

corresponding to the Church in her first phase -- that of her original purity, her "first love." But the counsel of Christ in His first letter said that there was even then a falling away from that first love: and this is signified in the Second Seal, at the opening of which "there went out another horse that was red."

And, under the Third Seal "I beheld, and lo a black horse!"¹⁶ Thus the symbols of the seals, passing in three steps from white to black, mark identically the course of the apostasy in the three steps, from the first love, in which Christ was all in all, in the first stage of the Church, to the third stage, in which, "where Satan's seat" was, and where Satan dwelt, a man was put in the place of God, in that which professed to be the Church of God, "passing himself off for God."

The immediate effect of this apostasy, which developed the papacy in the Roman Empire, was the complete ruin of the Roman Empire. And, this consequence of the apostasy, which is traced in the first three steps of the two lines of prophecy of the Seven Churches and the Seven Seals, is sketched in the first four trumpets of the line of prophecy of the Seven Trumpets. And here it is -- in the Seven Trumpets -- that national history enters, as an incident, in this book of Church history; as in the rise of the little horn amongst the ten, in the book of Daniel, there enters Church history, as an incident, in that book of national history. The Seven Trumpets aptly enter here, because the trumpet is the symbol of war; and it was by the universal war of the floods of barbarians from the north, that there was swept away that mass of corruption that was heaped upon the Roman Empire by its union with the apostate Church, in the making of the papacy.¹⁷ (*Alonso T. Jones, Ecclesiastical Empires, p 6-7*).

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PAPACY

The period covered by this church may be located from the days of Constantine, or perhaps, rather, from his professed conversion to Christianity, A.D.323, to the establishment of the papacy, A.D.538. It was a period in which the true servants of God had to struggle against a spirit of worldly policy, pride, and popularity among the professed followers of Christ, and against the virulent

workings of the mystery of iniquity, which finally resulted in the full development of the papal man of sin. (*DAR 383.5*).

Satan works wherever Christians dwell. But surely there are times and seasons when he works with special power; and the period covered by the church of Pergamos was one of these. During this period, the doctrine of Christ was being corrupted, the mystery of iniquity was working, and Satan was laying the very foundation of that most stupendous system of wickedness, the papacy. Here was the falling away foretold by Paul in 2 Thess.2: 3. (*DAR 384.1*).

William Miller says: "It is supposed that Antipas was not an individual, but a class of men who opposed the power of the bishops, or popes, in that day, being a combination of two words, anti, opposed, and papas, father, or pope; and at that time many of them suffered martyrdom in Constantinople and Rome, where the bishops and popes began to exercise the power which soon after brought into subjection the kings of the earth, and trampled on the rights of the church of Christ. And for myself, I see no reason to reject this explanation of this word Antipas in this text, as the history of those times is perfectly silent respecting such an individual as is here named." (*Miller's Lectures, pp. 138, 139*).

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The church of Pergamos

Pergamos signifies "very earthy, elevated." This period reached from Constantine, about 313, down to the rise of anti-christ, about 538. During this period the church became very earthy, having her worldly policy, and like the church of this day, attending to the ceremonies and forms of religion, and neglecting inward piety, the graces of the Spirit, and the life and power of the religion of Jesus.

"Here was the falling away mentioned by Paul. 2 Thess.ii,3. Fault is found with this church, and it is here called upon to repent. But this was the age that prepared the church to receive to her bosom the monster, "man of sin," "son of perdition." (RH, Vol 8, October 16, 1856, p 188).

THE CHURCH OF PERGAMOS

And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges: I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. 2: 12-17).

Persecution is ever calculated to keep the church pure, and incite its members to piety and godliness. But we now reach a period when influences began to work through which errors and evils were likely to creep into the church. (DAR 383.4).

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The term Pergamos which signifies height, elevation. The church entered into this period when Christianity had secured the throne of the Roman empire, and Constantine had become a nominal convert to the gospel. The spirit of the world worked mightily in this period; hence the church is addressed as being where Satan's seat is. Christ takes cognizance of the unfavorable situation of his people during this period. But disadvantages in situation are no excuse for wrongs in the church, and this church maintained some features for which they were severely censured. They had those in their midst that held the doctrine of Balaam, referring to their falling into spiritual idolatry.

They had also those that held to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. This was a form of heresy said to have originated with one Nicholas, who taught a plurality of wives, etc. The promise to the overcomer in this church is to eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone with a new name written thereon. What that is, it would perhaps be unnecessary, as well as useless, to inquire, Wesley says: "Wouldst thou know what that new name will be? The way to this is plain - overcome. Till then, all thy inquiries are vain. (Uriah Smith, Biblical Institute, p 246-247).

The letter to the Church in the third phase of her experience gives the key to this particular thought which is now before us -- the identification of that ecclesiastical State. In this letter Christ mentions with commendation the fact that His Church had held fast His name, and had not denied His faith, "even in those days wherein Anti-

pas was my faithful martyr."12 This word "Antipas" is not a person's name, but is a term characteristic of the times. It is composed of two words, anti, and pappas. "anti" signifies against, and "pappas" signifies papa, which is our English, and also the universal, word for "papa." And this word "papa" is but the repetition of the simple word "pa," and is the original of the word "pope."

Therefore, the word "Antipas" -- "against 'pas' or 'papas'" -- shows the growth of the papa-cy in the period immediately following A. D. 313. This was the period of Constantine and onward, in which the papa-cy itself was distinctly formed. And history records that in that time, while the other principal bishops of the Church bore the title of "patriarch," the bishop of Rome studiously avoided that particular term, as placing him on a level with other "patriarchs." He always preferred the title of "papa," or "pope" (Schaff13); and this because "patriarch" bespeaks an oligarchical Church government -- that is government by a few; whereas "pope" bespeaks a monarchical Church government -- that is government by one.14 Thus the history, and the word of the counsel of Christ, unite in marking as the characteristic of that phase of the Church's experience, the formation of the papa-cy, and the assertion of the authority of the pope.

And thus, beyond all question, the papacy is identified, and that by the very Word of God itself, as that ecclesiastical State, that church-kingdom, sketched by Daniel, in chapters 7 and 8; described by Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2: and fully traced by John, in the Revelation. The time covered by this third letter of Christ to His Church is, by that letter itself, shown to be the time of the making of the papacy; and to the words of that letter correspond exactly the facts of the history in the period reaching from the Edict of Milan to the ruin of the empire. The "falling away," the leaving of the "first love," mentioned in the first letter, had, in this time of the third letter, culminated in the formation of the papacy.

Now this same course is traced on the side of the apostasy, in the first three steps of the line of prophecy of the Seven Seals of the book of Revelation. Under the First Seal there was seen going forth a white horse (Rev. 6:2),