



Records of sun worship are to be found in the very beginnings of history. Shamash, the Babylonian sun-god, in his shrine. To him a high priest leads the king and queen of Sippar.

## The MASTER Counterfeiter - 1

# *How the Devil Has Sought to Supplant God*

First of a Unique Series of Articles Tracing the Rise  
of Many Un-Biblical Doctrines and Practices Still  
Held by Christian Churches Today

**By MURL VANCE**

**I**t all began about four thousand years ago. Shortly after the flood a revolution against God led to the building of the Tower of Babel and the establishing of a monarchy instead of the theocracy under which man had previously lived. Since the Divine Being was no longer recognized by the Babelites as their ruler, and since it seems to be a part of man's very nature to worship something, it was natural that they should have accepted a counterfeit deity of some kind. The identity of man's new god is not hard to discover when we examine the evidence.

Everyone who has studied into pagan religions knows that the sun is one of the chief deities, though it may be called by many names. Even in a single kingdom we may find one name for the "male sun, one for the "female," one for the rising sun, one for the midday sun, and so on. There is one name for the winter sun, one for the spring sun, one for the hot summer sun, and another for the fall sun. We find one name for its rays, another for its disk, and still another for its heat. We find men worshipping its life-giving qualities and its death-giving powers.

Then on the earth we find fire being worshiped because, being hot and having the appearance of the sun, it is declared to be the sun spirit. We find the storm being worshiped as a divine being because thunder was declared to be the voice of the sun-god-and so on into an unlimited number of symbols, manifestations, and names.

A peculiarity, however, soon appears in these multitudinous manifestations of the sun-god. Almost invariably, no matter where we find sun worship on the face of the earth, either ancient or modern, we find a sacred serpent accompanying such worship. Take ancient Egypt, for instance. On Egyptian inscriptions we find the sun always pictured in the sky encircled by the cobra. The cobra, likewise, is pictured as being a part of the headdress of the queen and of the Pharaoh, who was deified as the sun-god on earth. We also find the sun temples everywhere containing their sacred serpent.

This holds true likewise among both ancient and modern Indians of America, and among the most savage tribes of Africa, the Orient, or the islands of the sea. Everywhere the sun-god is accompanied by his sacred serpent. Why? Can it be that back in the cradle of sun worship, in ancient Babylon, the serpent meant more to the apostate worshipers than merely an earthly reptile? Fortunately for the student desiring an answer to such a question, various scientific organizations have recovered and translated thousands of the clay Babylonian temple texts, so that anyone who desires can read these strange facts in his own language.

### **WHEN THE DEVIL MADE HIMSELF GOD**

That the devil himself, not the sun, should become the real deity of paganism, at first seems almost unbelievable, but such proves to be the case. The reason for such devil worship soon becomes apparent when one interviews the modern followers of this ancient religion. Worship, they declare, has no other object than to appease the evil spirits. A good being needs no appeasing--he is naturally kind and good. It is the evil one that man must fear; worship him, and he will bless you and give fortune in place of misfortune. That the conclusion is not true is evidence when one observes the degraded, superstitious, fear-crazed followers of devil worship today; but at any rate the reasoning must have sounded fairly plausible to the ancients who turned their back upon God and accepted Lucifer as their deity.

That the sun as an object of worship is merely considered as a visible manifestation of Satan by so-called sun worshipers becomes at once apparent when one examines the titles by which the sun-god is addressed. Here are a few of them taken primarily from the translations of Babylonian temple texts by Jastrow and Sayce: "Lord of the lower world,"

"sword," "god of fire," "raging king," "the violent one," "the one that lies in wait," "the oppressor," "the soul of the sun," "the spy," "prince of Hades," "the ruler over the great city" [Babylon?], "the lightning flash" "the plague demon," "the serpent," "the solitary monster," "the goddess of reptiles," "the fire flame," "lord of swine," "the evil face," "the evil eye," "the evil breath," "the tormentor," "the reptile," "he that hath many names."

We find this same unmistakable demon connection with the sun in other nations that imported their sun worship from Babylon. In Egypt we find Ra, the sun-god, pictured with a tail, a tined fork in one hand, sun on his head, with a cobra coiled around the sun--unquestionably the source of our modern concept of the devil. In Persia and India we find the sun being called Mithras in one breath and Ahura-Mazda in the next, the latter term being best translated "light-demon."

In one Babylonian hymn the sun-god is described thus: "Desire for rulership seizes his heart." And then he is represented as saying, "I will take the tablets of the gods and decree the decisions. I will establish my throne, I will proclaim laws, I will give orders to all the Igigi (spirits)." Every student of the Scriptures will note the similarity of these words of the sun-god to those of Lucifer found in Isaiah 14:13, 14: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation: ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High."

With these words in mind, we are not surprised that Lucifer was not content to be worshiped only as a demon--he had higher aspirations than that. He wanted to be worshiped as a god as well as a devil. That his ambitions in this respect were gratified is likewise shown by the titles addressed by the Babylonians to their demon sun-god. For just as we find almost every title by which we know the devil, applied to him by Babylonian sun worshipers, so also we find practically all the titles rightfully belonging to the true God similarly used in addressing the sun.

Here are a few, likewise primarily taken from the translations of Jastrow and Sayce: "judge," "mediator," "son," "redeemer," "the only son," "judge supreme of heaven and earth," "light of the world," "the merciful," "creator," "the intercessor," "the only-begotten one," "divine prince," "supreme counselor," "lord of the covenant," "preserver," "the sin bearer," "savior of the world," "branch of God," "god the son."

The jealousy with which Lucifer had viewed the work of Christ the Creator, and his desperate efforts to destroy Christ's work as the Redeemer, are startlingly revealed by these titles which the serpent's demon-inspired worshipers addressed to him. And most certainly he took

full advantage of his knowledge of the plan of salvation--a knowledge he undoubtedly received directly from God after his sin, or which he could have received when the plan was revealed to man in the Garden of Eden--to attempt to destroy the work of Christ by setting up himself, the destroyer of the world, as its redeemer!

Thus it was that Lucifer established himself as a counterfeit god, the supreme deity in a false system of worship that was to spread over the entire world. As could be expected, Lucifer would never be content to leave a single genuine doctrine among his worshipers. His set task was to establish a nonscriptural counterfeit for every truth ever given by God to man. That he succeeded, and that many of these same counterfeits are today to be found in the creeds of practically every professedly Christian church on the face of the earth, is one of the most astonishing facts to be uncovered by modern archaeology.

So widespread, in fact, have become these counterfeits that the chances are a hundred to one that every reader of this article has among his beliefs and practices some which have their origin, not in the Scriptures, but in the devil worship of ancient Babylon.



Second in a Unique Series of Articles  
Tracing the Rise of Many Un-Biblical  
Doctrines and Practices Still Held by  
Christian Churches.

## **The MASTER Counterfeiter - 2**

### ***The Serpent Coils Around the World***

**By MURL VANCE**

**L**ike a giant serpent, the devil worship of ancient Babylon threw its coils

of counterfeit religion around the entire world, until worship of the true God became well-nigh extinct. Devil worship even contaminated the worship of God in Old Testament times, and fought it to a standstill. After a pure religion was re-established by Christ, the same old counterfeit religion at first attacked it openly, then feigned conversion - a policy that enabled it to penetrate into the very heart of Christianity during the Dark Ages. The early fathers, and many later reformers, raised their protesting voices in vain. The great mass of the people without access to the word of God contented itself with what was being taught, never bothering to check up on the source of the doctrines, rituals, and holy days the church was presenting.



Hammurabi worshipping before the sun-god, Shamash. The code, of which this is a part, dates to the first dynasty of Babylon.

Even the reformation failed to dislodge many of these counterfeits. Declares Browne, in "This Believing World": "Isolated rites, festive days, theological notions, even some of their god names persisted. They took up their abode-albeit furtively, clandestinely- in the religions that endured. And there they persist to this day. For this reason, one cannot well refer to those cults of Babylon, Egypt, and the rest as 'dead religions.' Actually they are not dead at all, for the echo of their ancient thunder is still to be heard reverberating in almost every form of faith existing today. They are dead only in name."

Olcott, another scholar of no mean standing in the world of history, declares, in his "Sun Lore of All Ages": "Our most important ecclesiastical feast days in fact are but survivals of ancient solar festivals." Then, after discussing the history of these various festivals at length, he adds: "From the foregoing, which treats merely of the more important solar festivals, it is clear that these products of paganism are as much in force at present from a symbolic point of view, as they ever were, and that Christianity countenances, and in many cases has actually adopted and practices, pagan rites whose heathen significance is merely lost sight of because attention is not called to the sources whence these rites have sprung...."

"The reason for the survival of many of the symbols of sun worship ... lies in the fact that the early Christian teachers found the people so wedded to their old rites and usages that it was vain to hope for the complete abandonment of these long-cherished practices." We learned last week, however, that this sun worship was in its origin nothing less than open devil worship with a sacred serpent, whom the Babylonians worshiped, says Sayce, as "the incarnation of wickedness and guile" in practically every sun temple.

The scriptures likewise point out the fact that the devil worship of Babylon did not die with Babylon. In Jeremiah 51:7 we read, "Babylon hath been a golden cup, . . . that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." And John the revelator, writing centuries after the kingdom of Babylon had ceased to exist,

declares in Revelation 18:2-4 "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen and become the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit. . . . For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

## **COUNTERFEIT RELIGION UNIVERSAL**

We notice two points in these texts: the statement that Babylon's devil worship became universal, and the warning for all who name the name of Christ to weed out of their religion all forms having their origin in this ancient pagan kingdom. On the first point we find striking confirmation in history.

*Persia.* "In Persia," declares Jastrow, "the Mithra cult reveals unmistakable influence of Babylonian conceptions." The Encyclopedia of Religion, vol. 8, pp. 752-759, likewise shows this relation between Persia and Babylon: There was a "close rapprochement between the Babylonian and the Persian cults. . . . When we find the busts of the sun and moon and the circle of the zodiac standing feature in Mithraic monuments, we can have no doubt as to the ultimate source of this element." And another name for Mithraic the sun-god, we must remember, was Ahura-Mazda, the first word coming from a root meaning demon. Zoroaster attempted to eradicate demon worship from Persia by eradicating Mithra, but the "Magi started a counterreform, and restored primitive conceptions."

*Rome.* The Roman soldiers on their eastern conquests came into contact with Mithraism, and for some reason eagerly adopted it. They brought it back to Rome with them, where it gained wide spread popularity just preceding and following the advent of Christ. Later it became the official religion of the Roman Empire, and we find emperors and peasants alike worshipping at the feet of the Babylonian sun-demon. Constantine was an ardent votary of the sun before his "conversion," and we find that he never gave up many of the tenets of his devil worship. It was the influence of Constantine perhaps more than any other single individual that brought about the compromise between Christianity and devil worship, enabling the latter to penetrate into the former during the Dark Ages. From Rome Mithraism spread throughout all Europe.

*Egypt.* That Egypt got its sun worship and its sacred serpent from Babylon is evidenced by many historians. Jastrow declares that the Tell el-Amarna tablets reveal unmistakable early contact between Egypt and Babylon. Budge declares that the magic practices of Egyptian temples were derived from Babylon. And Sir Flinders Petrie, the English scholar, declares: "The

Eastern sun worship seems to have poured into Egypt with the second prehistoric civilization." Since Egypt everywhere had its sacred serpent connected with sun worship, and the same system of omens for foretelling the future as did the Babylonians, no one can doubt that Egypt is another of the nations that drank of Babylon's "wine."

*India, China, and Japan.* We would naturally expect that the Oriental nations that remained within the boundaries of what was once the great Babylonian Empire should continue on in the same religion of their forefathers. A glance at the religions that have endured in the Orient shows that our supposition is true. Sun worship is still prominent, with various phases defined. The sacred serpent is found everywhere, particularly in India. In China, the serpent usually appears in the form of a great dragon. Fire, the sun spirit on earth, is considered as holy. The cow and the bull are sacred to the sun, representing its life-giving qualities, the same as in ancient Egypt: swine are likewise holy, the same as in ancient Babylon. And in the Buddhist temple we see a "heavenly king," a hideous figure in dark, bound round with the coils of a serpent, and carrying a pitchfork! Even Buddha is pictured at times canopied by serpents. Ah no, the devil worship of Babylon did not die with Babylon!

*The New World.* There can be no controversy as to the source of the religion of the early American Indians. We may not know just how they arrived here from the Old World, but we do know that they brought their religion with them. Just as it has been since Lucifer appeared to our first parents in the guise of a serpent, so we find devil worshipers everywhere reverencing poisonous reptiles. To this day, snake dancers among the Indians are a common sight to American tourists, and practically every ancient temple has its stone serpents coiling everywhere. The sun was generally the chief deity, with a golden disk sacred to the sun and a silver disk sacred to the moon, just as in the Old World.

We find parts of the Indian mythology identical with the mythology of Japan, and other parts identical with that of Egypt. We find pyramids sacred to the sun the same as in Egypt. Hearts of the dead and of sacrificial victims were sacred to the sun, being "fed" to the image of the sun by the Indians as well as by the Egyptians and Babylonians. Both the Old World and the New had the same colors gold and red sacred to the sun; both have the same type of sun charms to be worn upon the person. Both branches of the devil worship had their great nunneries filled with vestal virgins dedicated to worship of the sun. The National Geographic magazine for February, 1938, November, 1936, and June 1937 has both illustrations and descriptions of many other similarities between the devil worship of the New World and that of the Old.

Truly all nations drank of Babylon's wine! That all paganism and apostate Christianity is in its origin devil worship clearly accounts for the warning from God, found in many places in the Bible, to come out of Babylon, "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit," as John the revelator puts it. Just as one cannot honor Lincoln by keeping Lenin's birthday, so one cannot honor God by desecrating that which He declares is holy, substituting the counterfeit "holy" days ritual, and doctrines having their roots in open devil worship. No sincere Christian can knowingly accept the counterfeit in place of the genuine, no matter how widely it may be observed and taught by professed Christians. The Scriptures are the only safe guide in such matters. The following articles of this series will trace the history of the various doctrines of devil worship, contrasting with them the plain teaching of the word of God.



Worship of a woman and her infant son can be found in ancient pagan religions.

## **The MASTER Counterfeiter - 3**

### ***The Counterfeit Godhead***

Third in a Unique Series of Articles Tracing the Rise of Many Un-Biblical Doctrines and Practices Still Held by Christian Churches

**By MURL VANCE**

**H**aving established himself as the god of this world, Lucifer at once began the task of destroying as far as possible all traces of divine worship. Granting him the intelligence that we know he must have possessed, we would expect him to analyze carefully every phase of worship of the true God and to produce a counterfeit of it. This he did so successfully, in fact, that today we find the counterfeits taking precedence over the teachings of the Scriptures even in the majority of Christian churches.

It is well for us to remember that when it comes to matters of religion the majority is never a safe guide. In Christ's own words we have the warning: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13, 14. The Scriptures and the Scriptures only, must ever be the source of information concerning man's relation to God and to his fellow men; yet what a wide variation there is between the plain teaching of the word of God and the traditions so commonly taught in many Christian churches!

### **Knowledge of God Destroyed**

It was a tremendous task to destroy in the minds of men the knowledge of the Being who had been so intimately associated with them since creation; but "the god of this world," as Lucifer is called in 2 Corinthians 4:4, was astonishingly successful in doing so. Like all the other counterfeit doctrines connected with Babylonian devil worship, the counterfeit godhead, consisting of a stern, demonlike father, a tenderhearted mother, and an infant son, spread over the entire world.

We have but to examine the Babylonian temple texts for a few moments to find a mother and her son being worshiped. See illustration in Kitto's "Illustrated Commentary," vol. 4, p. 31. This introduction of the mother and her infant into divine status undoubtedly had its origin in Lucifer's intimate acquaintance with the prophecies dealing with the birth of Christ into this world.

Worship of the mother and her infant son, who, for some mysterious reason was doomed to remain an infant throughout the centuries since his birth into Babylonian demon worship, became almost universal, though thinly disguised by a multiplicity of names, as was also the case in sun worship. In Babylon we find them known at least part of the time as Semiramis and Nimrod; in Egypt as Isis and Horus, or Osiris; in pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter, or Venus and Cupid; in India as Isi and Iswara; in Asia as Cybele and Deoius; in Greece as Irene and Plutus, or Ceres the Great Mother with a babe at her breast; and in Tibet, China, and Japan the earliest Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the female Buddha holding a divine son in her arms.

A study of any encyclopedia of religion reveals a surprising oneness in all these counterfeit deities. As every student of religions knows, names and gender meant little to ancient devil worshipers. The same deity often appears in a hundred different forms. In Babylon, the female sun, worshiped for its life-giving qualities, has multitudinous phases, chief of which were probably summed up in Ishtar, from which we get our English word Easter. Ishtar was described as "the fruitful goddess of the earth, teeming with fertility," the latter idea being typified by the rabbits and eggs that always accompany the Anglicized form of this Babylonian deity. Worship of the female moon, of Venus, of Diana of the Ephesians, "whom all Asia and the world worshipeth," according to Acts 19:27, or even of Mama Quilla among the American Indians, can all be traced back to its source in ancient Babylon. So also can the sacred cow of India and Egypt be shown to be but earthly representatives of the sun's life-giving powers, and so on into the almost unlimited phases of the worship of the sun's ability to fertilize or to cause the seed to spring forth.

As has already been pointed out, however, when the Babylonian worshipers prayed, "Mother goddess, . . . exalted a lady whose command is mighty. . . . O my mistress, establish for me a place of rest. Absolve my sin; lift up my countenance . . . Mother of the house supreme, may the supplication address thee" (Sayce), he was praying to more than just the female sun, for this female deity also bore the titles, "Lady of the abyss" and "Lady of the world." Her temples likewise had their sacred serpents, which have, since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, represented upon earth the evil one, who appeared in this guise to our first parents. Worship of the "great mother" among the world's idolaters is but another form of devil worship- a female devil, if you please.

In the Scriptures we find compleste unity as to the three Persons composing the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is represented as a Being who "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16, The Son is pictured as the Saviour and Redeemer - the Creator who was "made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:1-3,14. The Holy Ghost is revealed as the Guide (John 16:13), the Comforter (John 16:7), the indwelling Spirit of God that directs the thoughts and actions of every genuine Christian (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17). Yet what do we find today being taught in many professedly Christian churches? Not the Godhead revealed in the Scriptures, but the counterfeit godhead, having its origin in devil worship!

God the Father is pictured as a cruel, demonlike being, ever seeking to destroy, not to save, the sinner, a being who constantly seeks vengeance, who delights in torturing throughout eternity those who cross His will. The Holy Spirit has practically been replaced by the Virgin Mary, who,

according to the Scriptures, has not the slightest claim to divinity, in fact, if Mary, the mother of Jesus were divine, than Christ cannot rightfully be called the Son of man, for He did not partake of humanity. And to this day the Son is worshiped as an infant in spite of the fact that He grew to maturity nearly two thousand years ago, and ascended to take His place at the right hand of God. Even Joseph, the husband of Mary, has been deified, though he had nothing whatsoever to do with the birth of Christ. In "What Every Christian Must Know and Do," a book by the Rev. J. Furniss, bearing the imprimatur of Palus Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin, we find these words:

"Heart of Jesus, I adore thee; Heart of Mary,  
I implore thee; Heart of Joseph, pure and  
just; In these three hearts I put my trust"

Everyone knows the magic efficacy of the three words "Joseph, Mary, and Jesus" as taught in some churches. A friend reared in the teachings of one of these churches recently told me that he had been taught since babyhood that he would get three hundred days out of purgatory every time he pronounced those three names! He further declared that he believed he had nearly a million years to his credit and that through his youth his concern was not so much about his conduct as it was about securing remission from the fires of purgatory. Thus has the counterfeit godhead of paganism crept into the Christian church. Sincere seekers for light, and undoubtedly in many cases sincere teachers are accepting the traditions of the church rather than the plain "Thus saith the Lord" at the scriptures. Because so many today have ceased to study the divine word and to learn the source of their beliefs and practices they have accepted the doctrines of Babylonian devil worship, and have failed to heed the warning of Christ found in Matthew 15:13 "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Those who trace their beliefs and practices to Babylonian devil worship should know the real meaning of the call found in Revelation 18: 2-4 "Babylon the great is fallen. . . . Come out of her, My people."



The Field Museum's depiction of the Neanderthal man.

## **The MASTER Counterfeiter - 4**

### ***The Counterfeit Creation***

Fourth in a Unique Series of Articles Tracing the Rise of Many Un-Biblical Doctrines and Practices Still Held by Christian Churches.

**By MURL VANCE**

**L**ucifer, the master counterfeiter, could not hope to become the ruler of this world and be worshiped as a divine being as long as mankind still looked to the true God as the Creator. Since the very existence of an orderly universe is proof incontrovertible of a Supreme Being, the evil one had a real task on his hands in his attempt to destroy every vestige of divine worship. As long as mankind believed the first verse in the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," devil worship could make but little progress. Worship of the divine Creator must be destroyed!

#### **The Counterfeit Creation**

The only way that acknowledgment of a divine Creator and Sustainer can be removed from the mind of a reasoning creature is to deify nature itself, for one cannot behold a universe without seeing in it the working of a supernatural power. Lucifer took the only course open to him - he pictured the universe as evolving out of chaos, and life on this planet as evolving out of inanimate substance. Let no one think that the "modern" theory of

evolution is modern in any sense of the term, for the exponents of this theory have but gone back to the teachings of Babylonian devil worshippers as the source for their "scientific discoveries."

Ancient Babylonian temple texts indeed have a "modern" tone when it comes to the origin of the universe. Declares Sayce, "In the Babylonian theory of creation all things originated out of the watery abyss, the sea being full of strange creatures who were imperfect first attempts of nature to create life as we see it today." Anaximander declared that man developed out of the fish of the sea. And to provide a connecting link between creation as taught in the Bible and theory of evolution we find that several thousand years before "modernism" began its attacks upon the verity of the Scriptures, the Zend-Avesta, the holy book of the East, taught that creation occurred in six great epochs of time, just exactly as it is being taught by many Christians today!

The Bible teaches that man was created by God in a sinless state but that he renounced his Creator and chose Lucifer as his god. Since that time, he has been and will continue to "wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13. In other words, man is in desperate need of a Saviour; without God he is going steadily downward toward destruction. When, however, man sees his plight and once again turns to God, recognizing Him as Creator and Redeemer, he becomes one of the "sons of God" and begins his journey back to a perfect state once more.

The counterfeit handles the whole problem from exactly the opposite angle. Its system teaches that man is evolved upward toward perfection, not downward toward everything that is vile and debased; that the race is getting better not worse; that there was no fall, no garden of Eden, for early man with ape-like mind was incapable of judging between right and wrong; that since there was no fall from a sinless state there is no need of a Redeemer to restore man to that state; that since man is part of nature and its highest product he himself has some claims to divinity and most certainly need not bow down to any other being, for what other being is there greater than man?

Thus we find man, who cannot understand the mysteries in a single little blade of grass, even though he studied an entire lifetime, attempting to explain the origin of the universe, an origin about which he knows absolutely nothing if he turns his back upon the word of God. How difficult it is for man to admit there is a Being in the Universe greater than he! To avoid making such admission he prefers to accept the counterfeit explanation for the origin of things; he prefers to cast himself from all allegiance to his Creator, declaring that sin is but the mistake of any perfectly formed judgment, and that left alone he will someday muddle through to the perfect state.

Another important result of the counterfeit explanation of the origin of things is lawlessness of every sort of description. If man owes no allegiance to a Supreme Being, certainly he owes no allegiance to any law of a Supreme Being. The theory of evolution, of man ascent from the inanimate to the animate, makes him accountable to no one being for his conduct. He has no God to look back to and no God or judgment to look forward to. He is free to do as he pleases, to take what he is strong enough to get. One look at the world today reveals a few of the fruits of the return to Babylonian devil worship for an explanation of the origin of the universe, with a far more violent fruition apparently scheduled for the not far distant future.

Small wonder that the prophet Jeremiah declared of Babylon that "the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad."  
Jeremiah 51:7 And still less wonder that he adds the warning in the forty-fifth verse of the same chapter, "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul."

## The Counterfeit Memorial

By Murl Vance

Fifth in a Series Tracing the Rise  
of Many Un-Biblical Doctrines  
and Practices Still Held by Christian Churches.  
Signs of the Times - March 19, 1940 pgs-12-13.

EVERY student of the Scriptures is acquainted with the memorial God set aside to commemorate His work as creator. The record of the memorial of creation is found first in Genesis 2:1-3. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

So necessary did the Creator feel this day to be for the physical and spiritual good of the human race that at the time when His instructions were put in writing—when Moses led the children of Israel out of Canaan—the command for this memorial was, along with the rest of the Ten Commandments, both spoken and written by the Creator Himself. It is set forth in Exodus 20:8-11: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Lucifer made an immediate attack upon this memorial, substituting for it a day that still bears the pagan name given to it by the Babylonians. Turning to the 1928 edition of Webster's New International Dictionary, we read: "Sunday—so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun or to its worship."

Dedicated by whom, and how anciently? we at once ask. When we go to the encyclopedia to find out who named the days of the week as we have them today, we find that, just as we expected, the ancient Babylonians named this day, and dedicated it to the sun. But we learned in the first article of this series that the sun was only a symbol, the real being who was worshiped being Lucifer himself. When we find the sun god pictured with horns, hoofs, a tail, and a pitchfork, being addressed in worship as "the evil one," "the destroyer," and "the great dragon," we need have no doubt as to who it is that is being worshiped.

Other historians also add their support as to the source of the day of the sun. Salomon Reinach, the French historian, declares in his "Orpheus, a History of Religions," English translation, page 39: "In their calendar, the Babylonians distinguished between propitious and unpropitious, working and nonworking days. Among the latter, it is believed were the first days of every septet, to the number of four per lunar month. This constituted the Babylonian Shabbatum, analogous to the Biblical Sabbath."

The Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia declares, under the article "Sunday": "The name Sunday or 'day of the sun' belongs to the first day of the week on astrological grounds, and has been so used, from far beyond the Christian Era, and far outside Christian countries."

### *Day Dedicated to the Sun*

The best possible source for deciding this matter permanently, however, would be a Babylonian temple text in which the first day of the week is specifically dedicated to the sun. Such a temple text, translated in detail on pages 71-75 Sayce's "The Religion of the Ancient Babylonians," lists each day of the week for an entire month. On this temple text we read:

"1st day. Dedicated to Anu and Bel [both sun-gods]. A day of good luck, ... He shall make his freewill offering to the sun, the mistress of the world. . . He offers sacrifices. The lifting up of his hand finds favor with the god.

"8th day. The feast of Nebo [identified by scholars as being another manifestation of the sun-god]."

"15th day. Sacred to the Sun, the Lady of the House of Heaven.

"22nd day. Festival of the Sun, the mistress of the palace.

"29th day. The day of the resting of the moon-god. The day when the spirits of heaven and earth are adored," (The moon—as also the planets—was considered as an emanation of the sun. The Babylonians had but one god, declared Sayce on page 268 of the book quoted above.)

In Mithraism, the name by which Babylonian sun worship was known in Persia, and later in Europe, Sunday, the first day of the week, was the weekly holyday for centuries preceding Christ. Likewise in Buddhism the first and fifteenth days of each month are sacred, many Buddhists keeping the intermediate Sundays also." Lark in "Religions of Old Korea", Page 75.

The pagan origin of the sun-day is generally recognized, though seldom spoken of, by the leading scholars of the church. Declares Cardinal Gibbons:

"You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never *sanctify*." - "*The Faith of our Fathers*," page 111. Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1893

Bernard Conway of the Paulist Fathers, in his "Question Box," page 179, gives a similar testimony: "If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing Saturday."

### *Going With the Crowd*

I once asked the man at the head of the Bible Department in a Midwestern denominational college the reason for the existence of two weekly days of worship in the Christian church. The doctor replied: "I am surprised that Protestants did not start keeping the seventh day of the week when they broke away from Catholicism. We all know that Sunday is not the Bible Sabbath, and we know who changed the day. But everybody else keeps Sunday, so I am going to do the same."

In the *Sunday School Advocate* for Dec-31, 1921, we read: "In the very long ago the people of the world began to give names to everything, and they turned the sounds of lips into words so ,that the lips could speak a thought. In those days the people worshiped the sun because it was kind to them and gave them heat and light. By and by, after many words were made to tell of many thoughts about many things, the people became Christians and were ruled by an emperor whose name was Constantine. This

emperor made Sunday the Christian Sabbath, because of the blessing of light and heat, which came from the sun. So Our Sunday is a sun-day, isn't it?"

The Catholic Church, to whom Protestants are indebted for their sun-day, frankly admits the pagan origin of many of the church's holydays, but claims the Power to sanctify these products of paganism. Cardinal Newman declares: It is not necessary to go into a subject, which the diligence of Protestant writers has made familiar to most of us. The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints; . . . holy water; asylums; holy days and seasons, use of calendars, processions, . . . are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the *church*. "*Development of Christian Doctrine*," page 373. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1906.

Without questioning the sincerity of the church's leaders, most surely every Christian has strong reason to question the power of any human being, or of any group of human beings, to sanctify or to make anything holy, least of all the day set aside by the master counterfeiter as a memorial of his power and authority; "the venerable day of the sun" established by the worshipers of the great serpent in ancient Babylon. Since the sun-day has been established upon human, not upon divine authority, and since we are told in Matthew 15:13 that "every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," surely the seeker for truth will do well to search the Scriptures for light on this question.

The commonly accepted belief that Sunday was set aside by divine command or example as a day commemorative of the resurrection of Christ has no Biblical foundation. Christ was crucified on Friday, the sixth day of the week; He rested in the grave on the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week; and He arose to resume His duties on Sunday, the first day of the week. And, although the greatest and most frequently referred to event in all history—the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, His death that the sinner might not have to die—occurred on Friday, still it seems never to have entered the mind of the Christian church to set aside the sixth day of the week as a weekly day of rest.

The Christian church regards two weekly days of rest, Sunday and the Sabbath. One of these days must be a counterfeit; the other must be God's holyday of worship and rest. One, as we have seen, originated among the devil worshipers of ancient Babylon, and entered the Christian church by way of Mithraism; for we find that Constantine was an ardent votary of this branch of demon worship before his so-called "conversion."

We also find that the next day after he passed his law calling for men to revere "the venerable day of the sun," he passed another law regulating the manner of cutting animals open and examining their entrails to foretell the future. Also, after his "conversion," he murdered his wife, and also his son, who he thought was becoming too popular with the army, his crimes finally raising such a stench in Rome that it appears that this "Christian" emperor, who passed the first law setting aside Sunday as a holyday, had to flee to a new capital, which he built and named after himself—Constantinople.

#### *Christ's and Paul's Example*

The Sabbath, on the other hand, has the authority of the entire Bible behind it. It was established by God at creation (Genesis 2:1-3); it is commanded in the Decalogue (Exodus 20:8-11); it is the sign by which one may know that he is a child

of God (Ezekiel 20:12, 20); and it is to continue to be God's holyday even after the destruction of sin and the establishing of the new earth (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

In Luke 4:16 we read that it was the "custom" of Christ, our example, to worship upon the Sabbath day; in Acts 17:2 we read that it was the "manner" of Paul to do likewise. The nearest suggestion that can be accepted in favor of the first day is found in 1 Corinthians 16:2, regarding the gathering of money, food, and clothing for the poor at Jerusalem, a collection that was to be laid aside "by one's self, at home," as reads the Greek. Since on his previous visit of a year and a half to Corinth Paul was found worshipping in the synagogue "every Sabbath" (Acts 18:4,11), it would indeed be inconsistent for him now to ask the Corinthians in his letter to them to start holding religious gatherings on the first day of the week, as some people claim he did.

In the very last book of the Bible we find a call to return to the worship of the Creator, which of course includes honoring His Sabbath day: Revelation 14:6,7 "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Matthew 15:13 "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Those who trace their beliefs and practices to Babylonian devil worship should know the real meaning of the call found in Revelation 18: 2-4 "Babylon the great is fallen. . . . Come out of her, My people."

Needs to be continued on page 14 of Signs of the Times March 19, 1940.

**The MASTER**  
**Counterfeiter - 6**

# Counterfeit Baptism

Sixth in a Unique Series of  
Articles Tracing the Rise of  
Many  
Un-Biblical Doctrines and  
Practices Still Held  
by Christian Churches.

**By MURL VANCE**

**W**hen Lucifer set out to counterfeit and attempt to destroy all divine worship, he left no point of doctrine unattacked. Step by step he examined every plank in the Christian platform, and produced a counterfeit for each. By a counterfeit theory to confuse men's knowledge of creation, and by a counterfeit memorial of that creation, he had gone far to make men forget Christ as their creator. He desired also to make men forget Christ as their redeemer; and we find a counterfeit in this connection also.

Every scholar who studies into religions that prevailed before the Christian Era would do well to remember that Lucifer was thoroughly acquainted with the plan of redemption long before Christ ever came to this world. The plan of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, we are told in 1 Peter 1:19, 20, was laid before the foundation of the world. Lucifer unquestionably knew of the plan after he had sinned, and certainly could have learned of it in detail as it was revealed to our first parents and to succeeding prophets. Failure to recognize Satan's knowledge of the work that Christ was to do has turned many a scholar into an infidel, for we find that Lucifer counterfeited some of the Christian doctrines even before Christ gave them to the world. Such is the case, at least to some extent, in Lucifer's counterfeit memorial of redemption. Noting this point, scholars often erroneously assume that Christianity is

copied after pagan religions, when, in actuality, Lucifer merely took advantage of his early knowledge of Christ's work.

The memorial of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as given by God is baptism by immersion. This point is made clear in Romans 6:3-8: "know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not server sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."

### **"Burial" in Baptism**

Baptism, then is a public confession of one's faith in the work of Christ. It represents the death of one's former lawless nature and the resurrection of a new creature in Christ Jesus. If the convert is not "buried" in baptism, then the entire figure is destroyed. The sprinkling of a few drops of water on a individual could not possibly typify a death, burial, and resurrection, but takes on instead the mystic cleansing of "holy water" almost universal among the heathen.

The use of holy water to cleanse one from sin has its origin in the devil worship of ancient Babylon. In Babylon, declares Jastrow, on page 103 of his book, "The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria," water was used with magic formulas in purification ceremonies. Worshipers were censed, and had holy water sprinkled on them, believing that thereby they were actually cleansed from sin.

Babylonian temple texts, as translated by the British Museum, mention holy water thus; "Pour out . . . pure water in the temple of the lower ground. . . Make prostration toward the gate of the setting sun . . . Dipping his hand in water he says" "At sunrise, on the bank of the river, a green spot thou must draw up pure water . . . May the cup of pure water of Merodach confer a blessing". "To

Merodach: The first-born of Ea, glittering water, pure water, holy water, resplendent water. The water twice seven times may he bring, may he make pure, may he make resplendent, may the evil incubus depart." "May Gulu, with quieting hand the consecrated water . . .send into his body." When a man took sick, we read that a woman approached to "pour over him the magical waters". One worshiper describes himself as the pure pourer of libations to Ea." The instructions for one prayer read: " Before a vessel of pure water repeat the prayer twice. End of incantation. Repeat it three times, using pure water."

In Egypt, declares the Egyptian scholar, Sir Flinders Petrie, kings, priests, and people were purified by pouring water over them; following purification incense was burned to Ra, the sun-god. He further declares on page 26 of "Religious Life in Ancient Egypt" that pre-Christian Roman times the worshiper could secure holy water at the temple door by dropping a coin into a box, whether by overflow or by some mechanical device he does not say.

The devotees of Mithraism, the Persian and Roman form of Babylonian devil worship, were purified "per lavacrum by sprinkling, we read in the "Encyclopedia of Religion," art. "Mithraism." Whole rivers, in fact, became "holy" among these ancients; and some of them have remained so to this day in pagan lands. One reads of the "holy" Euphrates, Tigris, Ganges, and others whose waters were used in the mystical cleansing ceremonies.

In the Christian church today there are two forms of administering the rite of baptism; by sprinkling, as did the ancient devil worshipers; and by immersion, as is taught in the Scriptures. We have already noted the origin of the former; let us examine a few scriptural instances of the latter.

When Christ our Example was baptized, He went to the Jordan to John. After baptism He "went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16), clearly showing what form of baptism was administered to Him. After the Ethiopian eunuch had been converted under the teachings of Philip, we read of them, in Acts 8:38: "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

## **"Baptize" means "immerse"**

The very word "baptize" in the Greek, in fact, carries with it the idea of "immerse," and it is thus translated in Wilson's Greek-English Bible diglot. We find also from other Greek writers at the time of Christ that the same word was used to describe the plunging of iron beneath water to temper it; also when a ship sank at sea - but not when the wind blew a little spray across its bow!

With both the day of the sun and sprinkling as counterfeit memorials of the work of Christ, the master counterfeiter seems to have been highly successful in securing popular acceptance of his doctrines. With the majority of the Christian churches accepting at almost every point the traditional tenets and teachings of Babylonian devil worship, rather than the plain teachings of the Scriptures, small wonder that Christ, the true Leader of the Christian church, was forced to say: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because trait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13, 14. Small wonder also is it that an oft-repeated warning was given to the professed followers of God concerning their dwelling in "Babylon": "Go ye out of the midst of her and deliver ye every man his soul." Jeremiah 51:45.

## COUNTERFEIT DEATH

By Murl Vance

Seventh in a series tracing the rise of many un-Biblical doctrines and practices still held by Christian churches.

TWO temples stand facing each other on opposite sides of the street. One contains a sacred serpent and has a tall spire reaching far into the sky to catch the first rays of the rising, and the last rays of the setting, sun. We enter, and we see around the wall the burial urns of the great departed. A worshiper enters and mumbles a prayer first to the dead, then for the dead. We recognize at once that we are in a temple of the ancient devil worshipers of Babylon or of one of the nations that secured its religion from Babylon.

We enter the second church, having a similar or perhaps an identical appearance on the outside, and look around. Through an open window we see the white markers standing over the tombs of the departed—perhaps we even find the dead buried in crypts in the same building with us. No sacred serpent is in sight, but numerous solar symbols decorating the windows, walls, and altars are significant to one who knows the origin of sun worship. A worshiper enters and mumbles a prayer to a dead "saint" or for the soul of one of his deceased loved ones. Amazed, we ask the identity of the church in which we find ourselves, and are informed that we are in a Christian church of the twentieth century. Can anyone blame us for standing in bewilderment, wondering?

When God made man, as we shall presently see from the Scriptures, He had no intention of making an indestructible, divine being out of him. But the master counterfeiter, the evil one who from the beginning has attempted to destroy every vestige of divine worship, had a plan which from the very first had a powerful appeal to man's pride. He would place man on a level with God, making him believe that he was immortal and worthy of worship by his fellow men if he lived an outwardly exemplary life, or if he became a ruler.

In ancient Babylon we find that the dead were deified and worshiped, some of the great even being deified and prayed to during life. Every Babylonian temple, declares Jastrow; had its offerings of food and water for the dead, just as did also later Egyptian temples and most of the modern temples of pagan religions. In Egypt every man who passed by a tomb, if he had any religious feeling whatsoever, paused and recited the established formula, "A thousand jugs of beer, a thousand loaves of bread, a thousand head of cattle, a thousand ducks, for the soul of M or N," the worshiper believing that the mention of the food would make it a reality for the deceased.

The Babylonians, declares Sayce, believed in the immortality of a conscious soul and prayed that their monarchs should "live forever in the land of the silver sky." Wailing for the dead was a common custom.

The Egyptians taught and believed that at death their Pharaoh, or earthly incarnation of Ra, the sun-god, ascended to and became identified with the sun. A passage from a monument concerning Amenemhet I declares that at death he "flew to the sky and was united with the sun, the body of the god was merged with him who made him." The king was given the title "great god," the standard title of the sun-god.

At night the sun was supposed to pass through the caverns of the underworld, and wake the dead to life. Declares one tomb inscription to the sun-god: "Thou hearest the cry of him who is in the coffin. Thou raisest up those who are lying on their sides. . . . Thou shinest forth for those who are in darkness, those who are in the caverns rejoice."

This belief that the dead lived on and were intimately associated with the sun god led to ancestor worship. One Egyptian officer lost his wife, and upon falling ill he was told by a magician that his sickness was being caused by the work of his dear departed; thereupon he addressed a long and pathetic letter to her, concluding it with, "What evil have I done thee that I am now in such misery? What have I done to thee that now thou layest hands on me? "-*The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, by George Steindorf, page 120.

This cult of the dead, declares Alann W. Shorter on page 129 of *"An Introduction to Egyptian Religion*," "exists to some extent in all religions, whether it be the ancestor worship among the African tribes or prayers for the faithful departed in the Christian church." We must say, however, that there is no cult for the dead in the religion of anyone who believes and follows the teachings of the Scriptures.

Ancestor worship and veneration has its roots in the belief that at death man become a higher being, a spirit which can make contact with God Himself. In almost every book on Christian religion and in almost every funeral sermon one hears of the "immortal soul" of man.

Yet nowhere does such an expression occur in the Scriptures. On the contrary, we are told in 1 Timothy 6:16 that God only has immortality. Nowhere does the Bible teach that man lives on in a conscious state after death.

In the Genesis record of the creation of man (Genesis 2:7) we learn that God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This breath of life is also called in the Scriptures the spirit of God, "spirit" in such cases being almost invariably translated in the Old Testament from the Hebrew "ruach," meaning wind or breath; in the New Testament the word translated "spirit" is from the Greek "pneuma," whose primary meaning is air, or breath (compare our English word pneumatic). Thus we find Job speaking of the "spirit of God" –in my nostrils." Job 27:3.

Since dust plus the breath or spirit of life causes man to become a living soul, as is stated in Genesis 2:7, it seems reasonable that if the breath of life leaves the dust, the soul would cease to exist. In other words man is a soul, he does not have a soul in the strictest sense. Mathematically, if dust plus breath equals a soul, a soul minus its breath equals dust.

The Scriptures emphatically teach that consciousness ceases at death. Note these texts: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts: . . . as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast.... All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Psalms 146:4; 115:17. "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything. . . . Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.

In spite of this array of scriptural evidence, however, prayers to and for the dead continue in the Christian church, and spiritism thrives on the teaching that man lives on after death. So great is the pride of man that he would believe himself a deity after

death, if he cannot be one before. Man would rather believe the report of the witch of Endor or distort a parable teaching that riches do not take one to heaven than to believe a dozen clear-cut scriptures dealing with the status of man after death.

Indeed the prophet Jeremiah knew whereof he spoke when he declared that all the nations had gone mad over Babylon's wine. Jeremiah 51:7. And indeed he had good reason for his warning for the People of God to flee out of the midst of her. Verse 45. In this as in other cases of the doctrines of the ancient demon Worshipers, one has his choice of honoring the master counterfeiter by accepting his doctrines, or honoring his God by accepting His teachings. Most certainly a man cannot honor the one by accepting the beliefs and practices of the other. The division between the genuine and counterfeit is always clear-cut and plain for him who desires to study and believe his Bible.

## The Counterfeit Destruction of the Wicked

By Murl Vance

Eighth in a series tracing the rise of many un-Biblical doctrines and practices still held by Christian churches.

"GOD is love." He is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." 1 John 4:16; Exodus 34:6; 2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16.

This is the character of the God we serve. It seems hardly possible that Satan, the master counterfeiter, should make the majority of the Christian world believe that God is cruel, vindictive—anything but what He is. Yet this is what has happened as a result of the counterfeit teaching regarding the destruction of the wicked. Here is the picture as it is commonly understood and taught today:

A sinner lives a few short years—perhaps ten, twenty-five, or, even in rare cases, a hundred—before he dies and comes before the judgment bar of God. Because of his refusal to accept salvation, he is sentenced to eternal hell-fire.

A hundred years pass. Writhing in agony, the sinner lifts his voice to God and pleads for mercy, for death rather than torture. Back from heaven thunders the voice of God: "No, burn on!" A thousand years more pass, then a million. Additional pleas addressed to the Ruler of the universe receive the same uncompromising sentence: "No, burn on!" Time stretches on endlessly; passing millenniums are but the inch marks on a never-ending scale; but throughout the universe, as each mark is passed, the voice of the Creator echoes: "No, burn on!"

Probably no doctrine of devil worship has ever created more infidels than has this, for no intelligent being could love or worship such a God. Yet such is today a commonly accepted teaching of the Christian church. One book, written for children, describes the picture in detail, telling how the saliva sizzles in the mouth, the blood boils in the veins. The sinner opens his mouth to ask for water, and fire shoots out, as it does also from his ears, his nose, and his eyes.

The origin of the doctrine of eternal hell-fire, as anyone who gives the subject a thought must know, is in ancient demon worship. It is the generally accepted theory among heathen tribes today. Buddhist temples contain pictures of souls being cast into hell-fire, while the four "heavenly kings"—hideous figures in dark, each carrying a pitchfork, and wound around with the coils of a serpent—look on.

Olcott declares, on page 49 of his "Sun Lore of All Ages," that it was the generally accepted belief among all ancient sun worshipers that at death men were sent either to the sun or to the moon, there to suffer eternally in fire for their misdeeds. The ancient Germans taught that all evildoers received eternal punishment in the heat of the sun. In a book written within the past century by the Reverend Tobias Snoden, the learned preacher seeks to prove that the sun is hell, and that the sun spots are gatherings of damned souls!

Some Christian churches today teach that there is a purgatory where those undeserving of eternal torment may go to be purified of their sins, after which they will be received into heaven. Indulgences of a certain number of days granted for the saying of certain magic words, or for doing good deeds. The Douay Version of the Scriptures, in its Preface, promises three hundred days out of purgatory to everyone who will spend fifteen minutes in reading the sacred pages.

The Bible itself does not mention or even hint at this place called purgatory and clearly teaches that there is no such thing as eternal torment for the wicked.

To answer this very charge against Him, God declares in Nahum 1:9-11: "What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end: affliction shall rise up the second time. For while they be folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry. There is one come out of thee, that imagined evil against the Lord, a wicked counselor."

"The Wicked Shall Perish"

Other Bible prophets add their testimony against the ever-repeated charge of demon worshipers that God Himself is a demon. "I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the Lord. I will consume man and beast. . . I will cut off the remnant of Baal [literally master or lord; but used among the Hebrews and many ancient nations as the specific title of the sun-god]; . . . and them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops." Zephaniah 1:2.

"The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psalm 37:20

"Evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." Verses 9,10

Isaiah plainly declares that the wicked shall be destroyed, and the fires will go out which burn them: "Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it." Isaiah 47:14.

Nor does there need to be any speculation as to the location of the place of punishment. It is not on the sun or in some cavern beneath the surface of the earth that those who chose eternal death will find it; it will be on this earth itself, and in the sight of the righteous. "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . . And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1-3

#### *The Destroyer Will Be Destroyed*

Even Lucifer himself shall be brought to ashes upon this earth in the sight of the watching righteous. "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty: . . . I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee." Ezekiel 28:17, 18.

The Scriptures teach that nowhere are men now being burned for their sins. "Where are the dwelling places of the wicked? . . . The wicked is reserved to the day of

destruction" (Job 21:28-30), or, as Peter says: "The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," when the "elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are, therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:7, 10

In spite of the fact that Romans 6:23 declares that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," a great majority of professed Christians seem to persist in reading into this verse that the wages of sin is eternal life in hell-fire, thereby making their Creator the most diabolical of demons.

Part of the confusion is undoubtedly caused by the lack of the equivalent in modern languages for the Greek word *aionios*. Meaning, literally, "age-lasting," the word was used freely by the Greeks to describe almost anything, both temporal and eternal. In the Greek, it is perfectly proper to speak of an age-lasting tree, an age-lasting man, an age-lasting God, and an age-lasting hell-fire. In every such case, the meaning of *aionios* is governed by the age or perpetuity of the thing described. In the case of God, *aionios* would be equivalent to our English word "eternal," because He is eternal; in the other three cases, *aionios* would be limited by the life span of the thing in question. As one lexicographer has expressed it, *aionios* is like a tree toad—it changes its color with its surroundings.

This confusion as to a modern equivalent of *aionios*, from which we get most of our "eternals" and "everlastings" in the Bible, together with the handed down doctrine of demonology, has resulted in an unfortunate translation that at times appears contradictory to the texts quoted above; a little study into the original, however, removes the apparent contradiction, and leaves God's name untarnished as a just and humane being.

Again we have two teachings dealing with an important Christian doctrine, one originating among the devil worshipers of ancient Babylon, the other being clearly set forth in the Scriptures. One we know to be counterfeit, aimed to discredit the Creator and to lead men to despise His name; the other presents the just and mercy-tempered punishment that will be meted out to those who persist in rebellion against divine law. Knowing the source of each of these teachings, the true Christian can do but one thing in his thinking and teaching concerning the destruction of the wicked: He will flee out of Babylon, as commanded in Revelation 18:1-4, and take his stand firmly upon the word of God.

## Counterfeit Crucifixions

### *Why Moses Nailed a Serpent to a Cross*

By Murl Vance

Ninth in a series tracing the rise of many un-Biblical doctrines and practices still held by Christian churches.

THE greatest day in the history of the human race occurred on a Friday nearly two thousand years ago. It was the greatest day to devil worshipers because on that day their leader apparently was victorious over the God of heaven; and it was the greatest day to the worshipers of the true God, for on that day the divine plan of redemption was ratified, and eternal death, the wages of sin, was overcome for the righteous by the sacrifice of Christ. The full significance of the magnitude of the sacrifice cannot be understood without knowing a little of the history of crucifixion as a means of torturing a human being to death.

Crucifixion did not originate at Calvary. It was the favorite form of administering the death penalty for centuries before Christ, and was a widespread method of offering human sacrifices to the evil one. When a sun-worshipping general went forth to battle anciently, he was almost sure to offer a multitude of the captives to his god, who was in reality Satan, as we saw in an earlier article in this series. The Behistun inscription tells how three thousand chief Babylonians were crucified at one time as an offering to the sun-god by a Persian general, who had succeeded in capturing them in battle. Alexander the Great is said to have crucified ten thousand as a similar offering after one of his victorious campaigns.

The cross itself has been sacred to the sun since the dawn of demonology. Look at the sun or at any other bright light through partially closed eyelids, and you will see that the rays of light form themselves into a cross, caused by the reflection of the light on the eyelashes and lids. This apparently accounts, according to Olcott, for the cross's being used as a symbol of the sun.

In ancient Babylonian art we sometimes find the sun pictured in the sky as a cross rather than as a circle. The robe of Cyrus the Great, a votary of the sun, was decorated with crosses five hundred years before Christ. Go into almost any museum today, and you will find statues of Ra, the Egyptian sun-god, holding the ankh, or ringed cross, in his hand.

On page 223 of "A History of Babylon," by Leonard W. King, is shown, a revealing reproduction of an early Egyptian picture. King Akhenaten, with his wife and daughters, is shown on the balcony of his palace. On the headresses of the pharaoh and the queen is found the sacred serpent, symbol of the evil one, which we find universally connected with sun worship. Overhead the sun sends out its rays, each of which ends in a hand shown caressing the royal family. Hanging from the sun's disk is a cross, and one of the rays offers a similar cross to the queen.

In the Rosicrucian Egyptian museum, at San Jose, California, will be found a jeweled crucifix attached to a string of prayer beads, recovered from Osiris, the sun-god at night, and consequently considered the king of the dead at Abydos. There are likewise in this same museum, many other examples of Egyptian crucifixes attached to

prayer beads. The Rosicrucians themselves, though a fraternal organization basing their philosophy upon that of the ancients, wear the cross, as a symbol of their order. Their organization, they declare, is philosophical, not religious. Prayer beads themselves, incidentally, are widely used to this day among Oriental pagan religions, a prayer being said for each bead. We look in vain for any mention of prayer beads in the Scriptures.

Even the American Indians, according to Prescott, were worshiping the sun on the hilltops with crosses before the landing of the white man. The missionaries who accompanied early colonists astonished to find crucifixes being used by the Indians, and thought that the gospel had preceded them, only to find later, that among the Indians the cross was sacred to the sun-god.

When the plague of serpents attacked the children of Israel in the wilderness (Numbers 21:6-9) God commanded Moses: "Make thee a fiery serpent," set it upon a pole." This pole was evidently a cross, for we read in John 3:14 that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so shall the Son of man be lifted up." The people were to look upon the brazen serpent when bitten, and live. They were to see in the crucified serpent a type of the *work* of Christ, not a type *of* Christ; it would be strange indeed, if God should suddenly start using the universal symbol of the evil one as a symbol of His Son.

It was the death of Christ on the cross that sealed Satan's doom. When Satan inspired demon-possessed men to crucify their Creator, he was also crucifying himself in type. Christ came down from the cross; the brazen serpent will never come down.

Every nail driven through the hands of Christ was a mortal weapon that would some day be turned against Satan, Every wound Christ received was a deathblow to Satan and to his chances for the future.

God took advantage of the standard means of offering sacrifices to Satan to depict a prophecy of his doom. For centuries men had worshipped the serpent as a symbol of the evil one; they had likewise revered the cross as a symbol of the serpent sun-god, and had crucified human beings upon it as an offering to their demon divinity; now God in type reversed the tables, and put the serpent himself upon the cross.

What gloating there must have been in demondom when Christ Himself came within the full power of Satan at Calvary! With the prophecy of his own destruction ranking in his heart, Satan and all his angels must have come down in person to direct the taunting and crucifixion of Christ. What a difference between the principles of the two spiritual kingdoms was revealed at that moment! While the leader of one was showing his jealousy, his hatred, and his cruelty, the Leader of the other was praying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.

Since the crucifixion of Christ, it is natural that in its symbolic sense, the cross should typify His sacrifice and death. We can "glory" "in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," and we can take up our cross and follow Him (Galatians 6:14; Matthew 16:24); but only in this symbolic sense. Civilized nations no longer offer human sacrifices to the evil one upon the cross; and surely, because of its origin in demon worship, no one should revere a physical cross.

Here again there is a parting of the ways between the true follower of God, who takes his stand upon the teachings of the Scriptures, and the professed follower, who follows complacently along in the traditions of his fathers, accepting the tenets of Babylonian devil worship "because attention is not called to the source whence these rites have sprung." Only those who are well grounded in the word of God can expect to

be able to distinguish between the genuine worship of God and its counterfeit, demon worship. There is no confusion on this subject in the mind of any open-minded student of the Bible; the dividing line between the two is clear and distinct.

We have before us the false—the reverencing of the Babylonian sun symbol, one of the cruelest instruments of torture ever invented; and the genuine—the reverencing of the Being who was tortured to death upon that symbol. Surely the Christian should make some distinction between these two.

He should indeed follow the injunction of Revelation 18, to come out of Babylon, eliminating from his theology every non-scriptural counterfeit arising in demon worship. There seems today to be a tendency to do what the children of Israel did with their cross and brazen serpent; for we read in 2 Kings 18:4 that they made a god out of it, and offered incense to it.

## HEATHEN CUSTOM

### In the Christian Church

#### *Strange Weeds in the Garden of God*

By Murl Vance

Tenth in a series tracing the rise of many un-Biblical doctrines and practices still held by Christian churches.

THERE are many strange weeds growing today in the garden of God, weeds whose roots extend back to Babylonian devil worship and whose fruits can scarcely be other than always have been borne by such plants. Since Christ declared, "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13), perhaps we would do well to examine a few of the strange practices and customs that we as professed Christians find ourselves engaging in during certain seasons of the year.

We can read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and we shall find only one holyday given by God to the Christian church. That day is the weekly Sabbath, given by God at creation (Genesis 2:1-3), commanded in the Decalogue (Exodus 20:8-11), kept by Christ (Luke 4:16) and the apostles (Acts 17: 2), and extending on throughout eternity in the earth made new (Isaiah 66:22, 23). The holydays connected with the sanctuary service before the coming of Christ all passed out of existence at the death of Christ, being nailed "to His cross" as Paul expresses it in Colossians 2:14. It is natural and reasonable that the sanctuary service, with its holydays, should cease at Christ's death, for it merely pointed forward to the work of Christ. It was not necessary to continue slaying the lamb after the Lamb of God had been slain, neither was it necessary to continue keeping the holydays connected with such a service. Whence, then, come all these holydays we find in the church today? Let us see.

#### *Easter*

Every student of the Scriptures knows that the single reference (Acts 12:4) to Easter in the Bible is a mistranslation of pascha, everywhere else translated "Passover." The Revised Version gives the correct translation; besides, there is no mention of the pascha as being a holyday binding upon the Christian church, Paul merely mentioning it casually in passing, just as he mentions in Acts 17:23 that he noticed an inscription "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" while walking down the street. The Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th edition, art. "Easter," declares: "There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the apostolic Fathers."

The word itself comes from "Eastre," the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, and from there it goes straight back to Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of spring, of love, and of immorality. The most savage and obscene rites of all ancient devil worship occurred at this season of the year. Most of the pagan days the church adopted carry with them some custom or practice that marks their origin, and Easter is no exception. The rabbits and eggs always associated with this day are but symbols of the organs of fecundity formerly sacrificed at this season by the savage Huns. They symbolize the power to produce offspring, and reveal but a fraction of the immorality formerly connected with

paganism's great spring festival. The British Museum possesses an inscribed egg of veined marble which Sargon dedicated to the sun-god of Sippara; and even the colors we use on our eggs today were formerly sacred in sun worship.

As was pointed out by Sir Isaac Newton, Easter, as well as practically every other of the church's holydays, is related to the movements of the sun or other heavenly bodies rather than to any event, occurring in the Christian church. As the "first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox," the day clearly shows its astral origin. It is at that season of the year when the sun has reached the halfway point between midwinter and midsummer.

Our hot cross buns at Easter time, declares Chambers in his "Book of Days" art. "Semnel Cakes," were formerly by the pagan Saxons in honor of their goddess Eastre. The ceremony of the new fire, also occurring on Easter in some parts of the Christian world, back likewise to the sacred fires of demon worship, fire being considered the sun spirit upon earth.

The Easter celebration of the sun's return to give new life to the earth was originally almost universal throughout paganism. Among the ancient Aztecs of Mexico, says Frazer in his book, "The Golden Bough," human beings were sacrificed to the sun-god on Easter day. Then, as now, the celebration was preceded by a long fast, and was followed by a feast of viands and flesh. Both the Mohammedans and the Buddhists have retained their spring festival of immorality; and to this day decent people of the East, endeavor to stay off the streets at the time of these pagan celebrations, which come at approximately the same time as the Christian Easter.

### *Christmas*

Christmas is another festival in the Christian church that antedates Christianity by hundreds of years, and that is of pure pagan origin. Like Easter, it brings with it numerous trappings that are a certain guide as to its source. Among the ancients, the mistletoe was sacred to the sun because of its yellow color, and was believed to possess miraculous healing powers. Kissing under the mistletoe likewise is pre-Christian, and was but an early step in the night of revelry and drunken debauchery with which the pagans celebrated the death of the old sun and the birth of the new at the time of the winter solstice.

Holly berries were also sacred to the sun-god among the demon worshipers of the Old World. The yule log is in reality the sun log, for "yule" means sun or wheel (an ancient symbol of the sun) in some languages today, and our English word "wheel" comes from this source. Even the lighting of fires and candles as a Christmas ceremony is but a continuation of the pagan custom of encouraging the waning sun-god as he reached the lowest place in the southern skies.

Christmas, as a celebration of the birth of the sun, not the Son, was widespread among the ancients. The Arabians celebrated the birth of the moon, considered as an emanation of the sun, on December 4. To this day, the most important state observance in China occurs on December 21, the sacrifice of the winter solstice. In Rome, the pagan Brumalia occurred on December 25, long before the birth of Christ. Christmas was a holyday in Mithraism, the Persian form of demon worship. Centuries before the birth of Christ, the Egyptians likewise celebrated Christmas much as it is celebrated today.

The real origin of the day, however, is in ancient Babylon, history recording the sacredness with which the winter solstice was celebrated in the cradle of demon worship. Whence, then, we wonder, did day enter the Christian church? We find no

reference whatsoever to it in the Scriptures, and in Schaff-Herzog's Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, art. "Christmas," we read that there is not even sufficient data to tell the month of Christ's birth, much less the actual day. There is no historical evidence of the celebration of Christmas in the Christian Church before the fourth century A. D.

The following quotation from Schaff-Herzog throws a great deal of light on how this and other pagan festivals entered the church of Christ:

"How much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia (December 25), following the Saturnalia (December 17-24) and celebrating the shortest day in the year and the 'new sun' . . . cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence. The recognition of Sunday (the day of Phoebus and Mithras as well as the Lord's day) by the emperor Constantine as a legal holiday, along with the influence of Manicheism, which identified the Son of God with the physical sun, may have led Christians of the fourth century to feel the appropriateness of making the birthday of the Son of God coincide with that of the physical sun.

"The pagan festival with its riot and merrymaking was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and in manner.

"Christian preachers of the West and the Nearer East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival."

What can be said of Easter and Christmas can also be said of many of the other holydays of the church. St. John's Day was celebrated anciently as the time when the sun reached the highest point in the sky in midsummer, being known in Babylon as the Feast of Tammuz. What is now celebrated as the "Annunciation of the Virgin" was celebrated in pre-Christian days as the feast of Cybele, the Babylonian mother sun-goddess. The Babylonians had an assumption of a virgin, and the Chinese to this day have a similar festival to the Assumption, which they celebrate at about the same time of year. Halloween was originally a day of rank spirit and devil worship, though today it is considered as a holyday in many European countries. The goblins and witches, which always accompany this day in popular celebration, show unmistakably its pagan origin.

Thus instead of the one holyday established and authorized by God, the Christian church has almost an innumerable number of holydays, which she has accepted from ancient demon worship. These days are not holy, and never can be. Only a divine or holy being can make anything holy. If all the people in the world should set aside next Tuesday as a sacred holiday, and should keep it faithfully till the end of the world, it would never become a holyday, particularly if it were a day formerly dedicated to devil worship, and still kept in the same manner as did the devil worshipers.

These spurious, counterfeit holydays represent a compromise with paganism, an attempt on the part of the church to convert the heathen by meeting them halfway. But the Scriptures clearly teach that there must be no compromise with the evil one on any point. Paul gives the warning: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." 1 Timothy 4:1, 2.

In Revelation 12:9 we read that the "great dragon, . . . that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, . . . deceiveth the whole world." We have learned that this deception came into the Christian church by way of the open demon worship of the ancient Babylonians, who worshiped the sun as the incarnation of Lucifer, even addressing it in prayer as the "evil one" and the "serpent." Knowing this, how can we fail to heed the warning of Revelation 18:2-4: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils. . . . For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . . Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"!

## CHURCH or BABYLON?

By Murl Vance

A description of ancient heathen worship indistinguishable from that carried on in some Christian churches today.

TURNING the calendar back three thousand years, we walk into a massive temple and gaze curiously around. We know that we are not in a temple dedicated to the worship of the true God, for along the walls and at the front are numerous images, which are receiving the adoration and prayers of the worshipers who bow before them.

Remembering the second commandment of the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them," etc., we know that this temple must be dedicated to the evil one himself.

At the front of the worship room a tonsured priest, with the shaved pate representing the sun's disk and the fringe of hair around the edge representing the sun's rays, chants in a monotone in a language understood neither by us nor by the worshipers, "abracadabra" being an oft-repeated sound. Upon inquiry, we are told that this and many other meaningless words used in the worship have a mysterious effect upon the one saying them.

A man guilty of a crime enters, and goes to the confessional in an endeavor to relieve his conscience. He pays the priest the required fee, and is told that he must do penance to purify his soul. The priest looks in his book of rituals, and chooses from the eighty grades of punishment, including water, fire, frost, hunger, thirst, and journeyings, one he considers sufficiently severe to expiate the sin. The penitent worshiper draws back at the punishment meted out to him; but, after being reminded that the priest carries the keys of heaven and hell and that eternal fire is the only alternative of disobedience, he trembles with fear and acquiesces, beginning his long penalty of self-torture.

Another worshiper complains that misfortune has overtaken him, and desires some formula that will protect him. The priest takes from a near-by chest a ring of silver, the metal everywhere sacred to the moon-god, and a ring of gold, which was everywhere sacred to the sun-god. Then he begins his incantation prayer; (recorded in Sayce, from a Babylonian temple text) : "In the right hand may the Sun-god be carried. In his left hand may the Moon-god be carried."

Then the priest continues to place the jewelry at the points of the body where it was believed the evil spirits might attack, in the nose, on the ears, on the fingers, around the neck, around wrists and ankles. Continuing the incantation, he says: "The weapon scatters rays of brilliance.... The forceful flash, made for the hand to grasp. . . The great stones that are made beautiful with rejoicing, that are fitted to become the flesh of the gods. . .the porous stone, the turquoise, the crystal, . . . the precious stone . . . and gold must be taken, to be set on the pure breast of a man.... The holy stones which are full of beauty and rejoicing, that fitted to be gazed upon, which are the flesh of the gods, very brilliant are they."

Having paid the proper price, the unfortunate man leaves the temple bedecked in his gold and silver and precious stones. Every movement he makes brings a new flash of

light from a jewel, warning any wandering evil spirit that the sun spirit dwells with the man, and that no other spirit dares to enter. We look about us, and see that every worshipper is likewise well protected with amulets, wearing "the flesh of the gods" at all danger points.

Suddenly there is a commotion in the rear of the temple. Two servants of the sun-priest drag in a man who is refusing to contribute his share to the upkeep of the vast retinue connected with the temple service. Defiantly he continues to refuse to cooperate, and we hear pronounced upon him the most dreaded of all ancient punishments. He is cursed to high heaven, sentenced to eternal hell, and excommunicated forever from the benefits supposed to be granted by the priestly service. His face blanches, his body trembles, he utters a half cry, then staggers from the temple. His property is seized, all civil protection is withdrawn from him, and he is forced to flee to the wilderness for his life.

We pass on to another room of the temple, where are kept the sacred relics through which most of the temple's miracles are performed. The relics, we notice, include a tooth, a shinbone, a bit of cloth, a vial of tears, a piece of wood, a black stone, a begging bowl. A constant stream of people passes in and out; many of them claim to have been healed by contact with some particular relic.

Vestal virgins are everywhere; but we soon learn that the word "virgin" means only that they are dedicated to the service of the temple. Immorality is required as a part of the worship of the sun-god, and we turn with loathing from the diseased and degraded creatures who fill the church's lazaret. We note in passing that each vestal virgin has the sacred sun color, red, smeared over each cheek; also that both her fingernails and her toenails are painted with the same color, a public sign that she is dedicated to the service of the sun-god. Twice daily we notice that the faces of the images of the sun-god in the temple are carefully washed and then given a new coating of brilliant rouge, so that they too may properly represent his majesty, the sun.

In another room we see young men in training to be priests. They explain to us the seven degrees of initiation through which they must pass. When they reach the sixth degree, each will receive the title of "Sun" and be so addressed by his associates. When they reach the seventh and highest degree, each will receive the name of "Father" and will be so addressed by everyone he meets; a heavy penalty will be imposed upon anyone who fails to use the title.

The picture here presented is not an imaginary one, nor is it one drawn from recent centuries. These are the actual scenes one would see in ancient temples dedicated to the worship of Lucifer, the master counterfeiter. The Babylonians, and the Egyptians and the Persians, who inherited their demon worship from Babylon, left exhaustive records of their temple services, records that have been translated by the scholars of the British Museum and elsewhere, and that may now be read by anyone. Yet in spite of the fact that these customs come to us from Babylonian demon worship, and often in spite of expressed commands to the contrary in the Scriptures, how many of these remnants of demonology are found today in the Christian church! Notice how contrary to such practices are the following quotations from the Bible:

"When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Matthew 6:7.

"So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."

"Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." 1 Corinthians 14:9, 19 The Scriptures, it seems, do not sanction the frequent repetition of meaningless prayers, or speaking in unknown tongues in the church.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5. These scriptures clearly teach that no penance is necessary for forgiveness, and that no human being can act as a mediator between man and his Creator.

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel; . . . not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." 1 Timothy 2:9. It seems strange that so many continue to spend enormous sums on utterly useless Babylonian sun charms, especially in the face of scriptural injunctions to the contrary.

"If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matthew 15:17. "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you." Luke 6:27.

According to these texts, only the church acting in concert can disfellowship an individual; and, when he is put out of the church, he is not to be cursed and abused and robbed, but worked with and worked for just the same as the missionary works for the salvation of the heathen. As we learned in an earlier chapter, there is no eternal hell-fire to which one can be sent if he chooses disobedience and death instead of obedience and life.

Matthew 15:13 "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Those who trace their beliefs and practices to Babylonian devil worship should know the real meaning of the call found in Revelation 18: 2-4 "Babylon the great is fallen. . . . Come out of her, My people."

from Signs of the Times April-30, 1940 page 14

## **Abominations of BABYLON**

### ***Their Survival in Modern Times***

*How the Devil Sought to Sanctify, the Things God Hates*  
By MURL VANCE

In some Indian tribes the chief faced east each morning before making his offering of tobacco to the sun-god.

IT HAS ever been the plan of Satan, the master counterfeiter, first to get men in his power, then so to destroy their characters by vicious habits that it seems a hopeless task for them ever again to regain their respectability. Such was the definite program in the worship with which our discussion deals.

In the previous article we noted how immorality was required of the worshipers in Babylonian temples; but that was only a step in the downward path of degradation. All who were initiated into Babylonian "mysteries" were also required to drink of "mysterious beverages," which contained, according to Hislop, medicated potions intended to arouse the worshiper to a frenzy of passion, and to deaden his mental faculties and conscience so that the "mysteries" could follow. Alcohol was the chief ingredient in these potions, and the feasts of the temple were little more than drunken debauches.

With the clothing of the devotee removed, according to Jastrow, before he appeared in the presence of his god, with his mind crazed and his emotions fired by medicated liquor, the worshiper had little to stop his downward course. Sayce declares the temples of Ishtar were "filled with the victims of sexual passion and religious frenzy; and . . . her festivals were scenes of consecrated orgies." In Rome, Ishtar was known as Venus, the goddess of love and immorality, and some idea of what occurred in her temples may be gained from the fact that our English word venereal, with its connotation of social disease, comes from "Venus."

Further insight into the full significance of liquor drinking in religious ceremonies is perhaps best gained by the custom of the American Indians in drinking their "holy" drinks. (See "The Incas: Empire Builders of the Andes," National Geographic magazine, February, 1938). Not only was the liquor drunk from golden cups at religious services, just as in old Babylon, but the Indians also literally "drank the serpent." A winding groove representing a serpent was cut in a narrow sloping stone. The liquor was poured in at the top, and as it serpented its way toward the bottom, the worshipers stood on both sides and lapped up the "firewater" as it passed along. With the "serpent" (typifying the evil one also among the native Americans) inside, the Indians were ready to begin a devil dance, go on a scalping party, or to do almost anything else required by the devil of his worshippers as only drunken Indians can.

Liquor was not the only habit-forming drug used by ancient devil worshippers to degrade the human character, Hashish, known in America as marijuana, was used by religious zealots of the East. Some of the effects of this drug, the use of which is spreading rapidly in America, are indicated by the fact that our English word "assassin" comes from hashishin, the Arabic name for hemp eaters.

Tobacco was widely used by the American Indians in their sun worship. Indians claimed that the haze of Indian summer was caused by the sun smoking just before

retiring for night. The chiefs of the Huron tribes offered tobacco as incense to the sun, and claimed that the peace pipe was derived from the sun. The peace pipe was always held up three times as an offering to the sun before it began its journey from mouth to mouth.

The Greeks always offered the first puff of the calumet to the sun. The Louisiana Indian chief faced east each morning, prostrated himself to the sun, then "smoked the sun," as the offering of tobacco to the sun-god was generally known among the Indians. At the sun dance, basketfuls of native tobacco were cast upon the fire by the sun priest while he chanted a thanksgiving hymn.

The smoking of drugs had a double significance. Not only were they offered as incense to the sun-god, but the smoker had, in the end of his glowing pipe or cigar, an excellent sun charm to ward off the evil spirits, for fire was universally considered by devil worshipers as the sun spirit upon earth. Babylonian prayers contain the plea, "May the herb of Venus absolve me." Just what this "herb of Venus" was I have not so far been able to learn; but more than likely it was a drug of some kind. Nor have I yet done any research to discover whether or not the opium of Japan and China was used originally in demon worship: but research in other fields indicates that such a connection might doubtless be established.

#### *Defying the Creator in Eating*

Throughout all the rituals of the counterfeit system of religion there is a marked tendency to sanctify that which God declares He abhors, and to desecrate that which He declares holy. This tendency is in evidence in the foods considered as sacred by the Babylonians. We read in Deuteronomy 14:3, 8: "Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing." 'And the swine, . . . it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh." In Isaiah 66:15-17, we find that this restriction concerning unclean foods—because of the eating habits of the creatures involved and the nature of their flesh—is to continue until the destruction of the wicked: "Behold, the Lord will come with fire.... They that sanctify themselves . . . in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord."

It must have been open defiance to these injunctions that caused the Babylonians to make a deity out of the hog.

The boar was called the "divine messenger," and could not be eaten on certain days of the year sacred to him. The Egyptians followed suit, and not only made a god out of the hog, but also offered swine as sacrifices at the doors of their temples.

Steindorff declares that the mouse was also sacred in Egypt, as was also the rat. The sun-god is frequently addressed in Babylonian prayers the "lord of swine."

Thus men ate, smoked, and drank that which was sacred to the evil one, defying their Creator with their abominations, and selling themselves in slavery to the god of this world—and they still do. Unknowingly today men continue to burn incense to the great serpent, failing to answer the question of Isaiah, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Isaiah 55:2.

Instead, in America alone, nearly a hundred million people daily "smoke the sun," burning enough money by their drug addiction in a year's time to feed and to clothe those on relief for many years. They continue to take into their bodies enslaving drugs and contaminated flesh directly contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures.

Indeed, Lucifer was successful in destroying among the human race the pure and unadulterated worship of the true God. Those who find themselves enslaved by drugs—and let any user who thinks that he is not, try to quit in his own power—will find comfort in the promise of John 8:32, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." To those who find themselves honoring the evil one instead of the God of heaven in their daily habits, the call of the Scriptures is clear and forceful: "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense. . . . The nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." Jeremiah 51:6,7.

## **GOD or SATAN**

By Murl Vance

Whom shall we serve?

Counterfeit Customs We Must Renounce.

Nothing that has ever occurred in history can more truthfully be described by the expression, "The song is ended, but the melody lingers on" than Babylonian devil worship. Today we find in the Christian church the same rituals, customs, and doctrines that were common in pre-Christian Rome, Persia, Egypt, and Babylon, and this in spite of repeated warnings in the Scriptures to flee from such teachings.

Satan, the master counterfeiter, has been successful in establishing a counterfeit for practically every doctrine and teaching given by God to man. Thus while many imagine themselves to be worshiping the God of heaven, through their non-scriptural practices they are in reality honoring "the god of this world," as Satan is called in 2 Corinthians 4:4.

There are only two major systems of religion in the world-God worship and demon worship. As "no man can serve two masters," so no one can serve God acceptably by clinging to the remnants of devil worship. Every individual must choose for himself whether he will study the Bible and follow its teachings or whether he will continue to accept traditions and doctrines that had their origin in Babylon.

### *Summary of Counterfeits*

Having once decided that we will choose to worship God rather than Satan, we must come to a definite decision concerning the following counterfeits, originating in devil worship, which have been discussed in this series of articles, and which are summarized here in brief:

1. The counterfeit godhead, consisting of a demonlike father, a mother, and a babe. According to the Scriptures, the only three divine Beings are "the Father, the Son, . . . and . . . the Holy Ghost." Matthew 28:19. Worship, or adoration, of any other being breaks the first commandment in the Decalogue, which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Exodus 20:3

2. The counterfeit story of creation. A thousand years before Christ, Babylonian devil worshipers were teaching that all life came from the water; that the water was at first full of "imperfect first attempts of nature to create life as we see it today," thus deifying nature and removing the knowledge of the Creator from the minds of men. The Bible declares "that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." Exodus 20:11. Peter declares that scoffers shall come in the last days who are willingly ignorant of the fact that God is the Creator of heaven and earth. 2 Peter 3:3-5

3. The counterfeit memorial of creation. Pre-Christian demon worshipers of Babylon, Egypt, Persia, and Rome kept the first day of every septet, or week. Since that time, this first day has been known as the day of the sun, or Sunday, the sun being worshiped by the ancients as the incarnation of Lucifer, or Satan. The Bible teaches that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work" (Exodus 20:10), stating in the following verse that the Sabbath is the memorial of creation. This day was kept by Christ (Luke 4:16), by Paul (Acts 17:2), and will continue to be kept throughout eternity (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

4. The counterfeit memorial of redemption. Since the dawn of idolatry, holy water has been used to purify the devotees of the evil one. This is the source of the church's practice of sprinkling her converts. The Bible clearly teaches that when Christ, our Example, was baptized, He went down into the water of the Jordan River. Matthew 3: 13-17. Paul declares that baptism represents the death and burial of the old sinful nature and the resurrection of a new creature. Romans 6:3-9. Only immersion can properly represent a death, burial, and resurrection.

5. The counterfeit nature of man. The Babylonians taught that men were, or could become, divine beings; that they had an indestructible, immortal soul. The Bible teaches that God only has immortality. 1 Timothy 6:16. All thoughts perish at death (Psalm 146:4), and the individual ceases to exist until the resurrection morning (Daniel 12:2).

6. The counterfeit destruction of the wicked. It was the general teaching of paganism that the wicked will be tormented throughout eternity in hell thus representing God as a cruel, merciless demon. The Bible teaches that the wicked shall be burned up root and branch, and shall be ashes under the feet of the righteous. Malachi 4:1, 3. In Isaiah 47:14 we read that the fires burning the wicked will completely go out; and Psalm 37:9,10 declares that the place of the wicked shall be no more.

7. The counterfeit veneration of the instrument of torture, upon which Christ died, rather than veneration of the Being who offered Himself for mankind. The cross was sacred to the sun-god from the time of Babylon on down, and before the advent of Christianity it was wide spread in paganism in both the Old the New World. Crucifixion was a standard means of offering human sacrifices to Satan for centuries before Christ. The Bible teaches nothing about the veneration of a physical cross, and contains no record of its being called holy by either Christ or His disciples.

8. The counterfeit holydays and seasons. Practically every holyday of the Christian church today comes from Babylonian devil worship, and is related to the various phases of the sun rather than to events occurring in the Christian church. These days are still celebrated in much the same manner as anciently, and are still accompanied by many of their pagan symbols, such as holy fire, holly berries, mistletoe, the yule log, rabbits and eggs, witches, intoxicants, etc. None of these days was made holy by God, and no one else could make them holy, least of all ancient devil worshippers. The only holyday mentioned in the Scriptures as belonging to the church is the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

The master counterfeiter also brought into the Christian church many other remnants of ancient demon worship we have not space to discuss here. Suffice it to say that both the Bible and History are united in the declaration, "Babylon the great is fallen.... and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit . . . . For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Revelation 18:2, 3

With the knowledge that paganism had its origin in demon worship, every Christian is in duty bound before God, if he has not already done so, to "search the Scriptures" (John 5:39), to see whether or not the charges herein made against Satan, the master counterfeiter, are true. No true worshiper of God can continue in the doctrines, beliefs, and practices of devil worship if he is willing to obey the scriptural injunction, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4.

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