarians' influence lived on, as, for example, in such familiar place names as France (ruled by Franks), England (ruled by Angles), Swabia in Bavaria (ruled by the Alamanni and Sueves),⁴⁵ Burgundy in France (ruled by Burgundians),⁴⁶ and Lombardy in Italy (ruled by Lombards). The Arian Visigoths in Spain converted from Arianism to Catholicism in A.D. 589 under Reccared (586-601) but were then swept into the peripheries of the Iberian peninsula by the Muslim conquest in A.D. 711.⁴⁷ In each of these cases the Germanic element remains but Arianism falls away and those who were formerly barbarians accept Catholic Christianity and become incorporated into European society.

It should be pointed out that the Franks were never Arians. From their conversion onward they were Catholics.⁴⁸ Thus, as France became the great champion of Christianity in continental Europe Catholicism once again became its dominant form. Germany east of the Rhine was still pagan until after A.D. 751 and its conversion proceeded slowly. All the while Rome had been coming under the rule of its Catholic bishops. In this way the former Arian bases of power either became Catholic or were temporarily lost to Christianity. Once regained, Spain was ardently Catholic and any new territory gained elsewhere by the church was Catholic from the start. In the end things did not go so badly for the church. But as the events were unfolding it was not at all a foregone conclusion that this would be the case. Arian belief coupled with barbarian arms made a formidable combination when they first appeared together.

The Vandals are unusual in two respects. Like most of the other barbarian groups the Vandals were Arian Christians. There are two areas, however, in which they were unusual and deserve special notice. The other barbarian groups did their fighting on land,⁴⁹ but once the Vandals took possession of Carthage (October 19, 439) they transformed themselves into the most formidable naval power in the western Mediterranean. And while barbarians generally had a reputation for tolerance in matters touching religion,⁵⁰ the Vandals persecuted Libyan Catholics with concerted determination for decades.

Goths had experimented with a military use of ships in the Black Sea in A.D. 257 and in 267-68 there was a series of Gothic-Herul raids into the Aegian--with terrible reprisals by Claudius II (battle of Naissus, A.D. 269).⁵¹ But a century and a half after that, in A.D. 410, when Alaric sacked Rome and tried to lead his men from there southward over into Sicily, he was unable to get his men over the narrow Straits of Messina that separate it from Italy.⁵² And in

A.D. 415, when another group of Goths tried to cross the Straits of Gibraltar, their attempt ended in disaster.⁵³ Goths were not vikings. As a rule they did not understand the sea.

The Vandals and Alans, however, after entering Africa in 429 and capturing Carthage in 439, proceeded to build a powerful navy. By June 455 they were sufficiently confident of their maritime abilities to undertake an expedition against Rome itself. They landed unopposed and spent fourteen profitable days there removing all of the city's movable wealth that they were able to transport.⁵⁴ "Among the plundered treasure the vessels of Solomon's Temple, formerly brought to Rome by Titus, took a conspicuous place."⁵⁵

Sacking Rome does not make the Vandals unique. Alaric's Goths had sacked the city some forty-five years previously. But Alaric's approach to the city had been by land, i.e., from the North. The Vandals came to the city from Carthage in Africa, i.e., from the South--by sea.

The capture of the Empress Eudoxia and her daughters gave the king valuable hostages against the hostile invasion of his kingdom which might now be expected. He was now fully master of the situation; his personality is from this time the centre of Western history. The Vandal fleet ruled the Mediterranean and cut off all supplies from Italy, so that a great famine broke out.⁵⁶

It is difficult to calculate the effect of Africa's loss on the Roman Empire in the West. Strategically it meant the near abandonment of naval action in the western Mediterranean, since the Vandals now had control of the sea, and Aetius in any event never showed Constantius' appreciation of the proper use of naval power. The naval balance of power shifted to the emperor in Constantinople.⁵⁷

These events are significant enough but they are not wholly unique. I have mentioned some early Gothic successes as they and the Heruls went on some joint raids into the Aegian in the third century. As regards persecution also, there are some Gothic precedents. In A.D. 348 and again from 369-72 Goths had persecuted the Christians in their own ranks.⁵⁸ And a suspicion of having persecuted Catholics darkens the memory of Euric (466-84) in Spain, although not all the evidence is clear.⁵⁹

The Vandals, by contrast, persecuted their Catholic subjects vigorously for decades on end. It was ten years after crossing the Straits of Gibraltar in 429 before they captured Carthage, as noted above.⁶⁰ From that time on the city's churches were closed to Catholic services and given over to the Arian clergy together with all the churches' property.

Actually the harm done to the churches is what showed the Vandals their need to master the sea because they expected Roman reprisals for what they had done.⁶¹ So they built ships to prepare for the Roman counter-measures that they were sure would follow. They then attacked Sardinia and Sicily so as to render these islands incapable of supplying corn to Rome in the ensuing conflict. Ultimately the Vandals placed themselves in so strong a position that Rome had to conclude its peace with Gaiseric on terms of equality.⁶² In time they disdained the plunder to be gained on the coasts of the western Empire and turned to the East, ravaging Greece itself.⁶³

On Gaiseric's death (January 25, 477) his son Huneric became king. For a time he seemed willing to make concessions in the area of religion. A Catholic bishop was even permitted in Carthage (481). But then there was a change for the worse.

Among some of the measures taken by him the most important is the notorious Edict of 24 January 484, in which the king ordered that the edicts made by the Roman Emperors against heresy should be applied to all his Catholic subjects unless they adopted Arianism by 1 June in that year. Next orthodox priests were forbidden to hold religious services, to possess churches or build new ones, to baptise, consecrate and so forth, and they were especially forbidden to reside in any towns or villages. The property of all Catholic churches and the churches themselves were bestowed on the Arian clergy. Laymen were disabled from making or receiving gifts or legacies; court officials of the Catholic creed were deprived of their dignity and declared infamous. For the several classes of the people graduated money-fines were established according to rank; but in case of persistence all were condemned to transportation and confiscation of property. Huneric gave the execution of these provisions into the hands of the Arian clergy, who carried out the punishments threatened with the most revolting cruelty, and even went beyond them. Repeated intervention on the part of the Emperor and the Pope remained quite ineffectual, for they confined themselves to representations. Perhaps Catholicism might have been quite rooted out in Africa if the king had not died prematurely on 23 December 484.⁶⁴

Huneric was followed on the throne by Gunthamund. In 487 the churches reopened and the banished priests were recalled. But when he was succeeded on September 3, 496 by Thrasamund, the bishops were exiled again.

The real persecutions began first under Huneric [477-84] and were continued, after an interval of peace, by Gunthamund [484-96] and Thrasamund [496-523], though in a milder form. Hilderic [523-30] gave the Catholic Church its complete freedom again; his successor Gelimer [530-33], an ardent Arian, was too much occupied with political complications to be able to be active in that sphere.⁶⁵

On September 14, 533 Justinian's general Belisarius entered Carthage and the Vandal political experiment in Africa was effectively at an end. After their defeat in Africa the Vandals are never heard from again. Together with the Heruls and the Ostrogoths they were, in Daniel's words, "uprooted" (Dan 7:8).

The Vandals were at once the only barbarian state to attack Rome by sea and to persecute Catholicism in a notable manner. These facts are important for a number of reasons. The combination of ships (to attack the Roman state) and persecution (to attack the Roman church) focuses attention on the peculiar relationship between church and state that would later characterize the object of these attacks. It also shows that the prophecy is not so much interested in Rome as the seat of an empire (by this time Byzantium was the seat of the Empire) as in Rome itself--as a city. The city's history was not over in the sixth century. The fame and power that we remember most vividly had hardly begun then. But when it did finally emerge it did so as a mixture of religious and political influences. Thus, it is peculiarly appropriate that the prophecy should single out that one attacker of Rome which exhibited both political and religious hostility.⁶⁶

The Rise of the Church in the West

"Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant.

(31) "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. (32) With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him." (Dan 11:30c-32)

Below it will be necessary to discuss a wide range of historical facts about Rome, by which I mean there are some that we cannot avoid discussing. We might wish to let some things simply fade from memory. But since the Roman Catholic church sees itself as being, in a special sense, the preserver of the past, it is not unfair to ask that church to meet its past honestly.⁶⁷

I want to be clear at the outset that I am not using past abuses to indict people who never did the things we discuss. The kindly Irish priest who plays basketball with the teenagers in his parish is not the object of my remarks. Nor is the devout Polish family in Chicago or New York that has drawn its spiritual life blood from the mass for generations. I am not talking about points of theological disagreement at all. These have been summarized elsewhere.⁶⁸ Instead I am talking about the inherent wrongness of a system that mixes civil authority with religious authority and the disastrous results of bringing these two incompatible elements together over an extended period of time. The fact that now and again there has been a pope who apparently had sufficient strength of character to rise above the corrupting nature of such influences is not evidence that the system itself is good or that it is what God had in mind for His church. The system is bad in the degree that it combines church and state precisely because it combines them. This fact will remain whether good people or bad people administer it and regardless what they might have believed or taught.

The weakness of Rome during the mid-sixth century

The history of the church in the West and of western Europe itself from the sixth century to the sixteenth are indistinguishable; they are not two but one. The body of material that could be presented on this topic vastly exceeds the scope of the present paper, and yet I do want to show that over time Christian Rome grew from insignificance to a position of great authority.

During the present engagement between North and South "the outcome will be different from what it was before" (Dan 11:29). This is how NIV renders the passage. The Hebrew says *w^olō^o tihyeh kārī^ošōnâ w^okā^oah^orōnâ*, which means literally, "and it will not be as the first or as the last," or alternatively, "as before or as after." It is not the case that the present (i.e., "after") is being contrasted only with the past (i.e., "before"). Instead the present course of events ("it") is being contrasted with both the past ("before") and the future ("after"). There are three items in the comparison rather than two. What happens on this occasion is unlike what had happened earlier in history and it is also unlike what would happen later in history. The contrast extends in both directions equally.

Alaric and his band of future Visigoths subjected Rome to a three-day sack in A.D. 410 (August 24-26)⁶⁹ and forty-five years later (June 455) Gaiseric again sacked the city, this time

for fourteen days.⁷⁰ Amazingly it is said that no blood was shed on either occasion.⁷¹ But however this may be, shortly after the Vandal outrage Odovacar, a Scirian Goth, made himself king of Italy (August 23, 476).⁷² Odovacar's takeover was not an invasion. He did not need to invade because he was already there as part of the Byzantine emperor's defense force, which contained a wide variety of different elements.⁷³ Then in 493 Odovacar was assassinated and Theoderic the Great (493-526) assumed power.

The fact that Rome was temporarily ruled by a Goth (whether Odovacar or Theoderic) instead of by an ethnic Roman can be overemphasized. The year 476, when Odovacar made himself king, does not mark so dramatic a transition after all.⁷⁴ There had been non-Roman rulers before.⁷⁵ So the ethnic origin of Odovacar and Theoderic does not make them unique, nor does it make Rome's situation all that remarkably different from what it had been before. Rome continued to be a great city ruled in ways similar to what it always had been.

In the early sixth century the Empire regained some of its lost ground as Justinian's formidable general Belisarius swept first the Vandals from Libya and then the Goths from Italy. But although the second of these wars turned out well in the end, the struggle was bitter and protracted. For reasons that will become clear below this is a point that requires emphasis.

Belisarius made his way from Libya to Rome by way of Naples. When he finally arrived at Rome in December of A.D. 536, the Goths fled through one gate while he was entering another.⁷⁶ Belisarius then wisely strengthened the city's defenses. In early 537 the Goths came back and mounted a siege, which was not lifted until one year and nine days later, about the time of the spring equinox, in early 538.⁷⁷ Belisarius had successfully recaptured Rome for the Empire. It was a momentous occasion.

Not long afterward, however, the Goths got Rome back again and, realizing how valuable it had been to Belisarius before and would be again if he ever recaptured it, the Gothic king Totila considered razing the city to the ground.⁷⁸

Accordingly he tore down the fortifications in many places so that about one third of the defences were destroyed. And he was on the point also of burning the finest and most noteworthy of the buildings and making Rome a sheep-pasture, but Belisarius learned of his design and sent envoys with a letter to him.⁷⁹

In his letter Belisarius made an eloquent appeal to Totila on behalf of the city of Rome and pointed out that, if it were demolished, the greater damage would not be to the city but to the Gothic ruler's own reputation, causing his name to go down in history blackened with infamy. "And Totila, after reading it over many times and coming to realize accurately the significance of the advice, was convinced and did Rome no further harm."⁸⁰

Instead he took the senators with him, not allowing one soul to remain behind anywhere in the city. For a time Rome was completely and totally depopulated.⁸¹ At length Belisarius returned and reoccupied the shell of this once-great city.⁸² Then Totila himself returned and Belisarius had to defend his position from partially repaired walls without any gates by stationing his troops in the openings where the gates should have been. For several days there were heavy skirmishes around the wall. Finally Totila took his troops elsewhere.⁸³

But this is not the whole story. Rome was captured not once or twice but five times during the course of Justinian's Gothic war.⁸⁴ It had never seen reverses such as these at any

earlier time in its history and they would never occur again. In the early sixth century A.D. Rome reached the very nadir of its existence. Here is the meaning of the clause mentioned earlier, which reads, "but this time it will not be as before [kārīṣōnâ] or as after [w^ēkāʾah^ārōnâ]" (Dan 11:29, literal rendering). Before this Rome had been the capital of an empire. Afterward it would rise to a similar level of prominence again as the seat of western Christianity. But for a brief moment it was left defenseless and entirely devoid of people. There is no lower depth to which it could sink short of ceasing to exist altogether.

The secular greatness of medieval Rome

Over time Rome rose from the ashes of the western Empire to a position of unrivalled authority once again. This fact is well illustrated in the following remarks by Lord Acton.⁸⁵

In the course of the fifth century we find the Popes attending to secular affairs, and exercising great authority, by virtue both of their spiritual character and of the claims which their wealth gave to the people, though without actually interfering in the government of the city. . . . As the strength and prosperity of the empire declined, the property of the Church increased. . . . at the close of the sixth century we find the Popes the richest landowners in Italy. . . . The times were particularly propitious to the development of the influence which was founded on the spiritual authority and on the possessions of the Holy See. . . . In the pragmatic sanction of 554 he [the emperor Justinian] took advantage of the influence which they already de facto possessed, to establish by their means a control over the whole administration of the provinces. They were required to superintend the conduct of the provinces, to report on their wrong-doings, and to act as defenders and advocates of the people. This was at once a portion of the extensive reform by which Justinian restored self-government to the towns and provinces and at the same time an attempt to save the crumbling system of the imperial government, by committing it in great measure to the care of the Church.

. . . the Pope acknowledged the Eastern emperor as his sovereign until the revival of the empire in the West. We have seen that it was no sudden or single act, that it was part of a general analogous movement throughout Italy, and a result not of design, but of necessity; that it was a physiological process rather than a political act. The scene now passes from the Greeks to that of the Franks, in which the situation of the Pope is greatly altered; in which his temporal power receives a vast increase, . . . Pepin invaded Italy in two successive years, and formally gave the exarchate, which he wrested from the Lombards, back to the Pope. By this transaction, his position in Italy was not greatly altered. His authority was established over a territory in which his influence had already been paramount, and in which the imperial authority, long scarcely more than nominal, had expired altogether. . . .

During the three following centuries, the limits of the possessions of the Holy See were, if we except the acquisition of Venaissin and Avignon, not greatly changed, but the extent of their authority constantly varied. They triumphed at last over captivity and the schism; over the emperors, the barons and the republics. . . . It was not, therefore, till the middle of the seventeenth century that the Papal dominions reached their highest point of increase. For more than a century the temporal authority of the Popes remained unchallenged and unaltered, and they enjoyed a period of repose such as they had never known in more Catholic times. Then, at the end of the eighteenth

century, came a period of disaster and decline, of which we have not seen the end nor, we fear, the worst.⁸⁶

In another essay⁸⁷ the same author speaks of the subservience to the papacy of Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, and Croatia; the German kingdom of the Hohenstauffen and the French House of Anjou; Provence, Portugal, and Aragon; England and Ireland; the Isle of Man, the Hebrides, and the Orkneys; Corsica and Sardinia; Ruthenia, Pomerania, and Norway.⁸⁸

The papal system of states gradually extended itself, till in the thirteenth century it reached its culminating point, when its great semicircle encompassed the States of the German Emperors. The Slavs and Magyars of the East had joined the Latin nations of the West, and the Sicilian Empire of the South was the connecting link between them. But after the thirteenth century the East began to detach itself.⁸⁹

Under this arrangement England was saved from becoming a French province by offering itself to the pope. "The king transferred 'spontaneously, and upon the council of his nobles, the two kingdoms of England and Ireland to the Roman See', in order to obtain them again from it as a vassal; . . ."⁹⁰ This is one example. The popes had vassal states from one end of Europe to the other, bound to Rome in a form of voluntary but mutually beneficial alliance. Much of the power and opulence of the old imperial days had now returned, though in a modified form.

Force as an instrument of papal policy before the Reformation

Not all compliance was voluntary. The idea that force was a legitimate resource to draw on in defending and expanding the influence of Christianity was of slow growth. But eventually it became an established fact of Christian thought and was applied in a variety of ways during the middle centuries of our era. At first this had not been so and now again we live in a time when force has become unavailable to the church. But during the Middle Ages using force to support the Christian religion came to be considered a form of piety.⁹¹

Crusades against Muslims in the East. The eastern crusades ostensibly grew out of the need to protect Christian pilgrims as they traveled to and from the Holy Land. In addition there was the hope that by fighting a common enemy unity between Catholic and Orthodox Christians could be restored. Taken in and of themselves both of these goals were praiseworthy. The fact that the church would choose to pursue them by military means, however, requires explanation. The ones given above are not complete.

The spirit of romantic conquest is another factor. Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, otherwise known as el Cid,⁹² mounted his attack on Valencia in 1089, against Almoravid Muslim defenders. The city finally fell in 1094. Whether el Cid saw, or did not see, the conquest of Valencia in religious terms, it takes no vivid imagination to reason from driving Arabs out of Christian Spain to driving Arabs out of places that Christian pilgrims would like to see in the Holy Land. Whether or not the two events can be linked in some way, it is nevertheless a fact that Pope Urban II (1088-99) preached the first eastern crusade in A.D. 1095,⁹³ one year after the fall of Valencia. The first crusade was highly successful. For the next two hundred years parts of Syria and Palestine were controlled by Christian kings.

From 1204 to 1261 western knights got control of coastal Greece and even captured Constantinople. In fact the fourth crusade weakened Constantinople to such a degree that it never fully recovered. Thus, the way for the city's decline and later fall to the Turks was prepared by its friends.⁹⁴ That was the fourth crusade. There were eight in all, of which only the first was really successful. A ninth was planned but not carried out. For a summary of the eastern crusades see table 5.

Table 5
Eastern Crusades

Number	Preached By	Led By	Dates	Object/Result
1	Urban II	Baldwin V (Provence), Godfrey (Lorraine), et al.	1095-99	Edessa, Antioch, Jerusalem, Tripoli ^a
2	Eugene III	Louis VII (France), Conrad III (Germany)	1147-49	Edessa, Damascus
3	Gregory VIII, Clement III	Frederick I (Germany), Richard I (England)	1189-91	Acre
4	Innocent III	Philip of Swabia, Boniface of Montferrat	1201-4 ^b	Constantinople
N/A	...	"Children's Crusade"	1212	(Marseilles)
5	Innocent III, Honorius III	(Frederick II) (Germany)	1213-21 ^c	Damietta in Egypt
6	Honorius III, Gregory IX	Frederick II (Germany)	1227-29	Jerusalem (by negotiation)
7	Innocent IV	Louis IX (France)	1248-54	Damietta
8	...	Edward I (England)	1270	Tunisia
9	Gregory IX	...	1272-76	(Abortive)

NOTE: Dates for the crusades are given variously by different sources. For the most part I here follow the dates given in *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes (ODP)*, except where a more specialized source differs from it.

^a Tripoli was conquered somewhat later than the other three cities (1102-9).

^b See Donald E. Queller, *The Fourth crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople, 1201-1204* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977). The dates for the Fourth Crusade are 1202-4 in *ODP*.

^c See James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade: 1213-1221* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986). The dates for the Fifth Crusade are 1217-21 in *ODP*.

Crusades against pagans in the North. Along the northern shore of the Baltic the Swedes crusaded against the pagan Finns and, more notably, along the southern shore of the Baltic the Teutonic Knights crusaded against the pagan Prussians. These and other major military versions of Christian outreach to northern Europe are discussed in Eric Christiansen's superbly researched volume entitled, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100-1525*.⁹⁵

On the Åland Islands, between Sweden and Finland, and in some parts of the southeastern coastland of Finland proper the process of Christianization began around A.D. 1050. From there Christianity spread slowly eastward, reaching Tavastia by 1150, but not being firmly established in Karelia until as late as 1300.⁹⁶ The first Finnish crusade was preached by the English-born papal legate Nicholas Breakspear (later pope Hadrianus IV [1154-59]), who arrived in Sweden in 1153. King Eric led the expedition, which took place in 1155 or possibly 1157. Permanent conquest was not the goal. Instead the king's purpose was to exact tribute, as in the old viking expeditions, and to limit the influence of Novgorod among eastern Finns. Shortly afterward, in 1164, Sweden received her own archbishop.⁹⁷

During the final decade of the twelfth century, many crusading expeditions were made to both shores of the Gulf of Finland. The Danes, who appeared on the scene as rivals of the Swedes, are reported to have invaded Finland in 1191 and 1202. Possibly operating from bases established on the southern coast of the country, they seem to have had considerable success. In 1209, the Pope, who had been informed that the Finns had lately been converted by the nobility, authorized the head of the Danish Church, the archbishop of Lund, to appoint a preacher who was stationed in Finland to take over the vacant bishop's seat.⁹⁸

In 1249 the Dominican Order established a convent at Turku and in the same year an expeditionary force was led from Sweden by the king's brother-in-law, Earl Birger. His objective was Tavastia, midway between Finland proper in the southwest and Karelia in the southeast. To help prepare for this major effort, known to Finnish historians as the "second crusade," pope Gregory IX (1227-41) took Finland under apostolic protection. As a result Tavastia became firmly and permanently attached to Sweden. Crusades into Finland continued from time to time until 1351.

The story of Prussia is the story of the *Deutschr Ritter Orden* or Teutonic Knights. This Order originated during the time of the eastern crusades and its first headquarters was in fact the town of Acre in Palestine. "Around 1222 the order had attempted to gain a foothold in the Transylvanian Burzenland in Hungary, which King Andrew of Hungary had, somewhat reluctantly, presented to the order, and which the Pope had declared as a fief of the Papacy."⁹⁹ A few castles were built but apart from this the Teutonic Knights had as little success in Hungary as they had in Palestine.

Then the opportunity for a crusade against the Prussians arose and the Order seized it. The Prussians were a Baltic people related to the Lithuanians and still pagan at this time. The papal mandate for the Teutonic Knights extended from Danzig to Memel, along the northern coast of what is now Poland and part of Lithuania. Membership quickly increased from 600 in A.D. 1230 to 2000 in the 1270s. Native Prussians made no attempt to obstruct the knights' building activity as they erected castles, being still unaware of both the nature and the magnitude of the threat that confronted them. As regards magnitude, consider that today there are no Prussians at all. None survived who have maintained any national or ethnic identity. The Teutonic Knights did their work thoroughly.

At its greatest extent the Order controlled the southern coast of the Baltic Sea from a point west of the Vistula River eastward as far as the Narva not far from modern Leningrad. This includes much of what is now northern Poland, Lithuania,¹⁰⁰ Latvia, and Estonia.¹⁰¹

Crusades against Christians in the West. Having learned how effective military force could be against Muslims and pagans, the church next put the new technology to use in dealing with dissident Christians in Europe. Both the Albigenses of Languedoc and Toulouse (between the Rhone and the Pyrenees) and the Waldenses of Provence (east of the Rhone) were the object of crusades.

The Albigenses took their name from one of their principal towns (Albi), in Languedoc. They were also known as Cathari or "pure ones." The Waldenses were known as followers of a man named Valdez (Waldo) of Lyons. Between these two groups the whole of southern France was filled with heretics, giving the struggle against them a regional dimension.

The Albigenses were dualists in the Manichaean tradition and their theology was similar to that of the Bogomil heresy in Serbia.¹⁰² The Albigenses were found in northern Spain, northern Italy, and Germany, as well as southern France. The crusade against them, however, concentrated on those groups that lived in Languedoc and Toulouse and was conducted by Louis VIII (1223-1226) and Louis IX (1226-1270) of northern France. The struggle began in 1181, when pope Alexander III (1159-1181), who was plagued by competition from rival popes and was himself forced to live in the small outlying towns of Italy rather than Rome, ordered that they be persecuted. Matters grew worse under Innocent III (1198-1216).

[Innocent III] commissioned the austere Spaniard Dominic Guzmán (1170-1221), later founder of the Friars Preachers, to counter the Albigenses of the Midi with their own weapon of public disputation. It was only after the murder in 1208 of his legate, who had been sent to convert them, that he ordered a crusade against the Albigenses in southern France which resulted in bloodshed and devastation and cast a shadow over the second half of his reign.¹⁰³

The legate, whose name was Peter of Castelnau, was killed on January 14, 1208.¹⁰⁴ This event enraged Innocent III and prompted him to send soldiers rather than preachers against them. The crusade began in 1209. The following year in the town of Albi, near Toulouse, 180 Albigenses were burned en masse in what, from a later engraving by Jan Luyken, appears to be the town square.¹⁰⁵ One might argue that this was an isolated incident but, as though these measures were not already strong enough, Pope Honorius III (1216-27) took steps to intensify the crusade begun by his predecessor by calling on Louis VIII (1223-26), king of France, to take personal responsibility for its success.

. . . with his approval Frederick in 1220 and Louis in 1226 published ordinances, of great significance for the development of the Inquisition, imposing severe penalties on heretics.¹⁰⁶

A number of results followed. First, the Albigenses were annihilated. The worst of the carnage had ended by 1229, early in the reign of Gregory IX (1227-41), but the Albigenses were not altogether destroyed until the 1240s, toward the end of Gregory's reign. Second, a legal precedent was being established that would serve the Inquisition well in later centuries. And third, Languedoc in southern France was brought under the political control of those kings who ruled France from the Isle de Paris in the North. Thus, the most impressive political result of the Albigensian crusade was the unification of France.

The Waldenses were distributed throughout northern Spain, Austria, and Germany, although they were most heavily concentrated in southeastern France.¹⁰⁷ They had the same high regard for Scripture and a simple lifestyle as the Albigenses--and the Franciscans--but differed with them significantly on a number of points. The Waldenses were under general opposition from the church for three centuries but there was no crusade against them until 1545, when, between April 18 and May 3, a series of massacres were perpetrated at Mérindol, Cabrières, Le Coste and eighteen other villages.¹⁰⁸

The beginnings of the Inquisition. The historical roots of the Inquisition go beyond the thirteenth century to the eleventh.¹⁰⁹ For two centuries before Gregory IX (1227-41) officially created the papal Inquisition there had been sporadic heresy trials resulting in executions. It is significant that in the first documented cases of capital punishment for personal belief in France, Italy, and the Holy Roman Empire the state appears to be proceeding on its own initiative,¹¹⁰ although in fact the church cannot have been far away when these things occurred.

During the reign of pope Honorius III (1216-27) "Frederick in 1220 and Louis in 1226 published ordinances, of great significance for the development of the Inquisition, imposing severe penalties on heretics."¹¹¹ The papal, as opposed to episcopal, Inquisition was called into existence by Honorius' successor Gregory IX (1227-41). But even under Gregory the papal Inquisition was not permanently in session, nor was torture an accepted means of obtaining confessions of guilt. These later refinements were added by Innocent IV (1243-54).

In 1252 he [Innocent IV] established the Inquisition as a permanent institution in Italy, combining all earlier papal and imperial enactments in the bull *Ad extirpanda* (15 May), which sanctioned the use of torture to extract confessions.¹¹²

The church never has taken responsibility for imposing the death penalty. By a legal fiction it turned impenitent heretics over to the secular authorities for that purpose. But whoever performed them, the ratio of executions to trials was low. For example, of 930 heretics convicted over a fifteen year period between 1308 and 1323 by the Dominican inquisitor Bernard Guy, only forty-two were handed over to the state to be burned.¹¹³ This is about three persons per year for a conviction-to-execution ratio of less than half of one percent. During the same period this same inquisitor pronounced posthumous convictions, i.e., convictions after death, against the estates of eighty-nine individuals. This is about six persons per year.¹¹⁴

It is important to understand that what we are talking about was not an isolated phenomenon. Heretics were tried, convicted, and executed in England to an extent; in France, Italy, Germany, and Bohemia; in the Balkan states, the Netherlands, and in Spain. Nor was the Inquisition confined to the span of a few years. Once established as official church policy in the thirteenth century, with precedents going back as early as the eleventh, it continued in varying degrees of severity for another 600 years. In Spain the Inquisition was still active, although moribund, only 176 years ago as I write these lines today and it did not completely disappear for another twenty-one years after that.

Napoleon, on his entry into Madrid (Dec. 1808), at once suppressed the Inquisition, and the extraordinary general Cortes on Feb. 12, 1813 declared it to be incompatible with the constitution, in spite of the protests of Rome. Ferdinand VII. restored it (July 21, 1814) on his return from exile, but it was impoverished and almost powerless. It was again abolished as a result of the Liberal revolution of 1820, was restored temporarily in 1823 after the French military intervention

under the duc d'Angoulême, and finally disappeared on July 15, 1834, when Queen Christina allied herself with the Liberals.¹¹⁵

We can refine our estimates of how many people suffered in precisely what ways in different places and at different times, but my point is that the Inquisition itself is not a figment of the imagination, devised by modern historians to embarrass a now defenseless church. It did not pass unnoticed during the reign of every pope from Gregory IX (1227-41) to and including Gregory XVI (1831-46) but was an official instrument of church policy. In 1820 when a new constitution was written in Spain that made the Inquisition illegal there,¹¹⁶ pope Pius VII (1800-23) voiced his protest. The Inquisition was something that the church had, was glad to have, and was sorry to see go. But we are getting ahead of our story. The third phase of the Inquisition's existence and the greatest of its activity and success, roughly coinciding with the Reformation, is discussed in a later section.

Discussion

What impresses one perhaps more than anything else in studying the lives of the popes is the wide variety of people who have held that office. There have been saints (Celestine V [1294]), men who were unquestionably sincere (Hadrian VI [1522-23]),¹¹⁷ capable men of good and decent morals (Stephen VIII [IX] [939-42], Nicholas V [1447-55]),¹¹⁸ men given over to the pursuit of luxury (Leo X [1513-21]) and vice (Alexander VI [1492-1503]), monsters of cruelty (Stephen VI [VII] [896-97], Boniface VIII [1294-1303], Urban VI [1378-89]), and varying combinations of the above (Sergius III [901-11], John XII [955-64]).¹¹⁹ But as an institution the papacy is not bad because bad men have been pope, although bad men have been pope. Good men have also been pope. Rather it is bad because it brings civil and religious authority together in the hands of one individual, which will have a corrupting influence on whoever it touches, completely apart from whether he is also able to resist such influences.

A similar point has been made by persons that Catholics respect, indeed by persons whom the popes themselves respected. Thus, there is nothing at all novel in what I say.

In vain, St. Jerome protested against the process that was turning the house of God into a treasure chamber. "The marble walls shine, the roofs sparkle with gold, the altars with gems—but the true servants of God are without earthly splendor. Let no one say that the Temple of Solomon was rich with gold—now that the Lord has made poverty his own we should think of the Cross and esteem riches as worthless."¹²⁰

Jerome lived during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. During the tenth century, in response to a series of depravities that I have neither space nor inclination to repeat, the younger Alberic, whose half-brother was pope John XI (931-35), made himself civil prince of Rome and forced not only his brother but his brother's successors for the next twenty years to serve in an entirely spiritual capacity.¹²¹

Even the sourest of churchmen, the most dedicated of Alberic's critics, were forced to concede that the supreme office of Western Christianity was discharged with high honor during the two decades that it was untrammelled by temporal power. Under Alberic, the popes enjoyed the fullest freedom in their priestly and papal roles. Edicts continued to go out to distant bishops, who in turn sought the guidance of their spiritual superior. The vast and complex machinery of the Roman Church continued to move around its ancient center, unaffected by the fact that the bishop of Rome

was no longer the lord of Rome. Not for another nine hundred years was the Papacy to be free again from the burden of temporality, and this brief respite granted it was perhaps Alberic's highest achievement.¹²²

It did not take 900 hundred years, however, for someone else to realize the truth of these statements. In 1527, after a devastating five-month sack of Rome by the Catholic emperor Charles V (1519-56), Gaspar Contarini offered Clement VII (1523-34) the following consolation in his capacity as ambassador from Venice:

Your Holiness must not imagine that the welfare of the Church of Christ rests in this little State of the Church: on the contrary, the Church existed before she possessed the State, and was the better for it. The Church is the community of all Christians; the temporal state is like any other province in Italy and therefore your Holiness must seek above all to promote the welfare of the True Church which consists in the peace of Christendom.¹²³

In response, "Clement agreed heavily with everything the Venetian said, and admitted that 'as a conscientious man I know that I ought to act as you tell me. . . . I repeat--I see clearly that the way you point out is the right way, but in this world the ideal does not correspond to reality, and he who acts from amiable motives is nothing but a fool.'"¹²⁴

The Protestant Reformation

(33) "Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. (34) When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. (35) Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time." (Dan 11:33-35)

Those who "are wise [*hammaškilim*]" and who "will instruct many" in the above passage come to prominence at a time after the high Middle Ages, discussed in the previous section. A natural application of the term Maskilim in the present context would be to the great Reformers of the sixteenth century. They were wise to bring people back to the Scriptures as the only rule for faith and practice. They were teachers of God's word whose influence extended throughout Europe. They were persecuted by the established church. Many prominent people supported their cause politically who were not sincere in the sense of acting from any deeply held spiritual motives. The timeframe is right, granting the present context. It is a perfect application.

The religious dimensions of the Reformation

"Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered" (Dan 11:33)

The spiritual dimensions of the Protestant Reformation are a topic that will not be covered adequately in any paper, regardless of length. But let us single out one area that we can say something substantive about and which will be at least consistent with whatever else

we might have said if it had been possible to write at greater length. The example I propose below is the Reformers' celebrated use of Scripture.

In *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission and Limitations*,¹²⁵ Bruce M. Metzger examines versions of the New Testament representing ten eastern languages (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Nubian, Persian, Sogdian, and Caucasian Albanian) and six western languages (Latin, Gothic, Old Church Slavonic, Anglo-Saxon, Old High German, and Old Saxon [Old Low German]). There were probably more but on present evidence it is a complete list. The earliest version Metzger documents is probably Tatian's "Diatessaron," published in Syriac about A.D. 170,¹²⁶ and the latest is the Old Saxon (Old Low German) "Heiland" ("Saviour"), "a poem of some 5,983 verses written at the order of Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious (d. 840)."¹²⁷ For comparison with the numbers introduced in the following paragraph, take the difference between 170 (for the "Diatessaron") and 840 (for the "Heiland"), which is 670. Sixteen versions over 670 years is approximately one version every forty-two years--East and West, New Testament only. If we take A.D. 50 as our starting point, it is one version every forty-nine years.

By contrast, between 1474 (when Gutenberg first published the Latin Bible using movable type) and 1600 the United Bible Societies' publication entitled, *Scriptures of the World*,¹²⁸ lists new translations of the complete Bible in fifteen modern European languages (High German [1466], Italian [1471], Catalan [1478], Low German [1478], Dutch [1522], Slavonic [1581], Spanish [1553], Polish [1561], Danish [1550], English [1535], Swedish [1541], Hungarian [1590], Icelandic [1584], Slovenian [1584], Welsh [1588]).¹²⁹ They also list six new translations of the New Testament during these years (French [1474], Czech [1475], Finnish [1548], Upper Engadine Romansch [1560], Serbo-Croatian [1563], Labourdin Basque [1571]) and five new translations of single books of the Bible (Portuguese [1505], Byelorussian [1517], Modern Greek [1547], Rumanian [1561], Lower Engadine Romansch [1562]).¹³⁰ Leaving aside the five single books, twenty-one versions over a period of 126 years is one new version every six years. And this was only the beginning.

The year 1600 is an arbitrary cutoff point. If we stop there it would be impossible to mention even our own English King James Version, which appeared in 1611. The Reformation shook loose a veritable avalanche of Bible translations in different languages, which has shown no sign of slowing down yet. Indeed, when the idea of producing a new translation under sponsorship of King James I was presented to Richard Bancroft, then Bishop of London, he rejected it, complaining that, "if every man's humour were followed, there would be no end of translating."¹³¹

Not all of the above translating and publishing activity can be attributed to the Reformation. Some of it took place before Luther and may reflect the Renaissance interest in new printing technologies. But it will be admitted that when the Renaissance interest in printing was combined with the Reformation interest in seeing the Scriptures widely read by common people, the result was explosive. It was this new awareness and personal knowledge of what the Bible says that, more than any other one thing, made the Reformation a powerful force in European society. Armed with such weapons the Reformers did not need armies in order to capture people's attention.

The civil dimensions of the Reformation

"When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them" (Dan 11:34)

The text. Verse 34 does not have in mind events different from those in vs. 33, but the same events from a different point of view. Both verses apply to the same time. The wise are persecuted and caused to fall because of a negative reaction to what they teach on the part of those who reject it (vs. 33). At the same time ("when they fall") the wise receive "a little help" (vs. 34). This comes from a positive reaction to what they teach on the part of those who accept it. If what they teach brings about the fall of "those who are wise" (A causes B), and their falling rallies support from many others (B causes C), then their teaching may also be said to rally that support (A causes C). What the wise believe and teach is therefore simultaneously the factor that provokes the king of the North to hostility against them and which rallies a large number of supporters to their defense. We now discuss the nature of this support.

The application. Sir Maurice Powicke's volume entitled, *The Reformation in England*, begins with the following statement: "The one definite thing which can be said about the Reformation in England is that it was an act of State."¹³² England provides one example of religious policies being changed for political reasons during the Reformation, but it is by no means the only example.

In a world where the distinction between church and state was everywhere blurred, it would be difficult to protest against the church without also appearing to protest against the state.¹³³ This mix of reform and revolt was especially evident in Germany, Bohemia, and the Netherlands. In England, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Prussia, where the heads of state themselves accepted the Reformation, there was no need to revolt. In Austria, Italy, France, and Spain, where the state remained resolutely Catholic,¹³⁴ there was no opportunity to revolt.

From Roland H. Bainton's, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*,¹³⁵ one gains the impression that the Reformation in Germany was waiting to happen before Luther was ready to lead it. He was a respected leader and certainly deserves the credit he has received, but he did not single-handedly bring the Reformation into existence. Europe was weary of papal abuses. Thus, Luther was on the growing edge of public opinion as well as spiritual truth when he inveighed against the established church as he did.¹³⁶

The situation in England was unique in some respects. King Henry VIII (1509-47) of England broke with the papacy for reasons that bear no relation to those which motivated a Luther or a Calvin. In the Netherlands the Duke of Alva's tax of the Tenth Penny appears to have been at least as persuasive a factor in bringing the revolt against Spain to fruition as the Calvinism of that movement's leaders.¹³⁷

The mature Inquisition

. . . for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. (Dan 11:33b)

The Inquisition includes more than the narrow period of its greatest influence. It is useful to think in terms of three different periods in its history spanning a total of about eight hundred years: (1) establishment of precedents (XI-XII A.D.), (2) pre-Reformation (XIII-XV A.D.), and (3) post-Reformation (XVI-XIX A.D.).¹³⁸ The last of these periods is both the best documented and the most important for our present purposes.¹³⁹ Fortunately the inquisitors kept immaculate records of their proceedings and many of their archives have survived.¹⁴⁰

The countries where the Inquisition was strongest during and after the period of the Reformation were those that bordered on the Mediterranean. Elsewhere the church either lost territory to the Reformation permanently (northern Europe) or suffered temporary losses from which it was later able to recover. The Counter Reformation provided an effective means of doing this in central Europe. One country where the church apparently did not have to defend itself was Ireland.¹⁴¹

The Reformation achieved its greatest successes in Northern Europe. Thus, England became Protestant in its own distinctive way with the pope being replaced by the king.¹⁴² Denmark, Norway, and Iceland;¹⁴³ Sweden¹⁴⁴ and Finland;¹⁴⁵ Estonia, Livonia, and Courland;¹⁴⁶ Prussia,¹⁴⁷ and especially Germany¹⁴⁸ all accepted the Reformation in its Lutheran form. Calvinism became dominant in Switzerland,¹⁴⁹ the Netherlands,¹⁵⁰ and Scotland.¹⁵¹ There was also some response to the Reformation in Italy,¹⁵² France,¹⁵³ and Spain.¹⁵⁴

In such central European countries as Poland; Bohemia and Moravia; Hungary and Transylvania; Slavonia, and Croatia Luther gained such a wide influence that it was impractical to use the Inquisition to put it down. Here the church depended on the Counter Reformation and the Jesuits in order to recapture lost territory. In central and northern Europe it was generally unable to use the Inquisition effectively.

During the period of the Counter Reformation a number of former inquisitors rose to the papacy. These include Giampietro Carafa as Paul IV (1555-59), Michele Ghislieri as Pius V (1566-72), and Felice Peretti as Sixtus V (1585-90).¹⁵⁵ Urban VII (1590) had been associated with the Inquisition in Bologna but died of malaria soon after his elevation to the papacy.¹⁵⁶ On the death of Paul IV an angry mob rioted, ransacking the headquarters of the Inquisition in Rome.¹⁵⁷ Ghislieri (later Pius V) had been commissary general of the Roman inquisition (1551-56) and inquisitor general (1558-66),¹⁵⁸ so he may have been partly responsible for the popular fury that was eventually directed against Paul IV. Peretti (later Sixtus V), another protégé of Paul IV, was made inquisitor at Venice in 1557. His severity in that office led to his dismissal, but in 1560 he was reappointed.¹⁵⁹ The sunnier days of Leo X (1513-21) were a thing of the past. Under the new leadership the church began to recoup its territorial losses.

The Protestant Reformation had swept like a tidal wave over the greater part of Europe, reaching its high-water mark around 1572. But by 1575 this tidal wave began slowly to subside. Roman Catholicism was at last able to check the progress of Protestantism and to win back parts of Europe which it had lost.¹⁶⁰

"The time of the end"

What C. Mervyn Maxwell calls a "hostile separation of church and state" in France during the Revolution one might wish to call a hostile merger.¹⁶¹ When the States-General met on May 5, 1789 about one fourth of its members were clergymen. On November 2, 1789, however, the National Assembly (as the States-General were then called) allowed church

property to be confiscated. By February of the next year religious Orders were terminated and monastic establishments dissolved. The church in France would be French (Gallican) rather than Roman.¹⁶² The clergy were to be elected by their parishioners and paid by the state. Confirmation of new bishops would not be subject to papal review.

Now it was loyal Catholics who suffered persecution. Priests who refused to swear loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy had to minister secretly to those who shared their views out of genuine conviction. Finally, on January 21, 1793, Louis XVI (1774-93) was executed.¹⁶³

On May 7, 1794, Maximilien Robespierre officially outlined a new religion of national patriotism. One month later, on June 8, the government, under his leadership, formally inaugurated the worship of the Supreme Being, intending this new form of worship to replace Catholicism throughout France.¹⁶⁴

But notice carefully that even at this point the revolutionary government of France was not rejecting religion so much as dictating that it be secularized. There would be worship, but not Christian worship. For the next two years (1793-94) France lived through a reign of terror. The constitution was changed again and a Directory replaced the National Assembly. Pope Pius VI (1775-99) championed the idea of counterrevolution and thus emerged as a public enemy.

So serious did the Directory consider the continuing antagonism of the papacy that one of its principal aims came to be "the destruction of the papal authority, both spiritual and temporal," and it asked Napoleon, at that time commander of the Army of Italy, to "consider the idea of destroying Rome as a scourge in the hands of fanaticism."¹⁶⁵

Rome was occupied without opposition on February 9, 1798 and pope Pius VI was taken prisoner by the French general Berthier eleven days later on February 20, 1798.¹⁶⁶ For more than one reason it is significant that Pius VI was not taken prisoner by Napoleon, who had received the Directory's official blessing on any such enterprise and who indeed had two golden opportunities to carry it out--once in the spring of 1796 (when he invaded the northern corner of the Papal States) and again in 1797 (when the papacy refused to honor the Armistice of Bologna). It is significant in the sense that he saw the political wisdom of dominating rather than destroying the papacy. And it is also significant in the sense that 1798, rather than 1796 or 1797, was the year when the end finally came and the pope was deported to France. In 1798--exactly 1260 years after 538 when another general had taken the opposite measure of ensuring the political viability of the popes--we reach the end of a period that had been prophesied many years in advance. Here, in 1798, is the "appointed time" of Dan 11:35b--the beginning of the "time of the end" (vs. 35a).¹⁶⁷

Some Parallels

Daniel 11:29-35 does not stand in isolation from other similar passages. There are parallels to it. Let me give just one example--the letters to the seven churches in Rev 2-3. Historicist writers apply the seven letters to different eras in the history of the church. In this comparison bloc 1 (vss. 29-30b) would correspond to Pergamum ("You did not renounce your faith in me" [Rev 2:13]), bloc 2 (vss. 30c-31) to Thyatira ("You tolerate that woman Jezebel" [Rev 2:20]), and bloc 3 (vss. 32-34, 35) to Sardis ("you have a reputation of being alive" [Rev

3:1]). The letter to Pergamum describes the church in the period when Christianity was accepted as a legal religion in the Empire. The letter to Thyatira describes the period starting with the establishment of the papacy in a combination of both religious and civil power. And the letter to Pergamum describes the period of the Protestant Reformation.¹⁶⁸

The relationship between these last two periods is not entirely one of contrast. The clause which says, "With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant" (Dan 11:32a) uses the Hebrew word *bah^llaqqô^t* ("with smoothness," i.e., "with smooth words"). The same word occurs in only slightly different form in vs. 34: "and many who are not sincere will join them." NIV's rendering is free but conveys the right idea. The Hebrew (*w^enilwû^u ^elêhem rabbîm bah^llaqqô^t*) says, "and many will join them with smoothness," or "in falsehood". The point to draw from this is that the same motives which led people to flock to the papacy's standard in one age would lead them to flock to the Reformation's standard in another. Earlier I quoted the clause which says, of the Reformation church, "you have a reputation of being alive." That is not the end of the sentence.

"I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. (2) Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God." (Rev 3:1-2)

There are those who would argue that the Reformation's deeds were in fact complete. But they are wrong. Christ did not stop when He had finished speaking to Sardis. He had more to say to the churches just as He had more to say to His disciples (see John 16:12).

Discussion

In 1972 I had the privilege of attending the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Norman, Oklahoma with a Catholic priest who was taking the course in order to prepare for mission service in South America. In one of our conversations he volunteered the remark that, when the history of our own times is written with sufficient perspective, it is our times and not the Middle Ages that will be remembered as an age of cruelty--to minorities striving for social equality and so on. As much as I respect the man's opinions, I must disagree. Being without a job is not in the same category as being sent to the rack. But the remark was instructive--first because it shows that the topic is a sensitive one for the church, to be dealt with in as winsome a manner as possible, and second because it shows a willingness to defend the past. As a modern Jesuit author puts it,

The liberal few hated the Inquisitions and their autocratic methods: most people, however, regarded the tribunals as completely necessary guardians of orthodoxy and public decency.¹⁶⁹

There is a question whether what the church lost during the Age of Enlightenment was its will to persecute heretics or its ability. Any action it might take now against those it considers to be heretics would be played back on the evening news. This is a crippling disability. But to the extent that Rome maintains its claims to temporal as well as spiritual authority, it must remain open in principle to the use of force because that is the way temporal matters are regulated (see Rom 13:4).

In any society different people are going to want different things, so whoever is in charge must select a course of action and make some people do things they do not like. That is the way society works, but it is not what God has in mind for His church. "Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place'" (John 18:36). If there was ever a situation where the church could justify tangible intervention in the affairs of the state, it was the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus. No political cause would have been more worthy than this one for His followers to unite on so as to take practical action in the political arena of their day. But this is precisely the context for Christ's rejection of such methods.

It has become popular for conservative Protestants in the United States to take sides on political issues. And it is true that there are political issues we cannot ignore. But in doing this Christians are playing with fire. Seeking to change societal behavior without changing the convictions from which it follows is a superficial work with dangerous implications. The results--taking at a bare minimum the three centuries on either side of the Reformation--are on public record, if we will examine that record and let it speak without constantly protecting ourselves from what it says. If society's morals are decadent, let those who wish to correct the situation meet the minds of those who are in error through preaching. In this way they will bring about the only form of conversion that is worth having and the results will be beneficial. If society is to be regulated against its will, however, let law makers do that separately and let the church pursue every means possible to ensure that the two functions are kept distinct. The church must never again take on the mixed political-religious character that it once had.

Protestants who begin by wishing to make people conform to certain standards of behavior, will end by wishing to make them conform to certain standards of thought. All this is backwards. Win the heart first and right behavior will follow naturally enough. To achieve similar results by other means there must be an appeal to force. When this happens Protestantism will have come back to the point where it initially broke away--but in the other role, the one it broke away from. There would be no value in reviewing the sad tale of abuses with which the history of the Christian church in western Europe confronts us if there were nothing to learn now from doing so. But there is something to learn and it is this: Blurring the distinction between civil and religious authority had disastrous results when it was tried before. Do not repeat the mistake.

Conclusion

Repeatedly in Dan 11 we find a motif in which the king of the North starts small and rises to power over the king of the South. Here the king of the North is not a state but a mixture of church and state, making Daniel's own earlier comparison of iron mixed with clay especially significant (see Dan 2:33, 41-43). Arianism was the southern power that challenged the Roman king of the North at the beginning of the period under review. In this comparison the South is doubly represented. Arius came from Alexandria in Egypt and his teaching was championed most conspicuously by the Vandals, who ruled North Africa from Carthage in Libya. Their new homeland was situated on the southern coast of the Mediterranean directly opposite Rome.

Barbarians, who for the most part were also Arian Christians, succeeded in taking over many parts of the western Empire. Both church and state were temporarily devastated by the onslaught and in fact the Roman state never recovered. Instead the Roman church took over both roles. It rose from the ashes of the ruined Empire to assume a position of power and influence that we might find hard to imagine today. These are not small or insignificant facts

about the history of western Europe. My only possible innovation in saying all of this lies in claiming that the prophecy of Dan 11 describes it.

With the secularization of science over the past few centuries the process by which the church's authority once expanded and flourished has now been almost entirely reversed.¹⁷⁰ The church has lost much of the control over peoples' lives that it once had. A point that I return to in a later paper, however, is that the pattern before us is not one of weakness, followed by strength, followed by weakness. It is one of weakness followed by strength--the struggle with Arianism both as a heresy and as a political reality with powerful barbarian champions followed by a period of unchallenged supremacy for the orthodox Catholic church during the high Middle Ages. The church's present state of political weakness is not a part of this sequence. It is the beginning of another one, however brief, which will be seen more clearly in vss. 40-45.